



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION JANUARY 9, 2024 – 3:30 P.M.

The Mental Health Commission meeting was held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 3:38 p.m. in the MHSA Office located at 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.

CALL TO ORDER Chair Henderson called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL Roll call was taken by JPA Clerk/Administrator Olmos. She announced that she received a letter of resignation from Commissioner Nichole Perry; and that Commissioner Perry thanked the Commission for allowing her to volunteer and wished everyone well in the future.

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

PRESENT: Anne Henderson, Chair
Wray Ryback, Vice-Chair
Carolyn Cockrell, GB Member Liaison
Toni L. Watson
Joan M. Reyes
Twila L. Stephens

ABSENT: Clarence D. Cernal
Isabella A. Chavez

STAFF

PRESENT: Rimmi Hundal, Executive Director
Elizabeth Renteria, Chief Clinical Officer
Dana Barford, Director of MHSA & Ethnic Services
Andrea Espinosa, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator
Mica Olmos, JPA Clerk/Administrator

REGULAR BUSINESS

I. PRESENTATION

A. OVERVIEW OF TRI-CITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY'S CULTURAL COMPETENCE THREE-YEAR PLAN, FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 TO 2025-26

Andrea Espinosa, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator of TCMHA, announced that she would talk about TCMHA's Cultural Competence Three-Year Plan (CCP) for Fiscal Years 2023-2024 to 2025-2026. She reported that her team recently submitted the CCP, which is an annual report that is sent to the California Department of Health Care Services (CDHCS).

DEI Coordinator Espinosa explained that the CCP is a lengthy report that compiles a lot of information regarding what the agency is doing throughout the year, and it shows how TCMHA is keeping its commitment of being an inclusive agency and how its staff are practicing cultural capability in the services they provide. She added that the CCP also highlights the agency's workforce demographic; language capacity; the accessibility to programming within the agency; a variety of other components that allows keeping the cultural lens in the work that the workforce performs; and the community engagement efforts. She then illustrated the components and requirements for the CCP that include adaptation of services and how the community needs are being met while maintaining cultural humility. She also explained the community outreach and engagement efforts and shared some of the events that TCMHA have hosted, including the people staff have connected with throughout the year; and showed pictures from the various events such as the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) Breakfast, the Latino Latina Round Table Breakfast, a 'Loteria Break' event at Café con Libros for May Mental Health Month, and staff attendance to the raising of the Juneteenth Flag at Pomona City Hall, and more. She noted that staff has focused on meeting the community in spaces where they feel comfortable and stated that a complete list of all the community outreach events, trainings and activities, webinars, and various events targeting specific populations were included in the CCP.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about the Native American population and the efforts being made to reach out to them. DEI Coordinator Espinosa stated that the Native American and Indigenous Peoples group continues to be one of the target populations; that it has been difficult to engage everyone; and that it is still in development. She then discussed the various efforts made to establish contact, noting that the Native American and Indigenous Peoples population continues to be a priority.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed incentives that will be offered through the Innovations Project to outreach to the Native American and Indigenous Peoples; and about the impact that the COVID pandemic has had in attendance in general.

Commissioner Watson inquired if staff has considered the incentive of priority for other programs such as the Community Wellbeing Grants for participating in community workshops and webinars. Executive Director Hundal replied in the negative, noting that it is a good idea and something to consider. DEI Coordinator Espinosa expressed gratitude for the comments and suggestions; that they are really trying to engage the community and finding different ways to interest them.

DEI Coordinator Espinosa continued her presentation and shared that the CCP also contains TCMHA staff demographics and staff language capacity, noting that 33% of staff are bilingual and 27% of staff speak the threshold language. Executive Director Hundal explained that a threshold language is required by State to provide services in a language outside of English that is spoken by recipients of Medi-Cal that are receiving services, noting that the threshold language for TCMHA it is Spanish. DEI Coordinator Espinosa added that it creates a stronger connection when clients are receiving support in their native language.

Discussion ensued about receiving services in the client's native language since translation can sometimes lead to miscommunication.

DEI Coordinator Espinosa also discussed the budget set aside for interpretation and translation services for when there is not a provider that speaks the language; and about the budget for staff training to keep up to date with evolving ideas, ever-changing terminology, and the continued

practice of cultural humility. She also explained that the CCP serves as a roadmap for TCMHA as a whole and allows staff to see the lessons learned and use it as an assessment tool; the shortcomings and successes to inform the next year's work; and shared a few of the lessons learned. She defined the term 'cultural humility', a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique, recognition of power dynamic and imbalances, a desire to fix those power imbalances and to develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others. DEI Coordinator Espinosa concluded her presentation by encouraging the Mental Health Commissioners to review the CCP, and also thanked them for their time.

B. OVERVIEW OF SERVICE CONNECTION EVENT

Chief Clinical Officer Renteria talked about the work that TCMHA staff did at a service connection event that was held last month. She explained that a Service Connection event is coordinated by the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Officer's Pathway Home Program to resolve homeless encampments around the County; that it was a program designed when cities were able to declare a state of emergency due to the number of individuals that were unsheltered and homeless in the County; and it was developed in an effort to support people that were coming out of homelessness; and that currently, Pathway Home's goal is to reduce the amount of unsheltered homeless individuals in LA County. She then showed a video: '*Pathway Home: Removing RVs [Recreational Vehicles] and Bringing People Home*' produced by the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. The video gave an overview of the Pathway Home program, showing a participant success story as well as discussing the goal for the program, which is to resolve homeless encampments and assist in placing homeless individuals into interim housing.

After the video concluded, Chief Clinical Officer Renteria stated that Pathway Home finds individuals living in encampments and they try to link them to services, and provided data from the 2022 Point in Time Count (PTC) showing the number of unsheltered homeless individuals in the communities of Claremont, La Verne, and Pomona. She explained that the Los Angeles County Pathway Home Project worked with a homeless encampment in Pomona and got 43 individuals out of the encampment and placed them at the Sunset Motel; that to facilitate their transition from unsheltered to permanent housing, they provided a service connection event at the Sunset Motel in Pomona on December 15th, noting that TCMHA and the LA County Department of Mental Health were the only two mental health support teams present at the event, along with a range of other service providers; and discussed the various activities during the event where individuals could connect with each organization, make appointments, and walk away with concrete next steps to help support them in their transition. She shared that TCMHA Access to Care (ATC) team and the Full Service Partnership (FSP) team staff were there in order to set up appointments for the individuals and provided preliminary data regarding individuals that were connected to services. She then acknowledged the staff members who were present at the event: Krystal Escobedo, Behavioral Health Specialist from the ATC team; Rosa Ramirez, Senior Behavioral Health Specialist from ATC team; and Tracy Boase, Clinical Therapist from the FSP team. She also indicated that additional partners attending the event included Volunteers of America; the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSO); Animal Care and Control; Department of Health Services; Countywide Benefits and Entitlement Services; Department of Motor Vehicles; Department of Public Health Mobile Vaccine Unit; Department of Public Health and Substance Abuse Prevention and Control; Client Engagement and Navigation Services; Department of Public Social Services Homeless Services; Los Angeles County Homeless Court, Metro Los Angeles; Military and Veteran Affairs; Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk; and Cell Phone Resources as well. She also indicated that all available resources for permanent supportive housing were presented to clients that were there; and that the participants had access

to people that could help them figure out the next steps. She concluded her presentation by showing some reflections from staff members Krystal Escobedo, Tracy Boase, and Rosa Ramirez about the event wherein they shared that it was gratifying for them to be part of the people's transition from unsheltered and unsafe conditions to something more suitable for them.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about the waiting time for Section 8. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria responded that she was not aware, but she will find out and provide her with that information.

Chief Clinical Officer Renteria mentioned that due to TCMHA's participation in the event, the Sunset Motel is referring a lot of people to TCMHA for additional services, noting that it is valuable to attend various events to increase outreach.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if the Pathway Home Program is reaching out to other unhoused individuals who are not in RV or tent encampments. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria replied in the negative, noting that this program focuses on resolving large congregations of homeless individuals, such those living in RVs and tent encampments, however, that there are other outreach teams that are reaching out to other unhoused individuals; and that Pathway Home does an audit across the County, have identified areas where there are encampments, and are working systematically to serve those individuals who fall under the category of unsheltered.

Discussion ensued regarding individuals who live in their cars.

Chair Henderson commented that she noticed that a few of the partners that attended the event also attend the Pomona Care Coalition; that a TCMHA Housing representative also attends the Pomona Care Coalition. She shared that it is important that TCMHA is connected.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MONTHLY REPORT

Executive Director Hundal talked about upcoming staff training courses on public sector employment, noting that the Mental Health Commission also has access to the trainings and that if they are interested, they can reach out to staff; and that the trainings are conducted by TCMHA's employment law firm, Liebert, Cassidy and Whitmore. She then provided an update regarding COVID-19 and masks in the workplace, stating that in February 2024, in accordance with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health requirements, TCMHA will begin implementing a reduced masking requirement for the healthcare workers, provided that employees receive both the annual flu vaccine as well as the COVID-19 vaccine (the 2023-2024 formula). She pointed out that some individuals may still choose to wear a mask and they are welcome to do that. She also reported that the MHSA Department are working on the Annual MHSA Update; that until Proposition 1 is adopted, staff will continue to work on it; that Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford and MHSA Project Manager Rodriguez are hosting community meetings; that the annual update, when completed, will be posted for a 30-day public comment period; then the Mental Health Commission holds a Public Hearing for the MHSA Annual update, and after it is endorsed, then it is presented to the Governing Board for its approval and adoption; lastly, it is submitted to Sacramento to start receiving MHSA funding for the upcoming year. She then stated that the IT department is working on increasing network speeds and wireless coverage for staff and guests at each of the TCMHA locations. Lastly, she reported that any public agency that receives Medi-Cal and Medi-care funding, is required to provide a Cultural Competency Plan, which TCMHA prepares one annually, even though it is a Three-year Plan, noting that she, Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford and DEI Coordinator Espinosa attend monthly

meetings with the California County Behavioral Health Directors Association to stay current on everything cultural competency related.

Commissioner Watson inquired what is the Cultural Competency Plan based on. Executive Director Hundal explained that TCMHA is required to provide services in the language that the person is most comfortable with, even though Spanish is the threshold language, whether that be Arabic or another language; that they work with an outside agency, the Language Line, which helps with interpretation services for those individuals. She shared that it is good for staff and clinicians to be aware of other cultures and their customs and that it is a skill they are working to keep up with.

Commissioner Reyes referred to Child Protective Services reporting and inquired if TCMHA does child abuse reports. Executive Director Hundal replied in the affirmative, noting that staff work with the Department of Family and Children's Services; and added that other trainings are provided such as sexual harassment, bloodborne pathogens, and cultural competency.

Commissioner Watson inquired if Commissioners were able to join the staff trainings. Executive Director Hundal replied in the affirmative, noting that there are certain trainings for staff only; and that she will share the trainings are they are able to join.

COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Chair Henderson mentioned that the Continuum of Care and the City invites TCMHA to participate in the greater Los Angeles County Homeless Count on Tuesday, January 23rd at the Pomona site; that participants can sign up on the website. She also shared that Vice-Chair Ryback and herself attended the ribbon cutting for the new Pomona Valley Pride Center, formerly known as the Pomona Pride Center; that they are in a new location on Mission Street near Main in the bank building, and pointed out that there is a lot more space for programs.

Vice-Chair Ryback added that the new location is very nice, and they have a lot of different volunteer opportunities.

Discussion ensued about the new location and the opportunities for programming in the new building.

Commissioner Reyes shared that there will be a Walk for Innocence, protecting children from sex trafficking and online sexual exploitation, to be held on January 27th at 9:30 a.m. at Bonita High School in La Verne. She shared a description of the event along with statistics regarding human trafficking, stating that self-education and community prevention is the goal of the event; that Bonita High School will be partnering with Innocence Rescue Mission, who is fighting to end human trafficking through work with local law enforcement sectors. She also shared about the Bridge Program created for those who are underinsured and are unable to receive the COVID vaccine; that CVS Pharmacy is a Bridge provider; that although the program ended on December 31, 2023, it may be worthwhile to call if there is any interest; that it is a federally funded program, which allows participants to receive the updated COVID vaccine.

Commissioner Watson shared that Ability First, a nonprofit which helps children and adults with disabilities, will be hosting a free event in Los Angeles the following weekend.

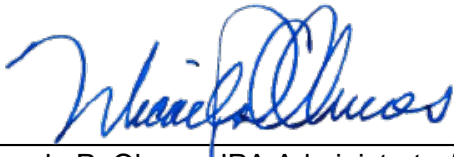
Vice-Chair Ryback reported that she met with Commissioners Reyes and Watson, and MHSA Project Manager Rodriguez to work on the Data Notebook, noting that they have a goal to submit the survey this week; if not able, it will be submitted by next week.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:35 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its meeting of January 9, 2024 was adjourned. The next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 3:30 p.m., in the MHSA Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.



Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk