

Prevention and Early Intervention Report

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

California's Mental Health Commission report, *Well and Thriving*, details a conceptual framework to instill a shared vision that guides prevention and early intervention in mental health, including four recommendations to advance that vision. Below are a series of short- and long-term action steps for the Commission to implement these recommendations. In addition to these actions, the Commission's immediate next step is to develop a process, informed by its *Well and Thriving* framework, for potentially establishing new priorities for programs funded by Prevention and Early Intervention component of the Mental Health Services Act.

RECOMMENDATION ONE

The Governor and Legislature should establish a state leader for prevention and early intervention charged with establishing a statewide strategic plan for prevention and early intervention – with clear and compelling goals tied to global standards of wellbeing that are centered in equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Commission Action Steps:

- I. Champion the designation of a state-level prevention leader and support the formation of a prevention and early intervention advisory body.
- II. Educate public and private partners on global standards of wellbeing and how they apply to Californians, including the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion in those standards.
- III. Work with the administration to identify a full array of opportunities consistent with prevention and early intervention around structural racism, economic stability, employment, housing, transportation, environmental policy, and other conditions and systems impacting wellbeing.
- IV. Work with state and local partners including California's Reducing Disparities Project and the newly established Racial Equity Commission to support awareness and application of opportunities to achieve equity, diversity, and inclusion through prevention and early intervention and related initiatives.
- V. Develop and document examples of tools and strategies including fiscal incentives, local planning, technical assistance, training, research, and other strategies to support implementation and progress of prevention and early intervention initiatives.

- VI. Develop metrics, identify opportunities around data systems, and monitor progress of prevention and early intervention and related strategies in pursuit of global wellbeing standards.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

The State's strategic approach to prevention and early intervention must address risk factors – with particular attention on trauma – and enhance resiliency, by addressing basic needs and bolstering the role of environments, cultures, and caregivers in promoting and protecting mental health and wellbeing across the lifespan for individuals, families, and society at large.

Commission Action Steps:

- I. Document local processes for assessing community needs and prioritization of local funds and offer technical assistance to strengthen that process to better address disparities in communities.
- II. Enhance awareness of the value of community environments in promoting mental health resilience and strategies for promoting healthy lifestyles, social cohesion, and belonging, including community defined evidence practices.
- III. Work with partners to better understand and improve strategies to respond to the mental health impacts of natural disasters, extreme climate conditions, pandemics, firearm violence, and related community-level traumas, with a focus on reducing disparities.
- IV. Highlight opportunities to strengthen the role of caregivers of children, aging adults, and people with disabilities and their ability support others in ways that are effective, sustainable, and reduce future costs.
- V. Consistent with data monitoring strategies described above, identify metrics and opportunities to measure and track indicators of mental health risk and resilience in communities, with an emphasis on disparities.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

The State's strategic approach to prevention and early intervention must promote mental health awareness and combat stigma by ensuring all people have access to information and resources necessary to understand and support their own or another person's mental health needs.

Commission Action Steps:

- I. Continue its partnership with the Governor’s Child and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative and support its digital tools and related public awareness strategies focused on Californians aged 0-25, and work to extend those efforts to enhance mental health awareness and support for all Californians through strategies that are inclusive of age, culture, language, and LGBTQ+ identities.
- II. Partner with private public leaders, such as employers, law enforcement, and educators, to identify and develop mental health information, training, curricula, and other resources to enhance awareness and reduce stigma among marginalized and underserved populations and in strategic settings.
- III. Consistent with data monitoring strategies described above, identify metrics to track public awareness and stigma related to mental health among California’s diverse communities, including the impact of current initiatives in youth and school mental health, suicide prevention, and workplace mental health, among others, with an emphasis on disparities.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

As part of its approach to prevention and early intervention, the State must guarantee all residents have access to behavioral health screening and an adjacent system of care that respects and responds to California’s diverse communities and their mental health needs.

Commission Action Steps:

- I. Increase support for the California’s Child and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative and its efforts to enhance behavioral health screening and services for California’s 0-25 population and expand those initiatives to support people of all ages, including older adults.
- II. Provide training and technical assistance to support implementation of cultural competency standards during behavioral health screening and services, and promote the inclusion of all underserved populations, including LGBTQ communities, in those standards.
- III. Partner with CDPH to understand the lessons learned through California’s Reducing Disparities Project and the efficacy of Community Defined Evidence Practices and other promising strategies to reduce behavioral health disparities.
- IV. Consistent with its data monitoring initiatives described above, explore opportunities and metrics to monitor access and outcomes related to behavioral health screening and

services on an annual basis, including but not limited to MHSA-funded initiatives, with an emphasis on disparities.

To support these efforts, the Commission may need to seek additional authority and resources through the state's legislation and budget processes.