

State of California

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION

MHSSA Collaboration Teleconference Meeting Summary
December 6, 2023

MHSOAC
1812 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Staff Presenting:

Riann Kopchak, Chief of Community Engagement and Grants
Cheryl Ward, Health Program Specialist
Michele Nottingham, Health Program Specialist
Lester Robancho, Health Program Specialist

Announcements | Updates

Cheryl Ward, Health Program Specialist, called the Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA) Collaboration teleconference meeting of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC or Commission) to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the twelfth quarterly meeting. She showed a short video about the Life Learning Academy (LLA), a public charter high school that serves the Bay Area's most vulnerable students. The LLA provides a supportive learning environment as an alternative to large public high schools, and the MHSSA grant helps to fund the dormitory and student counseling services that are on site. She thanked San Francisco County for sharing the video.

Introducing Riann Kopchak

Ms. Ward welcomed the new Chief of the Community Engagement and Grants Division, Riann Kopchak, who has taken over Tom Orrock's position since Tom is now the Commission's Deputy Director of Operations.

Ms. Kopchak introduced herself and stated she looked forward to working with everyone.

MHSSA TA RFQ

Michele Nottingham, Health Program Specialist, stated the MHSSA Technical Assistance Request for Qualifications (RFQ) awardees were announced on October 16th, as follows:

- Imperial COE – Partnership Development
- Imperial COE – Sustainability
- Placer COE – Program Implementation
- Tehama County Department of Education – Data Collection

Ms. Nottingham stated the Commission is currently working on the scope of work for the awardees and is also considering a statewide coordinator. She stated the contracts may take some time to execute. She encouraged everyone, in the meantime, to continue to reach out and connect with the grant coordinator at the Commission and with each other for peer-to-peer program guidance. She noted that the MHSSA web page includes contact information for communication between counties.

MHSSA Additional Funding

Ms. Ward stated the Commission has approximately \$25 million for additional MHSSA funding. The Commission will present a proposal for use of this funding at the January 25th Commission meeting. To help inform where the needs might lie for the MHSSA program, the Commission will be holding a virtual wellness listening session on January 9th to hear from students, families, and organizations about the mental wellness needs of youth. The hope is to learn more about the most vulnerable youth, the best approaches to universal screening, and how to sustain the current MHSSA programs. She asked meeting participants to consider a “Shout Out for Wellness” party that provides space for students to gather in person to participate in the Zoom call. She noted that food and refreshment costs for this event are an acceptable use of MHSSA funds.

AFRs/Contract End Dates

Ms. Ward stated grant terms will begin to end in 2024 and 2025. She encouraged everyone to plan for sustainability of their MHSSA programs while compiling the Annual Fiscal Reports (AFRs). Most grantees have opted for RFA_003 funding, which extends the term of the contracts. She asked grantees to thoughtfully consider how to use unspent funds to sustain the program moving forward if that is an option. She encouraged everyone to consider their budget end date versus their contract end date, to maximize the length of their programs.

Research and Evaluation Update

Ms. Ward asked the Research and Evaluation team and WestEd partners to provide an update on the Phase 1 evaluation.

Alexis Grant, Evaluator, WestEd, provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of the evaluation planning process to date. She administered a brief survey and discussed next steps.

Arturo Chavez, Evaluator Program Associate, WestEd, continued the slide presentation and discussed the community planning process and the initial learnings from listening sessions.

Discussion

A grantee asked the WestEd team for a copy of the student feedback received.

Certified Wellness Coach (CWC) Presentation

Ms. Ward stated workforce development is a major issue facing grantees and a barrier to program implementation for many. She welcomed the representatives from the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) and asked them to provide an overview of the new CWC Model.

Sharmil Shah, Psy.D., Assistant Deputy Director, HCAI, and former MHSOAC Chief of Program Operations, provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of the vision, need, role, and development process of the CWC program. She stated, as part of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI), HCAI received \$338 million to design and build the CWC workforce.

Anne Powell, Health Program Specialist, HCAI, continued the slide presentation and discussed the behavioral health career lattice, certification requirements, education and workforce pathways, services, and competencies of the CWC, and timeline for the CWC program. She stated HCAI will be the certifying body for this new profession. She stated the CWC role is designed to be an additional opportunity in the career lattice, bridging the gap between roles from no education to Master's level graduates. It was initially designed to be situated in schools and in school-related organizations, but HCAI's vision is that it become a more broadly applied profession that can work in community health centers, rural health centers, and others.

The presenters answered questions posted in the Chat Section:

- Regarding the questions about the accrual of hours for certification, they stated individuals can begin accruing hours at any point in their educational program, if the program offers practicum. When accruing hours through an employer, hours can begin at any point as long as the experience is with children and youth in mental health within the last two years of certification application. Work studies in health settings and independent studies are other options for earning experience while in college.
- Regarding the questions on the fee for certification, they stated it is anticipated that certification will be free initially but eventually may have a low cost associated with it, based on whether the funding runs out.
- Regarding the questions on billing Medi-Cal, they stated HCAI is working closely with the Department of Health Care Service (DHCS) and Agency on the Community Health Worker (CHW) benefit. No new information is currently available.
- Regarding the questions on current staff with the appropriate Bachelor's degree, they stated current staff can begin collecting hours and may already have the hours of experience, particularly MHSSA personnel.
- Regarding the questions on community-based organizations, they stated community-based organizations that have a relationship with education are an appropriate agency to apply.

- Regarding the questions about who is tasked with overseeing the certification application and approval, they stated HCAI oversees the process.
- Regarding the questions about coaches needing to get their own National Provider Identifier (NPI) number, they stated that is still to be determined.
- Regarding the questions about required continued education, they stated there is no continuing education process at this point but there is a renewal process every two years.
- Regarding the questions about whether the school system is responsible for supervision, they stated supervision is envisioned to be provided by the Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) in the school setting. Licensed clinical personnel may also be employed in some schools and are appropriate for providing supervision. HCAI is working on how to address supervision in rural locations that may not have PPS or licensed personnel.
- Regarding the questions about a link to the CWC website, they stated the website link is not yet available, but HCAI is working with Agency on the release of the website link that will be loaded with information that will answer many questions.

Fresno County All-4-Youth Tool

Ms. Ward stated grantees will hear a presentation on the Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health and Fresno County Superintendent of Schools collaboration to develop a comprehensive partnership to address social, emotional, and behavioral needs of youth in all schools across Fresno County. She asked the speakers to give their presentation.

Susan Holt, Director, Fresno County Behavioral Health, provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of the background, development process, and evaluation of the Fresno County All-4-Youth Toolkit for integrating school-based mental health services in California. She stated Fresno County determined that joining forces between county behavioral health and the schools could better impact the community; however, the cultures in education and health care are quite different. Joining forces bridged gaps to increase services, particularly to youth and other populations with high needs.

Trish Small, Senior Director, Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Office, continued the slide presentation and discussed the research and development process, implementation, services provided, onboarding new staff and school sites, and lessons learned. She stated the goal for the five-year phased rollout was to have a clinician placed in or accessible to every school in the county by the end of the fifth year. One of the challenges was that a centralized referral system needed to be developed because every school had its own unique system. A centralized referral system helps track students for consistency in referral processing and for monitoring referrals and treatment. One of the requirements was for all school staff to participate in three trauma training modules to help them identify and respond to students in need.

Discussion

Ms. Ward asked the speakers to demonstrate the online toolkit.

Ms. Small shared her screen and provided a live demonstration of the toolkit.

Ms. Ward stated the toolkit is packed full of great information. She encouraged grantees to review it.

Adjourn

Ms. Ward asked for input on subjects to address at future collaboration meetings by putting it in the Chat Section or emailing staff. Grantees asked for discussions on sustainability, private insurance plans, and updates on the CWC.

Ms. Ward stated the next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2024. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.