



STAFF ANALYSIS - SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Innovative (INN) Project Name: Resiliency Interventions for Sexual Exploitation (RISE)
Extension Funding Requested for Project: \$2,600,000
Duration of Extension: 2 years

Review History:

MHSOAC Original Approval Date: 05/28/2015

- Original Program Dates: 07/01/2015 through 6/30/2018 (3 years)
- Original Budget: \$2,507,749
- New Budget: \$2,600,000
- New Total Budget with Evaluation Costs: \$5,107,749

Approved by the County Board of Supervisors: June 1, 2018
County Submitted Innovation (INN) Project: April 12, 2018
MHSOAC Consideration of INN Project: August 23, 2018

Project Introduction:

The County is requesting an extension of time and funding for this Innovation. Initially approved in 2015 as a three-year project, Resiliency Interventions for Sexual Exploitation (RISE)ⁱ was designed to increase the quality of services, including better outcomes, for girls who are victims of (or at risk for) sexual exploitation through sexual trafficking. The program intended to utilize an interagency and community collaboration with numerous agencies who may come in contact with these girls, including but not limited to law enforcement, courts, social services, alcohol and drug services, mental health providers so that the girls are provided access to treatments and supports with a focus on trauma sensitive interventions.

Over the course of the first three years of this Innovation, the County discovered that building the infrastructure to provide the require services was labor and time intensive for a number of reasons-staffing, locating a secure and confidential service site, and not the least of which, establishing trusting relationship with victims of human trafficking. This extension will allow the County to establish the fledgling interventions as a promising

practice, continue to refine the screening and assessment tool, develop an interventions “toolkit” for statewide use and meet the community demand for this critical intervention.

In the balance of this brief we address specific criteria that the MHSOAC looks for when evaluating Innovation Plans, including:

- *What is the unmet need that the county is trying to address?*
- *Does the proposed project address the need?*
- *Are there clear learning objectives that link to the need?*
- *Will the proposed evaluation allow the county to make any conclusions regarding their learning objectives?*

In addition, the MHSOAC checks to see that the Innovation meets regulatory requirements, that the proposed project aligns with the core MHSA principles, promotes learning, funds exploration of a new and/or locally adapted mental health approach/practice, and targets one of the four (4) allowable primary purposes: increases access to mental health services to underserved groups; increases the quality of mental health services, including better outcomes; promotes interagency collaboration; and increases access to services, including, but not limited to, services provided through permanent supportive housing.

The Need

The County indicates that some of the reasons it is requesting an extension of time and money for this project are:

- Additional time is necessary because of startup delays related to hiring and training staff with specific expertise in serving the sexually trafficked population.
- Additional time is necessary since a secure site for services and other required operational barriers (i.e. transportation, developing and implementing training modules, etc.) required specific service and security agreements.
- Additional funding is necessary to allow the County to develop a toolkit (one of the overarching goals for this Innovation)
- Additional funding is necessary to allow the multi-agency team to use and share the screening and assessment tool that was developed in the first three years of the plan
- Additional funding is necessary to add new outreach groups (migrant, juvenile and child welfare systems individuals and gender identity populations) since those had been seen as groups not being addressed in the current Innovation
- Additional funding is necessary to allow for additional training (public awareness regarding signs and risk of mental illness due to sex trafficking) since only 1600 of the originally intended 2600 have been trained
- Additional funding is necessary to allow for an increase in the survivor mentorship aspect of this program

The Response

Perhaps the greatest learning experience the County reports and one that adds to the complexity of completing this Innovation as originally proposed is the degree to which it had underestimated the population; numerically, experientially and philosophically. The County reports that the sexually trafficked population (regardless of race or gender) is generally mistrustful, afraid of repercussions from the group or persons trafficking them, dependent on illegal substances or submits to trafficking to obtain illegal substances, extremely transient and possibly re-traumatized by stigma associated with their lifestyle. Additionally, many trafficked individuals are runaways and have increased distrust and transient life styles. Further complicating this is that any mental health issues that made the victim susceptible or vulnerable to this type of trafficking are likely to remain undiagnosed and untreated. Clinicians have limited access to those individuals especially if they are jailed. The County has learned that their best assessment and screening tool cannot be utilized until it has established a significant relationship with the victim of trafficking.

In addition to the new screening and assessment tool, the County intends to use this extension to develop a more robust toolkit, which will include prior best behavioral health practices, data and information from their new and more informed approach as well as continuing with the multidisciplinary team approach.

Research indicates that a multi-pronged approach to providing services to victims of trafficking is essentially necessary because so many of life activities and services (i.e. housing, law enforcement, education, employment, etc.) are required to restore a victim to some kind of emotional and physical solvency. The County reports that it has developed 8 individual training/awareness programs for victims as well as collaborators, a phased approach to recovery (stabilization, coping, maintenance and leadership, and has served 101 sexually trafficked persons (100 females and one male).

The Community Program Planning (CPP) Process

A full and complete initial CPP was conducted in 2014/15. When the County realized it was going to require additional time, they went back to stakeholders and collaborators and ultimately posted the extension request. The 30 day comment period was June 5, 2018 through July 3, 2018. Approval from the Board of Supervisors occurred July 17, 2018. The feedback was all positive and the County has submitted letters of support as part of this extension request, included, but not limited to: Department of Social Services, Child Welfare Services, Medical Directors of Juvenile Detention facilities and sexual assault response team, parent of a RISE participant, North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center.

Learning Objectives and Evaluation

With this extension, the Santa Barbara County states that their target population will be expanded to include individuals over the age of 18 with significant alcohol and other drug issues, domestic violence, developmental and/or cognitive and legal issues. This expansion will yield a larger population and it is estimated that 160 individuals will be

served annually. The learning objectives of the project remain the same as originally approved, and include:

1. Will a shared universal and measurable trauma risk screening tool be effective and result in comprehensive understanding of this population and increase trauma sensitive treatment of victims?
2. Will offering services in a trauma sensitive recovery based approach increase rapport and participation from the victims?
3. Will community education/awareness efforts increase engagement of bystanders or witnesses who may be able to aid or assist with prevention of sexual abuse?
4. Will increasing community and policy maker awareness increase funding sources to develop longer term housing and emergency shelters?

During the first phase of the project, much of the evaluation work revolved around piloting tools to screen and respond to children in the community, determine the strengths, risks, and needs of RISE participants, and determine how to track RISE project participation. Challenges and lessons learned during this phase relative to each learning objective have informed changes that will be implemented in the evaluation during the extension period (see pgs. 14-25).

Santa Barbara County will determine specific outcome measures and methods for collecting data in months three through five of the extension period to determine the impact of the shared screening and assessment tool. Currently, several tools and sources are being used for baseline data, and include: Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE), Social Emotional Health Survey (SEHS), Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS), Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI), arrest records, length and frequency of incarceration, placement stability reports, and consumer surveys. Possible outcomes include:

1. Improved CSEC identification and early identification
2. Increase in number of timely therapeutic interventions
3. Improved CSEC multidisciplinary team participation
4. Stronger collaborations and communications across agencies

To complete the evaluation of the project, Santa Barbara County will continue to work with the University of California at Santa Barbara, who will be responsible for completing the final evaluation report. The County has proposed developing and distributing a statewide toolkit that incorporates what was learned through the RISE project. **In recognition of lessons learned during the first phase of this project, the Commission may want to encourage Santa Barbara County to reach out to other counties with similar needs in order foster cross-county learning as well as possible statewide implementation of a tool addressing trauma risk.**

The Budget

The budget for the two extended years (\$2.6M) is reflective of the learning from the first three years. Although staffing has not changed and total salary is 59% of the total budget for all five years.

The County is encouraged to be prepared to address the costs associated with this extension since they are approximately the same and for the first three years of the proposal.

The County proposes to use 27% of the total budget for project operation costs and 14% for evaluation and administrative costs.

The County may wish to identify more exact costs for evaluation since they appear to be \$121K and represent a little over 2% of the total plan costs as well as contract provider costs for years 4 and 5 at \$100.00 per year.

The County has identified use of AB 114 reversion funds as follows:

\$259,272 from FY 2008-09 and FY 2010-11 will be utilized in FY 2018-19 to support the RISE extension. These monies were approved by the local stakeholder process and the County Board of Supervisors on July 17, 2018.

Additional Regulatory Requirements

The proposed project (extension) appears to meet the minimum requirements listed under MHPA Innovation regulations.

References

https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking/Public_Awareness_Folder/Fact_Sheet/HT_Building_Effective_Collab_fact_sheet-508.pdf

<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/wp-content/uploads/Collaborating-to-Help-Trafficking-Survivors-updated-links-final.pdf>

Full project proposal can be accessed here:

<http://mhsoac.ca.gov/document/2018-08/santa-barbara-county-resiliency-interventions-sexual-exploitation-rise-august-23>

ⁱ This project was previously approved as **Girls Resiliency Restoration and Reintegration aLIance (GRRRL)**