



## **Therapeutic Behavioral Services Accountability Structure Report to the Department of Mental Health**

**Purpose:** The goal of the Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) Accountability Structure is to identify and develop a statewide practice and performance improvement structure. This structure will include outcome and utilization measures and a continuous quality improvement process that will allow the California State Department of Mental Health (CDMH) to effectively ensure that TBS are accessible, effective, and sustained for the Emily Q class members as outlined in the Court-approved TBS Plan.

The accountability structure, to be implemented by CDMH, will be accomplished through annual reports submitted by the county Mental Health Plans (MHPs). This new report utilizes a quality improvement process based on principles and accountability activities that focus on practice and service coordination, rather than compliance and disallowances. The report is designed to increase Emily Q class access to appropriate TBS services. This approach requires an interagency review of relevant data in response to four questions, utilizing a standard report format. --Nine Point Plan, Appendix C

**County:** Imperial

**Date of TBS Meeting:** 4/30/09

**Type of Meeting:** Decision-Maker Meeting

### **Decision-Maker meeting attendees:**

Jim Semmes, Director of Imperial County Department of Social Services

Win McFadden, Program Manager Imperial County Department of Social Services

Kurt Leptich, Director of SELPA, Imperial County Office of Education

Mickey Castro, Deputy Director Imperial County Department of Social Services

Francisco Ortiz, Sr. Manager Imperial County Behavioral Health Services

Gloria Muñoz, Juvenile Division Manager, Imperial County Probation Department

Angela McNeece, Assistant Superintendent, Imperial County Office of Education

## **Questions:**

### **1. Are the children and youth in the county who are Emily Q class members and who would benefit from TBS, getting TBS?**

When discussing and reviewing county data on the number of children or youth placed by Department of Social Services (DSS) and Probation and the actual number of children who have received TBS, attendees agreed that there is a significant number of children or youth that are Emily Q class members that could benefit from TBS that have not received the service. Representatives from DSS and the Probation Department indicated that they have used other programs or services within or outside Imperial County Behavioral Health Services (ICBHS) for this population. Data presented revealed that almost all referrals to TBS were initiated by ICBHS on active clients. Representatives from DSS and the Probation Department reported that they found it futile to refer due to the cumbersome and lengthy authorization process. They also were under the impression that TBS was an ineffective service for their population. In general, the feedback from the group indicated that it appears that barriers for Department of Social Services, Education, Probation and the Court were the length of time and requirements to start the service; the lack of accurate information about TBS interventions; and the confusion about who was eligible or who was an appropriate referral for TBS.

### **2. Are the children and youth who get TBS experiencing the intended benefits?**

When the group was presented with data on the number of clients who have received TBS and the total number of hospitalizations and crisis services billings before and after TBS was provided. The group agreed that TBS shows to be effective as the number of hospitalizations after TBS were eliminated or reduced; and the number of crisis services decreased significantly or, in most cases, there were no crises after TBS services. This demonstrated a significant decrease of severe and high risk behaviors for those who received the service.

### **3. What alternatives to TBS are being provided in the county?**

Participants indicated that they are currently referring clients to outside providers via contracts for therapy and to other programs within ICBHS. There has been a lack of knowledge of the services and requirements of TBS, as a result, referrals were not being made. Common practice for juveniles who have severe behaviors is to order them into placement with no identification for additional local services, specifically TBS. Youth with severe behaviors and or symptoms are referred to ICBHS school based counseling programs, programs provided by schools, and MHSA Transitional Age Youth (TAY)/Ward Access to Support and Services (WASS) although few of these provide the intensity of TBS.

### **4. What can be done to improve the use of TBS and/or alternative behavioral support services in the county?**

Participants agreed that providing information about TBS and how it can benefit children and youth in the community should continue. Through collaborative meetings and information to ongoing clients we can assist in improving the use of TBS. We discussed a process that could provide information to ensure children's admission to services and consideration for TBS. Participants welcomed TBS presentations to their line staff to

increase awareness, thus increase referrals for TBS. Consequently, the use of TBS would help to reduce behaviors that put children and youth at risk of losing placement and keeping them at a lower level of care.

**Additional comments:**

Attendees we personally invited via telephone and follow up was done with a written letter to participate in this meeting. Department heads from Probation, DSS, Education and SELPA, and the Juvenile Judge were invited and confirmed their attendance. The Juvenile Judge was invited but did not attend. Representatives from probation indicated that they would discuss TBS and its benefit to their population, with the judge. Packets of the presentation were sent out to those that did not attend the meeting.

In summary, the presentation provided information to agency representative from probation and child welfare of the positive outcomes of TBS. It made clear that TBS was successful in keeping our county children in the community or in a lower level of care when provided with TBS. The Juvenile Judge was invited to attend, but did not attend this meeting. One of the attendees reported that this does appear to be a good method at preventing many out of home or out of county placements, and indicated that once the judge sees the positive effect of TBS less children will be ordered directly into placement. The group expects that by providing TBS the county can save money and avoid higher level of placements for children and youth. Also, the key agencies agreed on working closer to improve collaboration and coordination of TBS and data collection between the agencies.