



Mental Health Services  
Oversight & Accountability Commission

# BIANNUAL REPORT

July 2022 – December 2022

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION | JULY – DECEMBER 2022

# Dedicated to the Wellbeing of All Californians

This report covers six months of Commission activities to promote the mental wellbeing of all Californians and to reduce adverse mental health outcomes.

Each day, the Commission works, along with state, county, and local partners, to make a difference in the lives of nearly 40 million people.

The pages that follow provide a snapshot of our efforts and progress. It offers information and insights on interrelated initiatives, and priorities over the last six months.

In Section 1 we focus on community engagement. The Commission sponsored or participated in 61 hybrid and virtual and 31 in-person community events in the last six months. This section provides information on the various types of community engagements the Commission uses, including teleconferences, learning collaboratives, and statewide conversations.

Sections 2 and 3 of this report provide an at-a-glance look at key activities surrounding each of our strategic initiatives and committees, showing how each is progressing. Section 2 offers more in-depth spotlights of select initiatives, their people, partners, and progress.

In Section 4, we share the incredible reach and impact of the PBS documentary *Hiding in Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness*, produced by Ken Burns. The Commission supported this film and hosted a special live screening, and as of this writing, the documentary has been viewed 4 million times. The film supports the Commission's mission to confront stigma and advance a shift in the public perception of mental health issues today.

*-The Commission*



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# 01 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Transformational change happens when the public – particularly those who access public services – are invited to shape those services, and local and state governments invest in that process. An essential commitment to community engagement is embedded in the Mental Health Services Act, which explicitly includes mental health peers, families, advocates, and community representatives as members of the Commission and in its deliberations and decision-making.



### Commission and Committee Public Meetings

Routine teleconference meetings for the Commission and committees allow Commissioners, committee members, and members of the public to work together on exploring goals, discussing future action, and reviewing results. This included meetings of the Client and Family Leadership Committee, Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee, Cultural and Linguistic Competency Committee, and the inaugural meeting of the Impacts of Firearm Violence Subcommittee. **The second half of 2022 also saw more hybrid Commission meetings,** with some Commissioners, presenters, and members of the public attending in person at the Commission’s office and some attending remotely.

### Community Partner Engagements

Community partner engagement grants help specific communities build an understanding of mental health needs and advocate for solutions. These grants support community events, **from statewide gatherings like the Veterans Art Project’s Pop-Up Art Café on the steps of California’s capitol, to local ones like United Parents’ Lunchtime Advocacy Panel sessions.** The Commission also supports virtual discussions like those hosted by Art With Impact, including their college workshops, which dive into film, poetry, and mental health in guided discussions with community college students.

### Learning Collaboratives

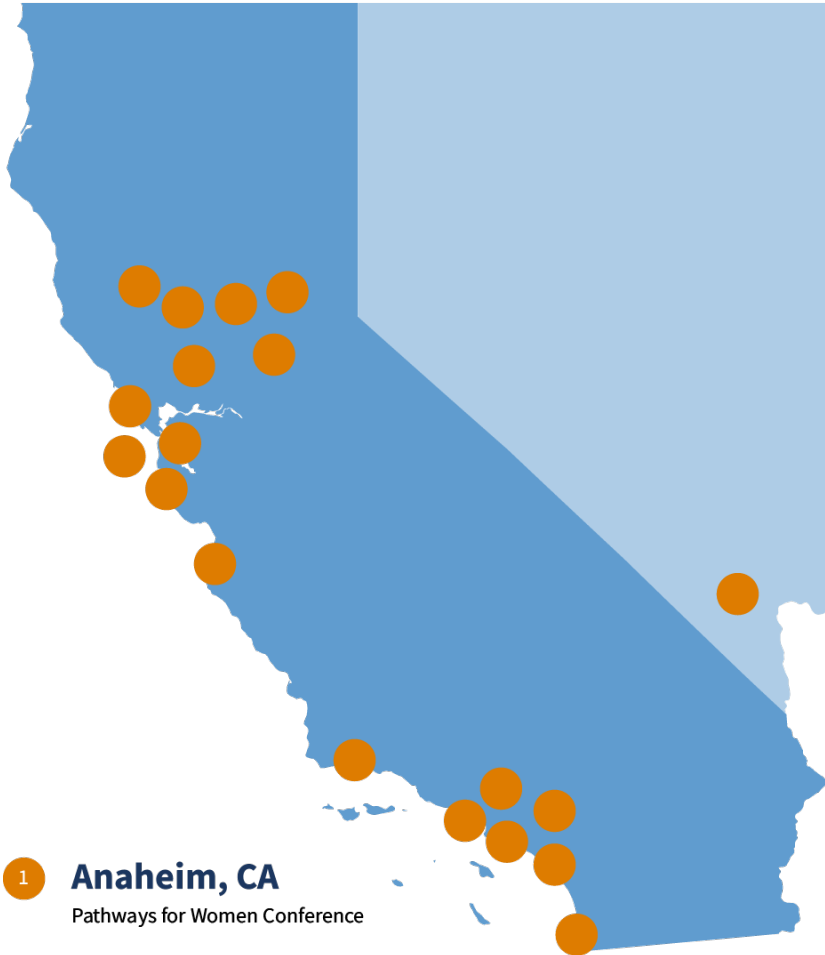
Commission initiatives happen statewide and at a local level, and collaboration with counties is critical. Learning collaboratives are a way for counties to work together, learn from each other, and accomplish their goals, **like 11 counties are doing as part of the Striving for Zero Learning Collaborative on Suicide Prevention.** This collaborative met twice in the second half of the year, advancing suicide prevention efforts through shared experiences and training. The Commission also hosted two Mental Health Student Services Act learning collaborative meetings, where county staff shared information about Wellness Centers, partnerships, and staffing strategies.

### Statewide Conversations

The Commission's engagement in mental health policies and practices creates opportunities for statewide dialogue. In the second half of 2022, Commission staff presented at the California County Boards of Education Conference, and as part of a panel of experts on behavioral health at the Association of California Healthcare Districts Annual Meeting and on homelessness at the Nevada League of Cities Conference. **Commission staff participated in conferences like the OneMind Conference, NAMI California Conference, and Words to Deeds Conference, making connections, expanding knowledge, and promoting solutions.**

# In-person Events

Between July and December, the Commission participated in 31 in-person events and 61 hybrid and virtual events. As the Commission recommits to in-person engagements, events will expand beyond Sacramento, the Bay Area, and the Southern California coast.



**1 Anaheim, CA**  
Pathways for Women Conference

**2 Carmichael, CA**  
EmPATH site visit

**3 Garden Grove, CA**  
Association of California Healthcare Districts Annual Meeting

**4 Kentfield, CA**  
Art With Impact Wellness in Words

**5 Lake County, CA**  
Suicide Fatality Review Training

**6 Los Angeles, CA**  
California Institute for Law Neuroscience and Education (CILNE) Retreat  
[Watts] Site visit with REACH TEAM for establishing information

**7 Monterey, CA**  
CCBE Conference Panel

**8 Napa, CA**  
Screening event for *Hiding in Plain Sight*  
OneMind Conference

**9 Newport Beach, CA**  
NAMI California Conference

**10 Redondo Beach, CA**  
Site visit to allcove™ Beach Cities

**11 Roseville, CA**  
Placer County adult crisis respite center grand opening

**12 Sacramento, CA**  
Advocacy events at the Capitol  
Screening event for *Hiding in Plain Sight*  
Presentation/Discussion at CalACEP Board Meeting  
Words to Deeds Conference  
Crisis Receiving for Behavioral Health visit  
Five Commission meetings  
Children’s Committee meeting  
Impacts of Firearm Violence Subcommittee meeting  
PEI Subcommittee meeting  
Research and Evaluation Committee meeting

**13 San Diego, CA**  
Grossmont Healthcare District Rural Health Coalition Meeting  
PEI Subcommittee meeting  
Sharp Grossmont Hospital site visit

**14 San Mateo, CA**  
Site visit to allcove™ San Mateo  
Art With Impact Movies for Mental Health

**15 San Rafael, CA**  
Site visit to MHSSA Wellness Center programs

**16 Santa Barbara, CA**  
Art With Impact Wellness in Words

**17 Santa Clara, CA**  
Site visit to allcove™ Santa Clara

**18 West Sacramento, CA**  
Site visit to MHSSA site

**19 Las Vegas, NV**  
Homelessness Panel Discussion, Nevada League of Cities Conference



## Hybrid & Virtual Events

EVENT	NUMBER OF OCCURENCES	LOCATION
Commission meeting	3	Sacramento, CA*
Children's Committee meeting	1	Sacramento, CA*
PEI Subcommittee meeting	1	San Diego, CA*
Impacts of Firearm Violence Subcommittee meeting	1	Sacramento, CA*
PEI Subcommittee meeting	1	Sacramento, CA*
Research and Evaluation Committee meeting	1	Sacramento, CA*
MHSSA Learning Collaborative meeting #1	2	Virtual
Research and Evaluation Committee MHSSA Workgroup teleconference	2	Virtual
ICCTM collaborative meeting #1	2	Virtual
Suicide Risk Screening in Schools training	17	Virtual
Older Adult Suicide prevention meeting	1	Virtual
California Legislative Staff Education Institute: Health Cohort Briefing	1	Virtual
Transform Mental and Behavioral Health Fund Committee meeting	1	Virtual
Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee teleconference	2	Virtual
Client and Family Leadership Committee teleconference	3	Virtual
Cultural and Linguistic Competency Committee teleconference	5	Virtual
Commission meeting	2	Virtual
Art With Impact virtual events	15	Virtual

\* Indicates hybrid meeting

# 02 **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

The Commission currently supports 11 strategic initiatives. These multifaceted, interrelated efforts together aim to improve mental wellbeing in California.



# Strategic Initiatives: July – Dec Progress Report

INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>allcove™ Youth Drop-in Centers</b>                      Half of all mental health conditions begin by age 14, and 75% develop by the age of 25, making early detection and treatment urgent and critical. Based on a proven model from Australia, allcove™ youth drop-in centers expand early access to integrated mental health care for youth between 12 and 25 years of age. An allcove™ center has opened in Santa Clara, and five more communities have been awarded grants to open new centers. These centers provide a one-stop shop for mental health, physical health, substance use counseling, and educational, vocational, and peer support services, all informed by a youth advisory group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted site visits at the Santa Clara allcove™ center and the San Mateo allcove™ center on October 28. Youth leaders presented on the needs of youth and on implementation and next steps in the center development. The site visit included staff from the Commission, Department of Health Care Services, local elected officials, a state legislator, consultants from Stanford University, and members of the allcove™ youth advisory committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoveFest takes place on January 28, 2023 in Redondo Beach to celebrate the opening of the newest allcove™ youth drop-in center. This center is operated by the Beach Cities Health Care District.</li> <li>Expand awareness of the model</li> <li>Bolster technical assistance strategy</li> <li>Develop data and evaluation strategy</li> <li>Recruit and fund additional partners</li> <li>Engage all payors</li> </ul>
<p><b>COVID-19 &amp; Emerging Issues</b>                      The pandemic has tested the capacity of the state’s mental health systems to meet pre-existing and emerging needs of Californians. The Commission redirected funding to help county partners and service providers support their communities. The funds supported counties replicating a Solano County innovation project, the Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Cultural Transformation Model and engaged county behavioral health leaders on opportunities to adapt, extend, and replicate the work of the California Reducing Disparities Project. Additional work in this project strengthens the Commission’s school mental health work through grants to on-campus organizations, with an emphasis on youth suicide risk and prevention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICCTM Collaborative launched in October 2022, with its first session featuring an overview of the Solano County ICCTM Project. A second session in November 2022 discussed the impact of COVID-19. A third session in December 2022 discussed social determinants of health.</li> <li>Additional funding was redirected toward suicide prevention efforts; for further details please see page 13.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be a total of 11 sessions for two cohorts of counties. The Commission anticipates proposed innovation plans focused on reducing disparities as an outcome.</li> <li>Fortify California’s behavioral health disaster planning</li> <li>Support the digital mental health strategy included in CYBHI and CalHOPE</li> </ul>

INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Criminal Justice Prevention</b> Following the 2017 adoption of its Together We Can report, the Commission is using an array of tools – research, policy development, financial incentives, and technical assistance – to implement its recommendations to help counties and their community partners build proactive and effective service systems that reduce criminal justice system involvement for those living with unmet mental health needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued exploring dataset linking mental health consumer data with criminal justice data, including arrest and incompetent to stand trial information.</li> <li>Additional criminal justice prevention work is being carried out by counties in Innovation Incubator multi-county collaboratives. Please see page 12 for more information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commission will publish its evaluation of the Innovation Incubator, which supported counties working on criminal justice prevention projects.</li> <li>Community engagement</li> <li>Strengthening data partnerships and analysis</li> <li>Selecting key metrics for criminal justice involvement</li> <li>Capacity building for FSPs</li> <li>Documenting relationship between initial criminal justice involvement and state hospitalization</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mental Health Wellness (Formerly Triage)</b> California's Mental Health Wellness Act grant program provides \$20 million each year to improve community response to people facing mental health crises. Grants have supported the ability of crisis responders to connect those having a mental health episode with wellness, resiliency, and recovery-oriented programs that offer the least restrictive settings appropriate for their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Crisis Now multi-county Incubator collaborative has currently recruited four counties (Plumas, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Ventura) to assess and determine the use of innovation funds in developing/improving their local crisis systems of care.</li> <li>In July of 2022 the Commission set priorities for the Mental Health Wellness Act funding and allocated \$20 million to support EmPATH psychiatric Crisis Stabilization Units, older adults, 0-5 early intervention, peer respite programs, and Substance Use Disorder programs.</li> <li>In September the Commission approved a \$20 million grant project to expand EmPATH. In November the Commission approved a \$20 million grant project to support older adults.</li> <li>In early December, Tom Orrock presented information about the EmPATH model and Request for Applications at the California Hospital Association Annual Meeting.</li> <li>The Commission released a Request for Applications (RFA) for the EmPATH programs</li> <li>The Commission worked with the Governor and Legislature to modify the parameters of the Mental Health Wellness Act to allow more upstream interventions to be supported with these funds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with a contractor, the four counties in the Crisis Now Incubator collaborative will consider proposing the use of innovation funds to assess and potentially create a crisis system of care in their local communities.</li> <li>Commission staff will hold discussion with representatives of the California Department of Aging in preparation for the release of an RFA to expand the number of Age Wise and PEARLS programs.</li> <li>Coordinate with California Youth Behavioral Health Initiative on strategies to support families with young children ages 0-5 at risk of mental health crises.</li> <li>Award EmPATH grants.</li> </ul>

INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Early Psychosis Intervention Plus</b></p> <p>Nearly 100,000 adolescents and young adults experience their first psychotic episode each year in the U.S. With half of all mental disorders manifesting by the age of 14 and 75 percent by the age of 25, the Commission is expanding the provision of high-quality Coordinated Specialty Care in seven grantee counties, focusing on early detection and intervention to improve the lives of adolescents and young adults, significantly reducing the impact of mental health challenges. This work is supported by the Early Psychosis Intervention Plus Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaged Sacramento County regarding interest in expansion of their Early Psychosis Intervention program after a former grantee relinquished their grant due to critical staffing shortages. Sacramento County has accepted the funding and will use the \$2 million grant to hire staff and expand programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission staff are producing the contract documents and reviewing county budgets. Contract will be executed in January 2023.</li> <li>The Early Psychosis Intervention Advisory Committee will meet in 2023.</li> <li>Establish statewide goal for access to best practices.</li> <li>Document service delivery gap, emphasis on disparities.</li> <li>Support research on improving access to CSC in hard-to-reach communities.</li> <li>Increase public awareness on the signs and symptoms of psychosis.</li> <li>Build sustainable financing opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impacts of Firearm Violence</b></p> <p>More than 3,400 people die from firearm violence in California each year; about half of these are homicides and just under half are suicides. In addition to the detrimental physical health problems that follow firearm violence – including emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and death – firearm violence also can cause trauma and lead to immediate and ongoing mental health challenges for individuals, families, and communities. This initiative explores the mental health impacts of firearm violence and works to develop strategies to prevent firearm violence and respond to those impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subcommittee formed by Commission on August 25, 2022.</li> <li>Published <a href="#">project framework</a>.</li> <li>Held first meeting of the Impacts of Firearm Violence Subcommittee on September 28, 2022, with over 40 public members attending.</li> <li>Visited the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles to hear presentations from the <a href="#">REACH TEAM</a> project, which aims to address trauma caused by community firearm violence.</li> <li>Conducted over 25 interviews with local and national survivors, advocates, researchers, administrators, and other experts.</li> <li>Commission explored the use of its linked datasets to answer project questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subcommittee will meet virtually on January 24, 2023 to hear from experts on prevention and early intervention opportunities in schools.</li> <li>Commission will hear a series of presentations from experts during its February 23, 2023 meeting.</li> <li>Commissioners have been invited to visit a Sacramento gun range to learn about their efforts to prevent firearm suicide and promote mental health awareness among firearm owners and their families.</li> <li>Commission is exploring opportunities to visit a rural community to learn about local gun culture and impacts of firearm violence in rural communities.</li> </ul>

INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Innovation &amp; Innovation Incubator</b></p> <p>The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) includes a rare and explicit commitment to fostering innovation in providing services and support. The Commission works to support counties creating and presenting innovation plans for approval. Additionally, the Commission supports the Innovation Incubator. Created in 2018 with \$5 million in one-time funding, the Innovation Incubator brings together county behavioral health agencies, subject matter experts, and other partners to drive innovations that improve mental health outcomes for individuals and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the past six months, the Commission approved five innovation projects from five counties totaling \$13,138,081. These projects were focused on FSPs, Social Determinants of Health, and a multi-county collaborative focused on the infrastructure of the public mental health system.</li> <li>• In October 2022, Commission staff presented the Innovation Action Plan, which summarized the work that has been done to understand the strengths and challenges of the innovation component, explore concerns and opportunities and present a plan to help counties develop transformative innovation projects, strengthen the Commission’s review process, and facilitate learning across and within counties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a total of 23 additional draft innovation projects in the Commission's queue that are being prepared for Commission review and total approximately \$98 million in innovation funding authority. If approved, these projects would be focused on crisis services, homelessness, criminal justice, older adults, youth, housing, transgender individuals, mobile services, reducing disparities, and the public mental health infrastructure.</li> <li>• Implement Commission’s Innovation Action Plan.</li> <li>• Build out data strategy to inform innovation investments.</li> <li>• Engage new potential innovation partners and investigate opportunities to host an Innovation summit.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prevention &amp; Early Intervention</b></p> <p>Everyone should have the opportunity to be well and thrive, yet one in four people worldwide will experience a significant disruption to their mental wellbeing at some point in their lifetime. Guided by the Governor and Senate Bill 1004, the Commission launched a policy research project to explore opportunities for prevention and early intervention in mental health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention and Early Intervention Subcommittee released the first draft of its final project report on August 24, 2022.</li> <li>• Subcommittee met to hear public comment on its draft report on September 7, 2022 in San Diego and October 6, 2022 in Sacramento.</li> <li>• The Commission’s Cultural and Linguistic Competency Committee met on October 18 and November 10 and Client and Family Leadership Committee met on October 25 and November 15 to discuss the report.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The subcommittee will release a revised draft of the report in January 2023.</li> <li>• The subcommittee will meet in January 2023 to hear comments on the revised draft.</li> <li>• The Commission will consider adoption of the report in February or March of 2023.</li> </ul>

INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>School Mental Health</b> The Schools and Mental Health Project is a multi-year effort to guide funding and policy decisions supporting the provision of mental health services to promote the academic and social success of young people. The Commission has funded school-county partnerships through grants to expand and better integrate mental health services in schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission staff, along with Commissioner Tamplen, conducted site visits to two Mental Health Student Services Act Wellness Center programs in Marin County.</li> <li>• Staff conducted a third site visit to Riverbank Elementary School in Yolo County to hear about the implementation of their partnership and workforce development strategies.</li> <li>• Commission staff held two Learning Collaborative meetings, September 7, 2022 and December 7, 2022, which included information sharing on Wellness Center developments, partnership development, and staffing strategies. Both Learning Collaboratives included more than 150 participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visits will be scheduled for Calaveras and Sacramento counties in January and March of 2023.</li> <li>• The next Learning Collaborative will take place on March 1, 2023.</li> <li>• A plan for Technical Assistance will be implemented in the first quarter of 2023 and will include a focus on sustainability, partnership development, data collection, and workforce development and retention.</li> <li>• Launch evaluation of school mental health investments.</li> <li>• Collaborate with state agencies on sustainable funding streams.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suicide Prevention</b> Suicide in California is a significant public health challenge. Guided by data and community input, the Commission developed a statewide strategic plan for suicide prevention that incorporates the latest information and evidence to guide state and local actions for saving lives. Following the Commission’s 2019 adoption of the plan, the Commission is working with governments and community partners to implement recommendations from the report with the goal of reducing the rate and incidence of suicide in California.</p>	<p><b>Striving for Zero Suicide Prevention Strategic Planning Learning Collaborative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four participating counties published local suicide prevention strategic plans: El Dorado, Glenn, Kern, and Tulare Counties.</li> <li>• Five counties advanced to drafting or finalizing their local county suicide prevention strategic plan.</li> <li>• 91 check-in meetings with county teams facilitated by the technical assistance team to support counties.</li> <li>• Up to 24 county teams participated in learning modules on Older Adult Suicide Prevention, Screening and Assessment, and Means Safety with a Focus on Suicide Prevention for Men.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suicide Risk Screening in Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 online, interactive trainings hosted</li> <li>• 1,299 participants trained</li> <li>• 50 counties participating</li> <li>• 287 school districts represented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training module will be held in February 2023, and two collaborative meetings will be held, one in April 2023 and one in June 2023</li> <li>• Trainings begin again in January 2023</li> </ul>

INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Suicide Prevention (continued)</b></p>	<p><b>Suicide Fatality Review (SFR) Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five onsite and 92 virtual partners participated in training for Lake County</li> <li>• 10 participants received additional virtual training at the request of the Shasta County Sheriff/Coroner</li> <li>• 62 participants from 27 counties heard a virtual presentation on SFR and county presentations on implementation of SFR on November 8, 2022.</li> </ul> <p><b>Striving for Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed <a href="http://strivingforsafety.org">strivingforsafety.org</a>, a website dedicated to placing lethal means safety tools in the hands of every Californian.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After several requests from counties, eight additional county teams will receive on site and ongoing training and technical assistance in 2023.</li> <li>• Launch and continue to support <a href="http://strivingforsafety.org">strivingforsafety.org</a> to support lethal means safety across California.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Workplace Mental Health</b>                      Nearly one in five Americans live with a mental health condition, yet there are no well-established and agreed-upon standards in the U.S. to guide public and private employers about how to increase mental health awareness in the workplace, support prevention, and respond to needs with recovery strategies. The Commission is developing a framework of voluntary standards to support mental health in the workplace for all Californians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Released draft of workplace mental health report.</li> <li>• Met with employers, federal leaders, and others at One Mind At Work conference in Napa, CA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Workplace Mental Health Advisory Committee met January 12, 2023 to review a draft of the workplace mental health report.</li> <li>• Present report to the Commission for adoption and support implementation after.</li> <li>• Engage the Governor and the Legislature as a large employer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Youth &amp; Peer Empowerment</b>                      The Commission works through advocacy funding, sponsored legislation, sponsored youth participation, and Committees to amplify the voices of youth and peer leaders seeking to create innovative solutions in the pursuit of emotional wellbeing and prevention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Youth Innovation Project Planning Committee is currently working with a contractor to develop a youth engagement toolkit.</li> <li>• The Commission released the TAY Advocacy Request for Proposals in October 2022; awards were made at the very end of December 2022.</li> <li>• At the November meeting the Commission designated Commissioner Gordon to work with staff to create a strategy to use funds to support the involvement of K-12 students in conversations about school mental health programs and policy; in early December Commissioner Gordon met with staff to outline the opportunities to allocate K-12 advocacy funding to amplify the voice of students across California.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission will discuss K-12 advocacy funding strategies and a plan for funding allocation will be shared at its meeting in January 2023.</li> <li>• Host youth convening.</li> <li>• Launch peer fellowship.</li> <li>• Enhance engagement of youth and peers.</li> <li>• Expand technical assistance to support local community engagement.</li> <li>• Expand partnership with Wellbeings/WETA project.</li> </ul>

FEATURED INITIATIVE:


# Prevention and Early Intervention

**Background:** Guided by direction from the Governor and Legislature through Senate Bill 1004, in 2019 the Commission launched a policy research project to explore opportunities for prevention and early intervention in mental health.

Prevention and early intervention (PEI) in mental health can be a difficult concept for many to embrace. California's public mental health is focused on care and treatment. People traditionally have required a diagnosis to receive care.

Prevention and early intervention are foundational to protecting public health – not just mental health. It was not long ago that cancer was a life-ending diagnosis in almost every case. Public health departments, universities, hospitals, and other organizations united in a multi-pronged approach to prevent cancer. Researchers advanced and tested treatments to improve outcomes. Governments enforce safety standards for cancer-causing environmental factors. Hospitals adapted processes to ensure quicker intervention post-diagnosis. Patients receive routine screenings to allow for early intervention. Public health campaigns have helped communities see sunscreen as a powerful tool to reduce common forms of cancer. We have dramatically changed how we as a culture see cancer: something to be intercepted, treated, and for patients to thrive.

This collaboration model across systems and companies has not been applied to mental health in the same way, but we are charged with changing this. Chances are, we will all be affected directly or through a friend or a loved one by a mental health challenge in our lives, and we must make prevention and early intervention a baseline to ensure the best outcomes possible.



Everyone should have the opportunity to be well and thrive, yet

**1 in 4 people**

worldwide will experience a significant disruption to their mental wellbeing at some point in their lifetime.



*“Mental health is always a reflection of what is happening in our society broadly. And so we need a framework, then that can evolve, as needs and concerns evolve. Prevention at its core, is recognizing the diversity of needs, and strengths in communities, and then creating response around that.”*

Kali Patterson  
Commission Research Scientist

## But what does prevention and early intervention encompass?

There are four main areas that are part of this continuum:

- ① A statewide, multi-partnered approach to prevention at a macro level, with leadership support
- ② A plan must include strategies to address shared risk factors that affect everyone differently – i.e. addressing basic socio economic needs to be well and ongoing traumas, and investing in people’s resilience
- ③ Addressing stigma and misconceptions related to mental health and empowering people with information that is credible, accessible, and can help them support their needs and help them recognize someone in crisis
- ④ Recognizing that prevention is also about preventing negative consequences that occur when someone doesn’t have adequate and appropriate mental health support. People can live happy and fulfilling lives with a diagnosis, and creating a system of care that is equitable and accessible can help them achieve wellness

There are many opportunities to advance PEI and during this project through dozens of meetings and interviews, it became clear we needed a strategic framework. To create that, we needed to understand the needs of Californians – the threats to their mental health, the barriers to PEI, and the solutions they believe will be most valuable.

Mental health threats will continue to change and evolve, and we need a framework that can evolve with them; a framework that is responsive to community needs instead of prescriptive.

The first step is addressing basic needs. Ensuring people have enough resources to make sure they are fed well and housed and have opportunities to connect with people in their communities.

### Progress: July – December 2022

- The Prevention and Early Intervention Subcommittee released the first draft of its final project report on August 24, 2022.
- Subcommittee met to hear public comment on its draft report on September 7, 2022 in San Diego and October 6, 2022 in Sacramento.
- The Commission’s Cultural and Linguistic Competency Committee met on **October 18** and **November 10** and Client and Family Leadership Committee met on October 25 and November 15 to discuss the report.



### Impact: Short Term

One of the areas of opportunity that the Commission will be focused on in the next six months is around prioritizing PEI investments. We have seen how critical it is for communities who continue to experience disparities to be heard and to respond, and going forward the Commission will be seeking input on creating a process to identify programs to help disparities.

- The subcommittee released the revised draft of the report January 3, 2023.
- The subcommittee met January 17, 2023 to hear comments on the revised draft.
- The Commission will consider adoption of the report in 2023.

### Impact: Long Term

The concepts of prevention and intervention in mental health require a critical shift in thinking and acting. How do you prevent a mental health crisis from happening in the first place? How do you prevent the escalation of a mental health challenge or the progression of a mental health need?

## IMPACT IN ACTION



### Seeking Understanding

Since the project's start in 2019, Californians have faced a pandemic, social, political and racial divisions, and more. It became clear that threats against mental health were global, cultural, and societal. Although we had to pivot our work during COVID-19, the Commission hosted virtual listening sessions to ensure voices representing as many communities as possible – both cultural and regional – were heard.

Our approach was broad and open-ended, seeking to understand what communities found harmful and helpful, what it means to talk about mental health in their culture and language, and who in the community needs training and outreach.

More than 800 people participated, helping us listen to voices that have never before been at the table. We reached communities who were unfamiliar with the Commission or who wouldn't have normally come to a government meeting.

FEATURED PROGRAM:

# Full Service Partnerships

**Background:** Full Service Partnership (FSP) programs support people with the most severe and persistent mental health needs. These programs, which are required under California's Mental Health Services Act, are designed to apply a “whatever it takes” approach to partnering with individuals on their path to wellness and recovery.

FSPs were designed to serve people in the community rather than in locked facilities or hospitals. As they continue to be implemented across the state, FSPs can reduce costs, improve the quality and consistency of care, enhance outcomes, and most importantly, save lives.

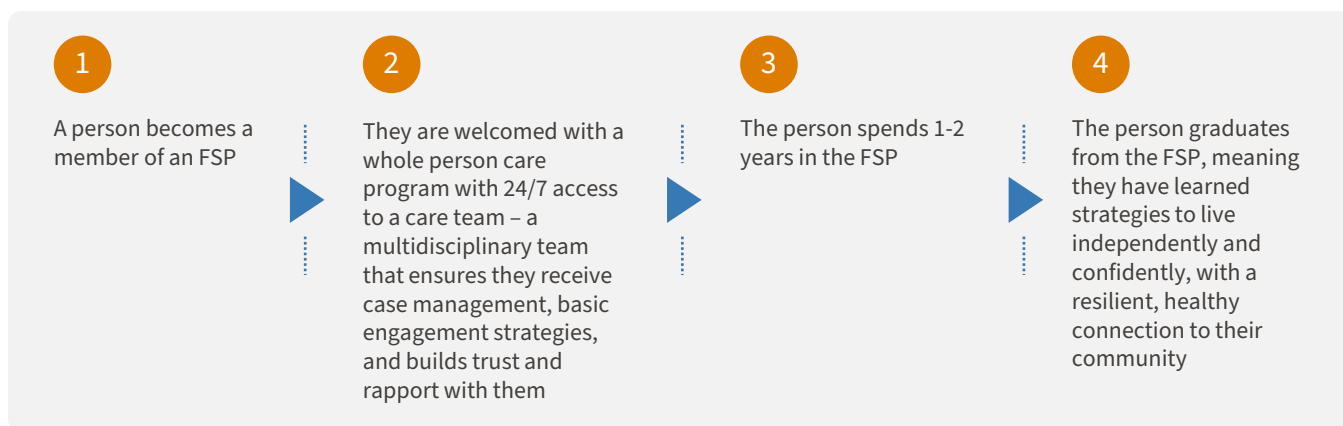
Currently, more than 70,000 individuals are enrolled in an FSP program across the state. Full Service Partnerships represent a nearly \$1 billion annual investment in public funds and have tremendous potential to reduce psychiatric hospitalizations, homelessness, incarceration, and prolonged suffering by Californians with severe mental health needs.

Mental health is an extremely individual and emotional journey, requiring care that is responsive to the needs of each person, and making it challenging to standardize care.

In partnership with Third Sector, a non-profit consulting agency, the Commission supported a project to strengthen FSP programs in nine counties. Through this work we learned that the overarching challenge of scaling FSPs is the need for standardized data, and a common language that is consistent across programs. Each of the counties involved was made up of diverse communities, cultural backgrounds, and target populations. And there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

However, the information sharing and collaboration between these nine counties has helped them learn from each other. They are sharing ideas on what is most important to help FSP participants succeed and what information and data can help state and local leaders best measure and report successes and challenges.

FSPs support individuals with severe mental illness in an intensive continuum of care in an outpatient setting, and are often tied closely to the individual’s community. The ideal scenario that we are working toward in developing and scaling FSPs throughout the state would see a person follow a journey similar to this:



This project involved conducting more than 200 interviews with FSP participants and found that one of the most important measures of success is increased social connectedness. When asked what success looks like, participants said they felt like they had a community and felt supported and this helped them feel that they were making progress. Community connectedness is a powerful metric highlighted by individuals in the program.

If we can intervene in mental health journeys and treat people earlier through FSPs, we can change their trajectories. Early data has shown us that FSPs are successful, recidivism is low, and the outcomes we have seen thus far are promising. Success for an individual is about them feeling well, stable, and independent, and that they've arrived at a place where they can see their path forward.

## Progress: July - December '22

Prior to the passage of the legislation directing the Commission to evaluate FSPs, an Innovation Incubator project on FSPs was in progress. This FSP project now has nine counties working together and aims to implement a more uniform data-driven approach that provides counties with an increased ability to use data to improve FSP services and monitor outcomes. Counties are leveraging the collective power and shared learnings of a cohort to collaborate on how to provide the most impactful FSP programs and ultimately drive transformational change in the delivery of mental health services.

Participating counties worked together to identify standardized measures for tracking what services individuals receive and how successful those services are. Guided by more than 70 FSP participant interviews

and recommendations around evidence-based practices from the project's evaluator, RAND, the counties selected and defined five measures to compare across counties for adult FSP participants:

- Increased Stable Housing
- Reduced Justice Involvement
- Reduced Utilization of Psychiatric Services
- Increased Social Connectedness
- Frequency of Locations and Services

Building off this initial work, the Commission has prepared a report to the Legislature on opportunities to strengthen FSPs moving forward.

### Impact: Short Term

The initial FSP report and the efforts of the Multi-County Innovation Project help shine a light on the current data limitations and barriers to identifying best practices, local, and statewide successes for FSP programs. The recommendations generated by both projects provide direction for strengthening data quality, streamlining data reporting, and supporting consistency in FSP implementation.

### Impact: Long Term

The long term goal for the statewide evaluation of FSPs is to assess the extent to which programs are maintaining clients in the community – helping them avoid cycling through hospitals and the criminal justice system, and living in stable housing environments. The evaluation can establish best practices and provide implementation guidance to FSPs across the state so that clients are supported in their recovery.



## IMPACT IN ACTION

### Participants Involved in the Process

During the Innovation Incubator project on FSPs, the team strove to listen to and elevate the voices of individuals receiving services, and to include them in decision making around services and programs. One county had a consumer engagement council made up of current and graduate participants, and others who met monthly to help the county think through program tools, success measurement, cultural responsiveness, inclusivity, and more. The power of including participants in their own journeys revealed extremely valuable insights.

“

Success would be for me, at least a semester of school, getting my own apartment. And feeling like less of a mental health case, and more of a, I guess, normal person.”

—*Fresno County FSP participant*

“

Slowly ease me into the transition process, rather than abruptly changing services. Not, oh we're done with you. Hope you have a good life.”

—*Sacramento County FSP participant*

# 03 COMMITTEES

The Mental Health Services Act charges the Commission with engaging the public. Committees allow Commissioners and the public to dive deep into questions and advise the full Commission.

# Committees

COMMITTEE	PROGRESS UPDATE	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Commissioner Shuo Chen</p> <p>Led by youth members, the Committee helps the Commission develop a social media strategy that will deliver trusted content designed to reduce the risks associated with bullying and build resiliency among children and youth. The Committee will advise on the strategy and how to make the content engaging and accessible to young audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed research and interviews with youth, community members, and subject matter experts into how a social media response can meet the needs of youth who have been or are being bullied.</li> <li>Determined campaign direction and began work with youth advisors on campaign identity.</li> <li>Met on August 17 and November 17, 2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch social media campaign to support youth – especially Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other BIPOC youth – who have been bullied, and share youth voices and resources.</li> <li>Monitor and support campaign into the summer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Children’s Committee</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Commission Chair Mara Madrigal-Weiss</p> <p>California is on the brink of unprecedented investment in children’s mental health, and this presents exceptional opportunities. In its inaugural meeting, the Committee outlined two potential goals for its work: to enhance the integration of the Commission’s work on children’s mental health, and to inform the Governor’s Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Children’s Committee met on November 8, 2022 and continued the discussion on Committee goals and membership, and heard a presentation from a subject matter expert on the 0-5 year old population and related mental health needs. The information presented can guide Commission support through Mental Health Wellness Act funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify workplan</li> <li>Recruit members</li> <li>Develop staff resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Client and Family Leadership Committee</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Commissioner Khatera Tamplen</p> <p>Made up of peer providers, consumers, family members, and representatives from diverse populations, the Committee explores best practices in implementing Peer Support Specialist Certification and works with the Department of Health Care Services to support the creation of program standards that reflect the unique work of peer providers in our mental health system and ensure that the skills of peer providers are appropriately included in local mental health plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee reviewed a draft of the Peer Certification Resources Guide.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next steps on the Peer Certification Resources Guide will be determined in 2023.</li> <li>New Committee chairs and members will be named in 2023.</li> </ul>

COMMITTEE	PROGRESS UPDATE	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Cultural and Linguistic Competency Committee</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Commission Vice Chair Mayra E. Alvarez <b>Vice Chair:</b> Commissioner Gladys Mitchell</p> <p>The Committee focuses on understanding inequities in California’s mental health system and identifying strategies to achieve equity. The Committee will identify ways to document and communicate inequities in California’s mental health system, model highly successful programs and other promising initiatives, and push for reforms to existing policies and practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">A report of the activities and accomplishments of the CLCC over the past 2 years was shared</a> with the Committee to document the public engagement that has taken place.</li> <li>• Committee met on July 14, August 23, September 8, October 18, and November 10, 2022.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Committee chairs and members will be named in 2023.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fellowship Committee</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Commissioner Khatera Tamplen</p> <p>The Committee provides guidance on the goals, design, eligibility criteria, and application process for the Commission’s Mental Health Policy Fellowship for a mental health professional and a mental health consumer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job listings were posted for the Peer Fellow and Clinician Fellow in fall 2022 and the hiring process began.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission will hire and onboard a Peer Fellow and Clinician Fellow in 2023.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research and Evaluation Committee</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Commissioner Itai Danovitch</p> <p>Comprised of a diverse, interdisciplinary group of experts, the Committee provides guidance and expertise that reflects a broader understanding of the opportunity for driving transformational change using research to improve prevention and innovation, as well as mental health services and supports. The Committee supports the Commission in reaching its strategic goals and ensuring that information disseminated is timely, accurate, and useful to improving community wellness and client recovery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee met on August 17, 2022.</li> <li>• Formed a workgroup to further look into Mental Health Student Services Act projects; workgroup met on October 5, 2022 and December 16, 2022.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full Research and Evaluation Committee will continue to meet semi-annually to provide input and direction on the innovation evaluation and provide direction on the research priorities for the Commission. Additionally, a Full Service Partnership Workgroup will be formed to focus on the legislative mandate to report on these programs.</li> </ul>

# 04 FOUNDATIONAL WORK

In its effort to create transformational change for wellbeing in California, the Commission uses research, grants, innovation, and more to explore bold new ideas. These tools underpin Commission initiatives to create more robust evidence and exploration.



FEATURED FOUNDATIONAL EFFORT  
**Community Documentary Screenings Help Bring Awareness to Youth Mental Health Challenges**

*Hiding In Plain Sight* community screening on September 22, 2022

Nearly 4 million video views to date. That is how many times since its June 2022 premiere on PBS stations across the nation that someone in the world has watched – and potentially been impacted by – *Hiding in Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness*.



A powerful documentary, produced in both English and Spanish by Ken Burns with support from the Commission, has not only been screened at the White House and in front of Congress with Commission representatives, First Lady Jill Biden, and other public and private sector decision makers in attendance, but has also been honored with the **53rd Annual Public Media Award for Excellence in Community Engagement, the 2022 Mental Health America Media Award, and most recently, the 2023 Research America Isadore Rosenfeld Award for Impact on Public Opinion.**

The incredible reach and impact of this film and its message not only supports the Commission’s legislative directive of distilling and disseminating knowledge on how mental health issues can be prevented, detected early, and addressed at population scale, it confronts the issues of stigma, discrimination, awareness, and silence, and, in doing so, helps advance a shift in the public perception of mental health issues today. It also supports the Commission’s strategic goal to better communicate the potential to prevent mental health issues to decision makers.

Further impact from the Commission’s work on *Hiding in Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness* was realized the second half of 2022 when the Commission hosted a special screening of the film and panel discussion at The Sofia in Sacramento, featuring the film’s director Christopher Ewers, youth film subject Morgan Brennan, and local youth mental health advocates.

“Who would ever have imagined that youth mental health would one day be the subject of a Ken Burns documentary,” said Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg, during his opening address to the event’s audience.



Following a reception and film screening, Ewers and Brennan were joined onstage by moderator and former Youth Innovation Committee member, Juan Acosta, as well as Trayzell White and Tanisha Lakanpal, local youth mental health advocates representing different regional groups.

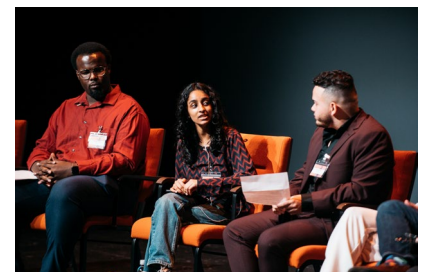
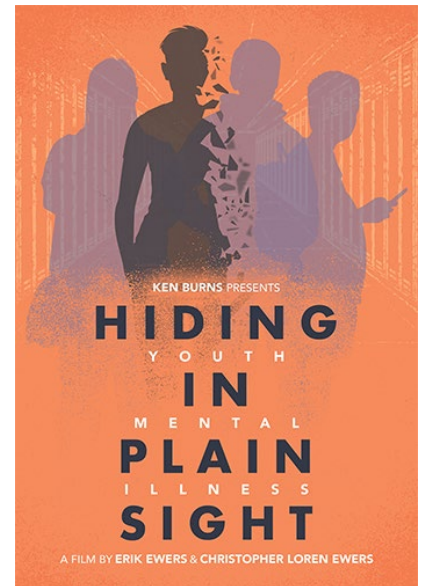
In addition to youth voices, the panel included California Deputy Director for Behavioral Health Stephanie Welch, and Commissioner Dave Gordon, also Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools since 2004, representing the Governor’s and the county’s perspectives respectively on the youth mental health crisis and how the state and local governments are responding.

Together with partners at the Steinberg Institute, the Sacramento County Office of Education, The Children’s Partnership and PBS KVIE, the Commission is proud to not only have created the opportunity for more than 200 regional attendees to experience the film and hear live from its creators interacting with local youth, sitting side-by-side with government officials, but also to ask questions and interact with all the panelists, before, during and following the event.

And the impact continues. As a result of attending the Commission’s Sacramento screening on September 22, an attendee from the Napa County Office of Education was inspired to host a screening in their region. Just over a month following the Commission’s event, Commission Director Toby Ewing sat on the discussion panel with youth and local education and behavioral health leaders during the Napa screening of *Hiding in Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness*, on November 7, at the Napa Valley College Performing Arts Center.

While more than 25 screenings of the film have been held throughout California, the Commission sees additional room for outreach on the opportunity for communities of all kinds to host a screening event. As a result, and in partnership with WETA, Commission staff have created a tool kit counties and community organizations can use to design and host their own screening events with panel discussions.

In addition to supporting additional community engagement through screenings, the Commission worked with PBS KVIE, producers of the state-wide public affairs program *Studio Sacramento*, to sponsor an episode on the youth mental health crisis covered in the film. The Commission connected two individuals featured in the film, youth mental health advocate Makalynn Powell, and former leader of the National Institute of Mental Health, Dr. Tom Insel, with the show’s host Scott Syphax. The initial episode ran on November 18, 2022, with repeats throughout the following week, and it is available to watch anytime on the PBS KVIE website or on the free PBS Video app.



# Foundational Work: July – Dec Progress Report

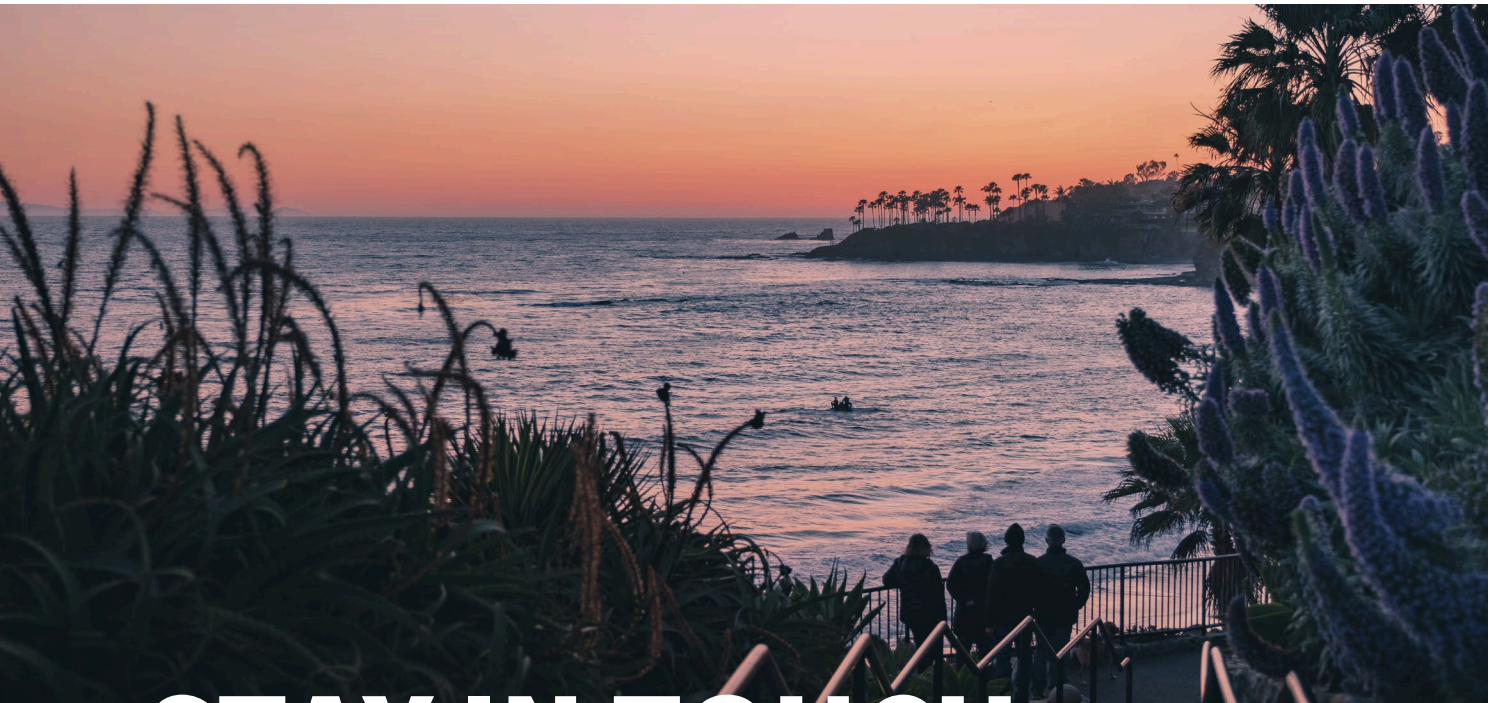
EFFORT	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Administration</b> Work to prepare budgets and contracts, support personnel and hiring, and coordinate logistics to enable transformational change at the Commission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission approved its Racial Equity Plan at its November 2022 meeting.</li> <li>• Commission staff are updating fiscal tracking tools to support public budget presentations.</li> <li>• Commission staff are developing dynamic organizational charts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working to create and implement a Commission Intranet to help facilitate staff productivity and support capacity building.</li> <li>• Strategic planning for 2024-2027.</li> <li>• Develop monthly progress reporting strategy on Commission initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advocacy Grants</b> In approving the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in 2004, California voters mandated the use of transparent and collaborative processes in determining the mental health needs, priorities, and services. The Act aims to change the way people access mental health services and participate in policy planning. It also seeks to change public perception and reduce the stigma associated with mental health challenges.</p> <p>Through MHSA funding, the Commission awards grants to local and state-level organizations to provide advocacy, training, education, and outreach on behalf of nine specific populations: clients and consumers, diverse racial and ethnic communities, families, K-12 students, LGBTQ+, parents and caregivers, transition age youth, veterans, and immigrants and refugees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy partners held six statewide events bringing the voice of mental health consumers, diverse racial and ethnic communities, families, LGBTQ+ communities, parents and caregivers, and veterans to state legislators at the Capitol</li> <li>• The Commission began partnerships with eight local advocacy organizations and one state-level organization to form a coalition to address the mental health needs of immigrants and refugees</li> <li>• Commission staff gathered information from over 80 Transition Age Youth (TAY) advocates and adult allies to inform the next round of advocacy funds for TAY</li> <li>• VETART, the Commission’s advocacy partner for veteran communities, brought together 35 artists and 200 attendees to the Capitol West Steps in October to promote mental wellness through art, music, and expression. Commission Chief of Community Engagement and Grants spoke before veteran advocates on the Commission’s partnership with the veteran community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release RFP for K-12 Student Advocacy project in early 2023.</li> <li>• Evaluate renewal of grants.</li> <li>• Assess impact of existing grants.</li> </ul>

EFFORT	PROGRESS	WHAT'S NEXT
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p>The Commission leverages communication opportunities to improve public understanding of mental health needs, the potential for recovery, the value of services and the opportunity for transformational change to significantly improve results. The Commission publishes its own communications in addition to leveraging strategic partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased awareness of youth mental health challenges by hosting public screening of documentary <i>Hiding In Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness</i> in Sacramento in partnership with the Steinberg Institute, The Children’s Partnership, Sacramento County Office of Education, and PBS KVIE.</li> <li>Created and shared screening tool kit to empower counties and community organizations to host their own screenings of <i>Hiding In Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness</i></li> <li>Supported release of PEI report drafts and engagement for community support.</li> <li>Created additional partnership with WETA on its Wellbeings project, supporting continuing education around the documentary <i>Hiding In Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness</i> and supporting the creation of an upcoming documentary and accompanying educational materials, <i>Hiding In Plain Sight: Adult Mental Illness</i>.</li> <li>Created series of fact sheets to help increase understanding of Commission strategic initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase public awareness of lethal means safety in suicide prevention by publicizing launch of forthcoming lethal means safety website.</li> <li>Improve public access to Commission information by updating website content to reflect more depth and detail.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Legislation</b></p> <p>Created and guided by legislation, the Commission tracks legislation that impacts its work. Periodically, consistent with the Commission's policy projects and publicly adopted priorities, the Commission will sponsor or support legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the 2022-23 budget process, the Legislature and Governor authorized changes to the Mental Health Wellness Act. Statutory changes were made to allow Mental Health Wellness Act funds to be used to support crisis prevention and early intervention, in addition to crisis response services and to allow use of these funds to work with partners other than county behavioral health departments, to support strategies other than supplemental staffing, to allow matching fund requirements and to allow competitive or non-competitive procurements when doing so is in the public interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch of the 2023 Legislative year.</li> </ul>

# Year-to-Date Budget Update

The table below illustrates the budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, year-to-date expenses, committed funds, and funds that are potentially available for the Commission to use in the future.

EXPENSE TYPE	ITEM	ADJUSTED FY 22-23 BUDGET	YTD EXPENSES	COMMITTED	POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE
Operations	Personnel	\$7,380,000	\$3,389,658	\$3,700,000	\$290,342
	Core Operations	\$1,784,552	\$460,086	\$1,270,251	\$54,215
Commission Priorities	Communications	\$887,448	\$264,100	\$611,200	\$12,148
	Innovation	\$100,000			\$100,000
	Research	\$1,116,000	\$64,034	\$831,787	\$220,180
Legislative Items	California Behavioral Outcomes Fellowship	\$5,000,000		\$5,000,000	
	Evaluation of FSP Outcomes (SB 465)	\$400,000		\$239,000	\$161,000
	MHSSA Evaluation and Admin (avail over 5 years)	\$16,646,000	\$63,163	\$3,525,000	\$13,057,837
Local Assistance	Mental Health Wellness Act	\$20,000,000		\$20,000,000	
	MHSSA	\$8,830,000	\$179,937	\$8,650,063	
	Community Advocacy	\$6,700,000	\$732,550	\$5,967,450	
	Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative	\$42,900,000		\$42,900,000	
Money Held For Reserve					(\$250,000)
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$111,744,000</b>	<b>\$5,153,528</b>	<b>\$77,368,907</b>	<b>\$13,645,722</b>



# STAY IN TOUCH

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