



C A L I F O R N I A D E P A R T M E N T O F

Mental Health

1600 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 654-2309

June 9, 2008

DMH INFORMATION NOTICE NO.: 08-13

TO: LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CHIEFS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATORS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
CHAIRPERSONS, LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARDS

SUBJECT: FUNDING AUGMENTATION TO THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMPONENT

REFERENCE: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MHSA, WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (WIC) SECTIONS 5820, 5821, 5822, 5847, 5848, AND 5892

This Department of Mental Health (DMH) Information Notice provides instructions to county mental health programs to request additional funding for their Workforce Education and Training component of the Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan of the Mental Health Services Act (Three-Year Plan).

DMH Information Notice 07-14 provided the proposed guidelines for the content of a County's¹ Workforce Education and Training component of its Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan. This Information Notice provides I) additional guidance to DMH Information Notice 07-14, II) Workforce Education and Training Planning Estimates² for each County (**Enclosure 1**), and, III) instructions for requesting this additional funding. This DMH Information Notice applies only to the Workforce Education and Training component of the Three-Year Plan.

¹ "County" means a County Mental Health Department, two or more County Mental Health Departments acting jointly, and/or a city-operated program receiving funds per Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5701.5 (California Code of Regulations, Section 3200.090).

² "Planning Estimate" means the estimate provided by the Department to the County of the maximum amount of MHSA funding that the County can request.

I. Additional Guidance

All proposed programs and activities should be consistent with the proposed guidelines and must incorporate the General Standards set forth in Title 9, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 3320: 1) wellness, recovery and resilience, 2) cultural competence, 3) client and family driven mental health services, 4) an integrated service experience, and 5) collaboration with the community. This Information Notice additionally encourages Counties to consider funding the following programs and activities that are particularly responsive to the needs of the Public Mental Health System workforce, and assist in the transformation of the workforce.

1. Mental Health Career Pathway Programs. Mental Health Career Pathway Programs are educational, training and counseling programs that are designed to recruit and prepare individuals for entry into a career in the Public Mental Health System. Mental Health Career Pathway Programs should address:

- A. The lack of diversity and equal opportunity and access to the public mental health workforce for underrepresented racial/ethnic, cultural and/or linguistic groups. This lack of equal opportunity and access may be addressed through targeted outreach, recruitment and active participation of underrepresented groups and special populations, including but not limited to transition-age youth and older adults within these underrepresented groups.
- B. The preparation of community members, especially clients and family members, for employment and a career in the Public Mental Health System. Outreach and recruitment for clients and family members should include efforts to involve individuals from underrepresented racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

2. Loan Assumption Programs. Loan Assumption Programs, also known as loan forgiveness or repayment programs, pay either part or all of a current or prospective employee's educational loan debt in exchange for working in a position deemed hard to fill and/or retain by a Public Mental Health System employer. This financial incentive strategy is an effective means to recruit and retain individuals for the Public Mental Health System workforce, and is a means to promote diversity in the work place. This Information Notice communicates the following guidelines that now allow a County to include a loan assumption, loan repayment or loan forgiveness program in the Workforce Education and Training component of its Three-Year Plan.

In addition to County administered loan assumption programs DMH intends to fund a state administered loan assumption program with MHSA funds. A DMH Information Notice will be published when this program is ready to be implemented. County administered loan assumption programs funded by the MHSA should be consistent with the following program and funding parameters:

- A. Selection. The County shall develop a process for selection and criteria for participation in the loan assumption program. Criteria should include, at a minimum, that an applicant is requesting payment on loans from an educational lending institution and that the applicant's current or prospective employer has certified that the individual fills/will fill a position in the Public Mental Health System that is hard to fill and/or retain. Whether a position is hard-to-fill and/or retain should be determined by the County. Counties should engage in outreach and recruitment efforts to inform underrepresented groups of the loan assumption program in order to promote diversity of the public mental health workforce.
- B. Application. Applicants should submit an application to the County that includes documentation of existing educational loans from lending institutions, which includes loan balances. An application may include more than one educational loan.
- C. Participation. Applicants who are selected for participation should sign a loan assumption agreement with the County that states that the applicant's loans will be assumed, or repaid, only after he/she has maintained full- or part-time employment for twelve consecutive months in a Public Mental Health System position.
- D. Payments. A single payment of up to \$10,000 per year can be made on the participant's behalf after 12 consecutive months of employment in an eligible position. No individual should participate in a loan assumption program for more than 72 consecutive months, and no more than a total of \$60,000 of any participant's educational loan liability should be assumed, or repaid. Payments should be made directly to the lending institution and should be applied to the principle balance. Participants remain responsible for their loan obligations, and for making payments as per their contract with the lending institution.

Counties may utilize MHPA funds as a match resource to enable individuals to participate in loan assumption or repayment programs that are administered by other federal, state and local government programs and private entities, such as foundations. In this case, Counties are subject to the program and funding parameters established by other non-MHPA loan assumption programs.

3. Training to Develop Culturally Competent Leadership/Management and Training/Consultation Expertise. DMH conducted a series of workgroups in FY 2006/07 in which stakeholders and subject matter experts attested to the lack of resources dedicated to increasing the capacity of individuals in the Public Mental Health System to skillfully communicate and implement the fundamental concepts embodied in the MHPA. Counties are encouraged to dedicate training resources to develop skills in leadership, management of people and resources to diverse communities, and delivering training and consultation according to the fundamental concepts embodied in the MHPA and set forth in 9 CCR § 3320. These training resources should be inclusively available to County staff, community based organizations contracting with a County, individuals with client and family member experience, including transition age youth and older adults, and representatives who can assist in outreach to unserved/underserved communities.

II. Planning Estimates

Enclosure 1 includes the initial Workforce Education and Training Planning Estimates identified in DMH Information Notice 07-14, the additional Planning Estimates identified through this Information Notice, and the total Workforce Education and Training Planning Estimates for each County. This Information Notice does not change the amounts identified for planning activities in DMH Information Notice 07-06.

Counties may also request funds from the Community Services and Supports (CSS) component for Workforce Education and Training programs and activities beginning in FY 2008/09, provided that the total amount requested for prudent reserve, Capital Facilities and Technological Needs, and Workforce Education and Training does not exceed 20 percent of the average amount of funds allocated to the County for the previous five years (WIC 5892(b)). Any CSS funds approved for Workforce Education and Training programs and activities cannot be used for another purpose, and funds that have been allocated for Workforce Education and Training must be spent within ten years, or they will revert back to the Mental Health Services Fund (MHS Fund), pursuant to WIC 5892(h).

Counties choosing to request funds from the CSS component for Workforce Education and Training programs and activities should follow instructions provided in DMH Information Notice No.: 08-10, Community Services and Supports (CSS) Plan Update Guidelines for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008/09. CSS funds allocated for Workforce Education and Training programs and activities will remain available to the Counties for their authorized purpose for ten years, and will not revert back to the MHS Fund until this period has elapsed.

III. Instructions for Requesting Funds

In order to access the Workforce Education and Training Planning Estimates identified in **Enclosure 1**, a County must submit to DMH either 1) an update to its existing Three-Year Plan, if the Plan already includes the Workforce Education and Training component, or 2) an initial Workforce Education and Training component, which will be added to the County's Three-Year Plan. A County may start new Workforce Education and Training programs and activities, or may add funds to existing programs and activities.

Counties submitting an update to their existing approved Workforce Education and Training component should include Exhibits 4, 5 and 6 of DMH Information Notice No.: 07-14. Counties should include on their Work Details in Exhibit 4 any existing programs and activities for which they are requesting to add funding.

Counties submitting an initial Workforce Education and Training component are to follow instructions provided in DMH Information Notice No.: 07-14, including the completing of Exhibits 1 through 6.

Planning Estimates provided for Counties through this Information Notice for Workforce Education and Training programs and activities will remain in effect for ten years, and will not revert back to the MHS Fund until this period has elapsed. Counties should budget for proposed costs only through the end of June 2009. Budgeting instructions for subsequent fiscal years starting in July 2009 will be provided in a forthcoming DMH Information Notice.

IV. Submission of the Proposed Workforce Education and Training Component

An original hard copy and an electronic copy of the proposed Workforce Education and Training component, or plan update should be sent to the following address:

**California Department of Mental Health
MHSA Workforce Education and Training Component
Workforce Education and Training Unit
1600 9th Street, Room 250
Sacramento, CA 95814**

V. Submission Date

We recognize that Counties are in various stages of readiness to submit the Workforce Education and Training component. Therefore, no deadline is established for component submission.

VI. Review and Approval

The statute provides for review by DMH and the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC), and approval by DMH to ensure compliance with Workforce Education and Training requirements and funding limitations. The review and approval of the Workforce Education and Training component is intended to be a streamlined process in which MHSOAC and DMH reviewers will work closely with County staff to assist with submission, identify any needed additional information, and obtain approval as quickly as possible. A decision to approve or disapprove will be issued within 60 days, assuming the County provides a timely response for any additional needed information.

Upon approval, DMH will notify the County in writing through a Letter of Intent, and will forward an updated MHSA Agreement. Counties may start programs and activities upon written approval by DMH. Funding will be distributed to Counties through the MHSA Agreement.

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For further information, clarification or questions about this Information Notice please contact Warren Hayes at 916-651-0461, or Warren.Hayes@dmh.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

STEPHEN W. MAYBERG, Ph.D.

Director

Enclosure 1 – Planning Estimates

cc: California Mental Health Planning Council
California Mental Health Directors Association
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
Elaine Bush, Chief Deputy Director
Denise Arend, Deputy Director, Community Services
Carol Hood, Assistant Deputy Director, Community Program Development
Michael Borunda, Assistant Deputy Director, Community Program Support
Marjorie Glaviano, Chief, County Contracts and Technical Assistance
John Lessley, Chief, County Operations South
Rebecca Kirby, Chief, County Operations North/Bay
Warren Hayes, Chief, MHSWA Workforce Education and Training