

Executive Summary

The County of Santa Cruz held an extensive Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) stakeholder planning process, establishing six different workgroups. The stakeholders included consumers, family members, educators, social service providers, health providers, law enforcement, family resource centers, and county and contract staff. Additionally, the County held focus groups to ensure the voices of parents, consumers, youth, transition age youth, seniors, and Veterans were heard. We also had key informant interviews with law enforcement and community health clinic representatives, for a total of 60 community and focus groups meetings. The County contracted with Applied Survey Research (ASR) to provide a snapshot of mental health prevention and intervention related data in order to guide the efforts of the PEI workgroups.

Per DMH requirements, the intent of PEI funding and services, as part of the overall MHA process, is to engage persons prior to the development of serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbances, or in the case of early intervention, to alleviate the need for additional mental health treatment and/or to transition to extended mental health treatment. Prevention involves reducing risk factors or stressors, building protective factors and skills, and increasing support. Intervention is directed towards individuals/families for whom a short-duration (less than a year) and relatively low-intensity approach is appropriate to achieve intended outcomes.

The PEI workgroups had the primary responsibility of identifying the priority populations, risk factors, reviewing existing resources, and developing their recommendations within DMH criteria and requirements. Based on the workgroup recommendations the County's proposal is organized in four major project areas:

1. Early Intervention Services for Children
2. Culture Specific Education & Support
3. Early Intervention Services for Transition Age Youth & Adults
4. Early Intervention Services for Older Adults.

Project #1: Early Intervention Services for Children

This project area addresses three priority populations: children and youth from stressed families, onset of mental illness, and trauma exposed children and their families. Of particular concern are families needing parental/supervision skills affected by substance use/abuse, and/or are exposed to violence, abuse, and /or neglect. The desire is to decrease the negative impact of these factors by offering mental health services to youth and their families. This project also addresses disparities in access to services by including a focus on the needs of Latino children/families, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and questioning (LGBT) youth and their families. This project has an estimated cost of \$674,00. Services will be leveraged whenever possible, such as Medi-Cal billing for services (if applicable) and contributions from First 5, and other community partners, as well as Mental Health Services Act Workforce Education & Training, as appropriate.

This component has three proposed strategies:

Santa Cruz County MHSa Prevention & Early Intervention Plan

1. 0-5 Screening and Early Intervention (see page 22)
2. County-wide Parent Education and Support (see page 23)
3. School-based Prevention and Early Intervention (see page 25)

Project #2: Culture Specific Parent Education & Support (see page 31)

The objective of this project is to decrease the risk of violence, suicide, and other traumas that children and youth age 0 – 17 may be exposed to by providing education, skills-based training, early intervention and treatment referrals to parents, families, and children, that are in need of parental/supervision skills, are affected by substance abuse, and/or are exposed to violence, abuse, or neglect. We have chosen Cara Y Corazón and Jóven Noble. Cara Y Corazón is a culturally based family strengthening and community mobilization approach that assists parents and other members of the extended family to raise and educate their children from a positive bicultural base. Jóven Noble is a youth leadership development program. This project has an estimated cost of \$168,000.

Project #3: Early Onset Intervention Services for Transition Age Youth & Adults

This project seeks to provide education, training and treatment by expanding mental health awareness and services through traditional and non-traditional settings, Community Entry Points, (CEP), Professionals and Family members. This will be achieved by developing a network of care for use prior to being formally “diagnosed” at the earliest signs of possible serious mental illness. Through consultation, training and direct service delivery, a broad menu of services will be offered by Peer Counselors, Family Advocates, and Licensed counselors and psychiatrists to transition age youth and their families. This program will integrate evidence-based practices that are client-centered. This program addresses transition age youth and adults who are trauma exposed and are experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) the onset of serious mental illness. This project also addresses disparities in access to mental health services by including a focus on the needs of Latino youth as well as Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual (LGBT) individuals and their families. This project has an estimated cost of \$550,000. Services will be leveraged whenever possible, such as Medi-Cal billing for services (if applicable), “in kind” supervision, as well as Mental Health Services Act Workforce Education & Training, as appropriate.

This component has five proposed strategies:

1. Identification of signs and early symptoms of Early Onset of Mental Disorders with Family Members, Professionals and Community Entry Points (see page 43)
2. Early Onset Intervention Services Utilizing service “Navigator,” Psychiatry, Peer and Family Advocates, and Employment Services for Individuals and Family Members (see page 44)
3. Monthly Transition Age Youth Provider Roundtable service coordination meetings (see page 45)
4. Veterans advocacy and service coordination (see page 46)
5. Suicide Prevention services (see page 46)

Project #4: Early Intervention Services for Older Adults

This prevention strategy addresses the high rates of depression, isolation and suicides of Older Adults in Santa Cruz County. Strategies are aimed at identifying older adults at risk of trauma-induced mental illness, depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and late onset mental illness, as well as undiagnosed and misdiagnosed seniors. This group has been identified as an underserved population, often due to senior's isolation and challenges in accessing appropriate care. This project has an estimated cost of \$300,000. Services will be leveraged whenever possible, such as Medi-Cal billing for services (if applicable), "in kind" supervision, as well as Mental Health Services Act Workforce Education & Training, as appropriate.

This component has three proposed strategies:

1. Field Based Mental Health Training and Assessment Services to provide mental health assessment and short-term services to older adults where they reside (see page 52)
2. Senior services and outreach including brief therapy and peer companions (see page 53)
3. Warm line providing quick telephone screening and referrals to senior resources for persons seeking service to older adults at risk of mental illness (see page 54)

Next Steps:

The draft PEI plan was presented to the Santa Cruz County Mental Health Services Act Steering Committee on January 26, 2009. They approved the posting of the draft plan for 30 days, and the public is invited to review and comment. There will be a public hearing on March 19, 2009. After the 30-day review, the County will summarize and analyze the comments, and make revisions, as necessary. The County will then send the plan to the State Department of Mental Health and the Oversight Accountability Commission for review and approval. The approval process generally takes about 60 days.

PEI Proposed Projects and Strategies

Project #	Strategy Name	Proposed Approach for Service Implementation *
#1-1	0-5 Screening and Early Intervention	County & Contract
#1-2	County-wide Parent Education and Support	County & Contract
#1-3	School-based Prevention and Early Intervention	Contract(s)
#2	Culture Specific Parent Education and Support	County
#3-1	Identification of signs and early symptoms of Early Onset of Mental Disorders with Family Members, Professionals and Community Entry Points	County
#3-2	Early Onset Intervention Services Utilizing Professional Navigator, Psychiatry, Peer and Family Advocates, and Employment Services for Individuals and Family Members	County & Contract
#3-3	Monthly Transition Age Youth Provider Roundtable Gatherings	(County & Contract)
#3-4	Veterans Advocate	Contract
#3-5	Suicide Prevention	Contract
#4-1	Field Based Mental Health Training and Assessment Services to Provide mental health assessment and short-term services to older adults in their homes	County
#4-2	Senior services and outreach including brief therapy and peer companion	Contract
#4-3	Warm line provides quick telephone screening and referrals to senior resources for persons seeking service to older adults	Contract

*** Please Note: Determination of service providers will need to be finalized based on best available information at the time of plan approval and implementation.**