



Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

We Are Serious About Mental Health & Recovery!



July 5, 2016

Santa Cruz County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services offers a variety of services to the community by County employees, as well as through our contracts with numerous community-based agencies. Our services treat persons across the lifespan, from prevention and early intervention services to being a safety net to persons with serious emotional disturbance and serious mental illness and/or substance use disorders. In an effort to shed light on the variety of services and programs we provide, we endeavor to provide a monthly newsletter about what we do.

Spotlight: Update on Santa Cruz County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services Strategic Plan

Phase I of the Strategic Plan identified 5 key gap areas:

1. Communication, Collaboration and Community Education
2. Programs and Services
3. Program Staffing
4. Timely Access to Treatment
5. Integrated Models of Care

Each of the needs and gaps areas had sub-topic areas. A series of recommendations were developed to address each of the needs and gaps areas.

Phase II of the process was Prioritizing Critical Community Needs. Two Town Hall meetings were held to give input on establishing a prioritized list of action steps over a 5-year period of time. The Priority Focus Areas are:

1: Enhance Programs and Services

Need Area 1: Increase the availability of a full spectrum of services from prevention and early intervention to episodic and ongoing treatment services, including best practice models.

Need Area 2: Increase access to safe and affordable housing with the needed supports in place to ensure successful community placement for individuals in the community.

Need Area 3: Implement Evidence-Based Practice Models across the entire system of care.

2: Improve Communication, Collaboration and Community Education

Need Area 1: Improve public understanding of mental health and mental wellness.

Need Area 2: Increase County-stakeholder collaboration to more effectively engage consumers and family members.

3: Address Program Staffing Issues

Need Area 1: Improve staff recruitment, staff retention, and staff development.

Phase I and Phase II were presented to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. **Phase III** will entail reviewing the Priority Areas in the context of current and future opportunities, including the following:

- Alliance for Health Grant
- Drug Medi-Cal Expansion
- "No Place Like Home" State Initiative
- CHFFA Grant

We may establish workgroups to develop key action plans and outcomes measures for each of the identified areas and ensure they link to other planning efforts within the County, including the Substance Use Disorder Plan. We will develop preliminary budgets and financing plan for priority areas, and report back and present to the Board on **November 15, 2016**.

Innovative Project Evaluation Results:

In May, 2015, the Mental Health Oversight Accountability Commission granted Santa Cruz County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services permission to continue our "Avenues: Work First for Individuals with Co-Occurring Disorders" Innovative Project for one more year. Generally, Innovative Projects are time limited (usually no longer than 5 years). We contracted with Applied Research Survey to help us to evaluate the program in the last year.

Overall, the majority of clients expressed satisfaction with program elements.

1. I was treated with respect (87% agree or strongly agree)
2. The staff is courteous (89% agree or strongly agree)
3. The staff is helpful (87% agree or strongly agree)
4. My needs are being met (81% agree or strongly agree)
5. The staff/program is culturally competent (75% agree or strongly agree)
6. The staff support my wellness goals (86% agree or strongly agree)
7. I receive information for wellness goals (73% agree or strongly agree)
8. I receive support for my recovery goals (73% agree or strongly agree)
9. I am given information for recovery goals (75% agree or strongly agree)
10. I receive support seeking employment (50% agree or strongly agree)
11. Overall, I am satisfied with this program and the services I received (80% agree or strongly agree).

Of the clients surveyed, 93% had been previously employed, and 67% were interested in finding employment and/or attending school. 33% were not interested in finding employment and/or attending school.

Santa Cruz County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services wishes to thank Casa Pacific, Community Connection and Alcance Work Crew for their services on this project, and dedication to our clients.

