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Innovation Work Plan Narrative

Date: Revised. 12.03.09

County: Monterey County

Work Plan #: INN-03

Work Plan Name: Alternative Healing and Promotores de Salud

Purpose of Proposed Innovation Project (check all that apply)

- INCREASE ACCESS TO UNDERSERVED GROUPS
- INCREASE THE QUALITY OF SERVICES, INCLUDING BETTER OUTCOMES
- PROMOTE INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION
- INCREASE ACCESS TO SERVICES

Briefly explain the reason for selecting the above purpose(s).

Monterey County is a very diverse county with over 52% of Latino descent and mostly of Mexican heritage. The economic engine of the county relies heavily on the agriculture and hospitality industry and as such, the County has a high percentage of immigrant residents most of whom are Spanish speaking. The Promotores program, a community based outreach program, was created as a result of the community's request to reach out to this specific population and increase prevention efforts. Despite some successes, the program has revealed challenges with regard to the application of culturally appropriate practices in serving these individuals and who require higher level of care.

Currently the Promotores program is structured so that individuals identified who need higher level of care are referred to a specialized social worker within the county mental health system. The direct referral program has been wildly successful in addressing the immediate needs of those individual and some have even developed their own peer led support groups which operate out of the client and consumer driven OMNI resource center. Despite these successes however, consumers, family members and the community at large continues to request that we include culturally relevant and accepting methods of care so that their loved ones and friends can best take care of their emotional and behavioral concerns no matter where they fall in the spectrum of care. The local mental health system is eager to design and implement a service model that addresses the needs of these individuals.

The project described in the next few pages focuses on the development of a continuum of care model that integrates the components that consumer, family members and the community at large is asking for. It will focus on developing effective prevention, early intervention and intensive treatment strategies that address specifically the needs of Latinos in Monterey County. It is our hope that this model, if successful, can be shared with other communities that have similar demographics. The model is intended to be

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cost effective in order to ensure sustainability. It focuses on addressing the cultural barriers that individuals have in seeking assistance for their mental health issues and deals directly with addressing the stigma around mental health, a barrier we recognize to be most prominent in the Latino culture. By using a community health-like model, individuals requiring mental health services will be able to more appropriately implement prevention and intervention strategies that are more culturally accepting so that they can keep their minds and bodies healthy. On the intensive side of the spectrum of care, services will incorporate holistic and culturally relevant approaches to clinical treatment of mental health issues. This project will be developed in partnership with and guidance from consumer and family members.

Project Description

Describe the innovation, the issue it addresses and the expected outcome, i.e. how the innovation project may create positive change. Include a statement of how the innovation project supports and is consistent with the General Standards identified in the MHS Act and Title 9, CCR, section 3320. (suggested length - one page)

Behavioral Health services have traditionally stemmed from a prescriptive clinical model. The Mental Health Services Act offers the opportunity to transform service delivery especially when reaching out to unserved and underserved populations. While 85% of Monterey County's Medi-Cal population is Latino, only 45% of individuals who participate in Monterey County's Mental Health Plan are Latino. The idea behind this innovative project is to seek an alternative method of service delivery across the continuum of care. By using a community health-based model, culturally relevant education, outreach and engagement methods will be made available for preventive and early intervention services while more intensive services will be made available to individuals requiring higher levels of treatment. Options for alternative treatment methods such as the use of holistic medicines—a practice that is commonly accepted in many Latino cultures and traditions—will be integrated into the array of service options. The learning expectation of this project is to acquire knowledge of commonly accepted education, prevention and intervention practices among the Latino community for the purpose of integrating such practices into the County mental health system, thereby transforming the system to be more effective in reaching and serving unserved and underserved populations.

The goal of this program is to develop a coordinated effort that purposely addresses the mental health needs of individuals of Latino descent. The 1999 Surgeon's General Report identifies that fewer than 1 in 11 Latinos contact a mental health specialist as compared to 1 in 5 who contact a general health care provider." While this is true for most populations, the report cites that basing service trends of Latinos using DSM-based clinical data is not accurate because 1) the symptoms of distress that Latinos face usually fall short of a given diagnostic threshold 2) diagnostic entities have little

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flexibility to take into account culturally patterned forms of distress and disorder, and 3) most of the epidemiological studies using the disorder-based definitions are conducted in community household surveys and fail to include non-household members, such as persons without homes or those who reside in institutions. With this in mind, the project proposed here provides an opportunity for Monterey County to pilot a new approach to providing culturally relevant mental health services throughout the system of care and to discover the "formula" in which to best engage and address the mental health needs of the Latino community.

To coordinate these efforts, a steering committee comprised of consumers and family members will team-up with a licensed clinical social worker, the community based Promotores and a psychiatrist knowledgeable about holistic medicine and alternatives to standard psychiatric care to develop a curriculum that provides education and awareness of emotional and mental distress and their symptoms specifically for the Latino community. This curriculum will serve as the guide for the work that Promotores do so well when conducting outreach and education and similarly guide clinical staff who will be caring for those referred who require a higher level of care. The Promotores will receive training by clinical staff on issues relating to holistic approaches to managing issues such as stress. In turn, Promotores, consumers and family members will provide clinical staff with training regarding the traditional approaches to healing often applied by Latino individuals and their families, including culturally-relevant strategies that are effective in developing the relationships and connections that are a critical component of the Latino culture. The cross training that will take place in the development of the curriculum will be the guiding force behind the development of the strategies and practices that will be incorporated into the service model. The steering committee will work collaboratively to ensure proper application of the strategies developed and will be responsible for assessing and reporting on the learning opportunities that this project is providing.

Once the initial framework of the curriculum is developed, Promotores with the assistance of consumers and family members will identify new locations throughout Monterey County that Latinos often visit and will identify new arenas in which to conduct outreach. This will be key as the gathering of ideas for the development of the strategies to be incorporated into the curriculum will only come by way of the engagement of the underserved and unserved Latinos. One such method already identified by the Promotores and consumers is the workplace, focusing specifically in agriculture, the predominant economic engine of our county. Promotores have cited the need to conduct preventive workshops at the various worksites as this is the audience that is less likely to request help but more likely to need it. This could be one specific task that the steering committee focuses on upon approval of this project.

During outreach and engagement activities, individuals identified by Promotores who require a higher level of care will be referred to the clinical social worker. Upon assessment, the clinical social worker will refer those needing psychiatric intervention to the psychiatrist who will work with the individual to develop a tailored plan

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inclusive of holistic medicine. The successes and challenges in applying the clinical strategies identified by the Steering Committee will be clearly documented by both the social worker and the psychiatrist and similarly Promotores will report out on their successes of identifying and involving the Latino community in educational and prevention services.

This project adheres to the MHSA general standards in the following ways:

- a) This project “increases resilience and/or promotes recovery and wellness” because the project is focused in developing a curriculum or model that focuses specifically in promoting recovery and wellness among the unserved and underserved Latino community.
- b) The project “includes the ongoing involvement of clients (including participants of prevention programs) in a key role as they will be represented in the Steering Committee for this project and be directly involved in the implementation, evaluation, staffing and dissemination” of the curriculum to be developed.
- c) The project “includes the ongoing involvement of family members in key roles as they too will be involved in the Steering Committee for this project and will be directly involved in the implementation, evaluation, staffing, and dissemination” of the curriculum to be developed.
- d) The project as a whole will support and expand collaboration and linkages, especially connections with systems, organizations, healers and practitioners not traditionally defined as part of mental health services. For example, we have several peer mentors who are known in their communities as “healers” and their participation on the Steering Committee will be key to ensuring that this project is successful.

Contribution to Learning

Describe how the Innovation project is expected to contribute to learning, including whether it introduces new mental health practices/approaches, changes existing ones, or introduces new applications or practices/approaches that have been successful in non-mental health contexts. (suggested length - one page)

The collaboration between consumer and family members, the Promotores, the clinical social worker and the psychiatrist will offer Monterey County Behavioral Health an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of applying culturally appropriate clinical methods to treating mental illness in the Latino community. In addition, it provides a cross training opportunity for all those involved. This pilot project will provide Behavioral Health an opportunity to best assess the types of services most acceptable to and effective with the population of focus. The introduction of alternative healing and its connection to cultural practices will provide Behavioral Health with the opportunity to learn more about the acceptance of these practices. This information is useful for future planning purposes and for integration of successful practices into the mental

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health system . In addition, the partnership with the Promotores will provide Monterey County Behavioral Health staff with an opportunity to learn more about the methods used in reaching and engaging with the Latino community, a skill that will be required as we continue to provide services to this underserved population. This learning opportunity will best prepare mental health staff to meet the challenges of serving the growing Latino population in Monterey County.

The incorporation of new outreach sites such as worksites, for example, is a new approach. This approach has been useful in other public health arenas and according to the Public Health Administration has been useful in changing patterns of behavior when addressing physical health issues. The thinking behind this project is guided by the community health model and will serve as the vehicle for developing a curriculum to more appropriately promote mental health education and awareness among the Latino community and integrate culturally-acceptable clinical and medicinal practices into our system of care.

Timeline

Outline the timeframe within which the Innovation project will operate, including communicating results and lessons learned. Explain how the proposed timeframe will allow sufficient time for learning and will provide the opportunity to assess the feasibility of replication. (suggested length - one page)

Implementation/Completion Dates: 01/2009-12/2011
MM/YY – MM/YY

Dates	Activities
01/2010-3/2010	Identification of the clinical social worker who will coordinate all activities; convening of Steering Committee meetings to include Promotores, consumers, family members, community healers, Psychiatrist and Clinician. Together this group will be focused on identifying the framework for the development of the curriculum.
4/2010-6/2010	Identify and develop methods in which to document findings as strategies roll out. This data will be key to incorporating strategies that are proven successful into the final curriculum. The group will also identify key benchmarks to be achieved in the development of the curriculum and will develop a calendar that will guide the timeline for the completion of the curriculum.
06/10-6/2011	Implementation of activities and services as identified in the curriculum; Meet regularly to review successful and challenging findings of the implementation of the suggested strategies identified by the Steering committee. By 01/2011, begin to write

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	up the first draft of the curriculum.
06/2011-9/2011	Conduct an evaluation of the curriculum and report out on the learning achieved thus far and the level of success in implementing strategies.
10/2011	Finalize the curriculum incorporating key changes as identified by the Steering Committee.
12/2011	Provide an annual report highlighting the curriculum; Conduct community meeting to present the curriculum. The format for the presentation of the curriculum will be designed and decided upon by the Steering Committee.

Project Measurement

Describe how the project will be reviewed and assessed and how the County will include the perspectives of stakeholders in the review and assessment.

Consumers and family members will be involved in the design and implementation phases of this Project. Of particular interest in that assessment are the following key areas:

- The success of integrating holistic medicine with traditional mental health practices as measured by consumers and community members receiving the information.
- The level of synchronization and comfort level between the consumers, family members, mental health staff, Promotores and the holistic psychiatrist in the development of the curriculum as demonstrated by their engagement and involvement in the project's development.
- The increased skills obtained by mental health staff in identifying successful outreach methods to the diverse Latino community.
- There will be increased satisfaction regarding the services received by Latinos in the mental health system. In addition, there will be an increased acceptance of the cultural relevancy of the services provided and made available to Latinos in Monterey County.
- There will be an increased number of Latino clients seen throughout the continuum of services provided by the mental health system.
- Access to education, prevention and more intensive services will be increased for Latino individuals.

To best develop an appropriate assessment tool, the staff and Promotores will work with the Cultural Competency Manager and the Epidemiological team.

Leveraging Resources (if applicable)

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Provide a list of resources expected to be leveraged, if applicable.

- Reimbursement from Medi-Cal or other type of insurance will be sought on cases that are identified as requiring more intensive care. These funds will assist in contributing to the share of cost for the staff involved in the project implementation.
- Grant opportunities will be identified upon the initial assessment that the pilot project is demonstrating promising results.