



## Prop. 63/The Mental Health Services Act in Contra Costa County



In November 2004, Proposition 63 was passed and became the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). The MHSA is intended to transform the public mental health system into a more effective, culturally competent, consumer/family driven system, with a focus on recovery and choice. Funding comes from a 1% tax on California residents with earned incomes of over \$1 million a year. To gain approval by the State Department of Mental Health, each County's planning process must meet specific requirements including extensive community and consumer input. There are several components to the MHSA that will be rolled out over the next few years: Community Services & Supports, Capital Facilities & Information Technology, Prevention & Early Intervention, Workforce Education & Training, and Innovative Programs.

Counties are now implementing the Community Services & Supports (CSS) component. By State regulation, the majority of the new CSS funds must be spent on intensive services to a relatively small group of consumers who will be offered *Full Service Partnerships (FSPs)*. FSPs combine the notion of fully "wrapping services around" an individual or family with "whatever it takes" to clear the way for each individual to achieve his/her own recovery. A lesser amount of funds are available to strengthen the overall infrastructure of the mental health system, or *Systems Development Strategies*.

**Contra Costa County** held a community planning process for Community Services and Supports in 2005. Community members participated on Stakeholder Planning Groups for four target age groups. Consumers and family members were surveyed, and data about needs was gathered. Stakeholder Planning Groups identified specific populations to be served within the four age groups of children, transition-aged youth, adults, and older adults. Key elements of Contra Costa's MHSA program are that it is person-centered, guided by a recovery vision; culturally competent; and consumer/family-driven. Contra Costa takes a Housing First approach in its Full Service Partnerships -- recognizing that consumers are more responsive to interventions, services and support after they are in their own housing, rather than while living in emergency or temporary/transitional facilities. Contra Costa's CSS plan provides rental assistance for Full Service Partner enrollees, along with one-time funding for future, permanent supportive housing.

### Contra Costa's Initial Programs

- **Children:** Children served in the *Families Forward FSP Program* are in Far East County with repeated failure in learning environments including childcare, preschool, school, and home; and who are from families at or below 300% of the poverty level and not eligible for other funding. 100 children and their families will be served in the first two years. Far East County was chosen as the initial service area because there are currently limited mental health services in the community. Services include crisis stabilization, care management, community and school linkages, housing if needed, and other community services and supports as needed to enhance resiliency. Services are individualized, based on the wrap-around philosophy of community-based services. *Families Forward* is a collaboration with Familias Unidas, Asian Pacific Psychological Services and County Mental Health.
- **Transition Aged Youth:** The *TAY FSP Program* is serving youth aged 16-25, living in the West County area, with serious emotional disturbances or serious mental illness, who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. 135 transition-aged youth will be served in the first two years. Supported housing is central to this progressive recovery-based program. A 24-7 service team conducts outreach and engagement and personal service coordination, which may include educational and vocational supports, wellness recovery peer programs, substance abuse treatment, and financial counseling. The team links consumers with other services and resources to support community integration. The TAY program is a collaboration with Fred Finch Youth Center, GRIP, the Latina Center and County Mental Health.

- **Adults to Age 60:** The *Bridges to Home FSP Program* serves West County adults with serious mental illness, who are homeless or at serious risk of homelessness, and who are not currently being served by County Outpatient Mental Health. 150 adults will be served in the first two years. Supported housing is central to this progressive recovery-based program. Two 24-7 service teams conduct outreach and engagement, and personal service coordination which may include educational or vocational supports, wellness recovery peer programs, substance abuse treatment, financial counseling, and serve as liaisons to the justice system. The team links consumers with other services and resources to support community integration. *Bridges to Home* is a collaboration with Rubicon, Familias Unidas, Asian Pacific Psychological Services, Anka Behavioral Healthcare, Mental Health Consumer Concerns and County Mental Health.
- **Older Adults Program:** The Older Adult program, beginning in January 2008, will serve seniors throughout the county with teams that provide outreach, engagement and on-going services to the most imperiled seniors in the county. Services will be both home and community-based. Additionally, CCMH will pilot the Impact Program model in primary care clinics in each region of the county. Short-term cognitive therapy will be provided in the clinics to a set of older adults with medical diagnoses of diabetes, cardio-vascular disease and/or chronic pain and who additionally show signs of depression and possible suicide risk. These outreach and clinic-based services will lay groundwork for more comprehensive services and increased service volume in the future. 425 clients will be assessed in the first year with 225 of those clients becoming active for ongoing care management services. These Older Adult efforts are categorized as Systems Development Strategies.
- **Housing supports** provided to FSPs are available through a collaborative relationship between CCMH and Shelter Inc. CCMH is also working with the Contra Costa County Community Development Department to award \$1.6 million in one-time MHSA funds for efforts that increase the number of supported housing units available in the county for mental health consumers. To-date, funds have been awarded to Rubicon Programs, Villa Vasconcellas Senior Housing and the Lillie Mae Jones Plaza. Additional funds will be available in the future from a State-led MHSA housing initiative.

### **Systems Development Strategies**

Funds have also been allocated to strengthen the infrastructure of the existing service delivery system of Contra Costa Mental Health. This includes:

- **Expanding the Office for Consumer Empowerment** to strengthen the consumer leadership training program, SPIRIT, and to allow stipends for training placements. The Office for Consumer Empowerment (OCE) empowers consumers to play an active role in transforming our mental health system.
- **Hiring of a Wellness Nurse** to lead a countywide physical wellness program to support consumers to be in charge of their wellness and to manage the physical effects of medications.
- **Hiring of Peer Benefits Advocates** to work with consumers and family members.
- **Hiring of Bilingual Family Partners for Children's Services** and hiring of additional **Adult Family Coordinators for Adult Services**
- Coordinated planning efforts around **Transportation** and **Co-Occurring Mental Health/Substance Abuse treatment**; and **Division-wide staff training**.

### **Next Steps**

In early 2008, CCMH will begin additional planning processes to establish priorities and strategies for two additional MHSA areas: Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), and Workforce Education and Training. These more condensed planning processes will build on knowledge gathered during the initial CCS process and will focus specifically on these new areas.

For further information go to [www.cchealth.org/services/mental\\_health](http://www.cchealth.org/services/mental_health) (click on MHSA) or contact Kimberly Mayer, MHSA Project Manager at [kmayer@hsd.cccounty.us](mailto:kmayer@hsd.cccounty.us); or at 925-957-5132.