

MHSA Newsletter

Stanislaus County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services
A Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Service Organization

...a newsletter to share information about Stanislaus County's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) programs with staff, consumers, stakeholders, other county departments and the community at large.



MAY STATE SATISFACTION SURVEY

By Brenda Kachel, DMS/PM



Thank you for your participation in and support of the May Consumer Satisfaction Survey! Results of the survey will soon be available and posted on the BHRS Intranet/ Extranet. Data will be instrumental in preparing reports as well as informing us about program quality, need for services, and to make future process improvements.

Although BHRS already administered the Satisfaction Survey (as did many other counties), the Department of Mental Health will not collect and report county data in its customary way this year. Due to high cost and manpower constraints, DMH provided "administrative relief" to the counties by not mandating the May State Consumer Survey to be done. However, to meet federal SAMHSA Block Grant data submission requirements for FY 09/10, DMH is collaborating with the Institute for Social Research at Sacramento State University to conduct a random sample mail survey. The statewide random sample includes 12,000 clients from each of three age groups. Stanislaus County's sample size, based on county population, is expected to total somewhere between 10 and 25 clients. Randomly selected consumers will receive a survey in the mail by the end of July. The survey packet will consist of a cover letter containing informed consent, the survey questionnaire, a postcard to request a different language survey form (seven languages are available), and a self-addressed stamped envelope for convenience in returning the survey.

Counties are required to participate in this pilot project but are not directly involved in it. If a client expresses concern that a survey was received, please be prepared to explain the process and encourage him/her to complete and return the survey as soon as possible. BHRS hopes to achieve the highest possible response rate to reflect everyone's hard work and the assistance we provide consumers. The Institute for Social Research will collect and produce data at the state level only; no individual county data will be reported. Fortunately, BHRS has its own, more comprehensive data because we wisely elected to conduct the Consumer Satisfaction Survey process during a two-week period in May (and preliminary reports indicate the results are exceptional!)

MHSA Five Essential Elements:

- Community Collaboration
- Cultural Competence
- Client/Family-Driven Mental Health Systems
- Wellness for Recovery & Resilience
- Integrated Service Experiences

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Sponsored by Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors



Clarification received from Department of Mental Health

NON-REVOCABLE PAROLEES MAY BE SERVED WITH MHSA FUNDS

By Carol Jo Hargreaves, MHSA CSS Implementation Manager

In a letter dated July 9, 2010, Stephen W. Mayberg, Director of the California Department of Mental Health, clarified that counties are not prohibited from and *should* provide mental health services for Non-Revocable Parolees. Excluding this population group from MHSA services, Dr. Mayberg explained "would thwart the aim and intention of the MHSA by denying individuals in need of the services they require because they are 'parolees' in name only." Mental Health Services Act programs are intended to employ strategies to reduce negative outcomes such as incarceration that may result from untreated mental illness.

Locally, BHRS would consider Non-Revocable Parolees just like any other county resident and determine eligibility for MHSA-funded services based on specific program criteria, need, appropriateness and available resources.



The MHSA-CSS (Communicate, Share, and Support) Meeting is held the 4th Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Redwood Room, 800 Scenic Drive (unless otherwise notified).

HOUSING UPDATE

By Karen Hurley, MFT, Planning Coordinator



Safe, affordable housing is a basic need in all of our lives, and essential to the well-being and recovery of individuals and their families who are coping with serious mental illness/serious emotional disturbance. The MHA Housing Program presents an opportunity for the model of long-term housing with supportive services to be more fully developed and in doing so, contributes to the transformation of the way mental health services are delivered.

Bennett Place (formerly known as Lincoln Avenue Project) will be a new 18-unit Permanent Supportive Housing Project that will serve older adults who have serious mental illness and are homeless or at risk for homelessness. The project will contain 18 units: 8 one-bedroom and 10 efficiency (studio) units along with a community center, laundry area and living quarters for an on-site manager. It is the first of three MHA housing projects proposed to be developed in the coming years.

The partnership between California Department of Mental Health (DMH) and California Housing Finance Agency (Cal HFA) has created this unique opportunity for long term supportive housing to be developed with each agency contributing its expertise in the process. DMH and Cal HFA have joint approval of all projects. To receive the funding, counties must first complete an "assignment agreement" of their housing funds from Department of Mental Health (DMH) to California Housing Finance Agency (Cal HFA). Stanislaus County accomplished the assignment in April 2008.

In May 2008, we developed and posted for 30 day review the Supportive Services Plans; a portion of the housing application. The Supportive Services Plan describes how the proposed supportive housing project is consistent with the need established during community planning for initial MHA funds, the target population to be served, tenant selection plan, referral

process, staffing level and the services to be offered and other details related to supportive services for tenants. At Bennett Place that will include housing and advocacy supports to residents with an emphasis on client-centered, wellness-focused plans and three philosophical orientations will drive the client-centered approach; 1) housing is first priority, 2) services are voluntary and 3) recovery is possible. The entire Supportive Services Plan may be found at <http://www.stanislausmhsa.com/housing.shtm>.

Project partners:

- Stanislaus County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services (BHRS) will be the lead service provider and on-site support for the Bennett Place project. Local organizational providers, contracting with BHRS, may also provide services to residents, on-site and off-site.
- Stanislaus County Affordable Housing Corporation (STANCO) a local non-profit affordable housing developer and property management agency that will be the project sponsor. STANCO will also be the lead developer during development phase and property manager upon completion.

The total amount of the MHA housing funds for Stanislaus County remains unchanged at \$4.8 million. The relatively small amount of MHA funds must be leveraged with additional housing funds and the other financing must be secured prior to project submission. Consequently, STANCO also sought funds from the City of Modesto Federal Home Funds, City of Modesto Redevelopment Housing Set Aside Funds and Federal Home Bank. Unforeseeable and unavoidable delays have occurred in project development primarily related to the economic downturn and issues related to a change in the amount and kind of available financing for this type of housing project. We are confident that the pending application for HUD 811 funds will be approved and the project will go forward this summer.

BHRS has an established history of collaboration with key community partners in the development of supported housing since 1997. Discussions are ongoing with partners to continuously investigate opportunities for funding and suitable properties for development into supported housing sites. In 2005 these partners finalized a 10-year plan to end homelessness in Stanislaus County. A significant milestone in this collaboration will occur with the submission of the Bennett Place Project this summer.

If you would like more information please contact Karen Hurley at khurley@stanbhers.org, 525-6274 or contact Pam Esparza, Housing Program Manager at pesparza@stanbhers.org, 277-7894.



Any questions or suggestions regarding MHA, please forward them by I.D. mail or e-mail to: Carol Jo Hargreaves, BHRS / Administration, e-mail: chargrea@stancounty.com; or Karen Hurley, BHRS / Administration, e-mail: khurley@stancounty.com

