

**Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Performance Contract Review Report**  
**Santa Cruz County Program Review**  
**May 11, 2021**

**Finding #1:** Santa Cruz County did not submit the FY 2019-20 Annual Revenue and Expenditure Report (ARER) by January 31<sup>st</sup> following the end of the fiscal year. (California Code of Regulations, title 9, section 3510(a)).

**Recommendation #1:** The County must submit the FY 2020-21 ARER by January 31<sup>st</sup> following the end of the fiscal year to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and for each subsequent ARER thereafter. Failure to submit the ARER in a timely manner may result in a withholding of twenty-five (25) percent of each monthly distribution to the County. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 9, § 3510.005(d)).

**Finding #2:** Santa Cruz County's FY 2019-20 ARER was not posted to the county's website. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 9, § 3510.010(b)(1); Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I) section 5899)).

**Recommendation #2:** The County must post a copy of the FY 2020-21 ARER to the County's website within 30 days of submitting to DHCS, and for each subsequent ARER thereafter.

**Finding #3:** Santa Cruz County did not include a description of the training provided to participants in the Community Program Planning Process (CPPP) in the approved FY 2019-20 Annual Update (Update). (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 9, § 3300). (FY 2015-16 Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) MHSA Annual Update Instructions (pg 3)).

**Recommendation #3:** The County must include a description of the training provided to participants in the CPPP in the approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update and each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter.

**Finding #4:** Santa Cruz County's approved FY 2019-20 Update did not include a description of how stakeholder involvement demonstrates a partnership with constituents and stakeholders throughout the process that includes meaningful stakeholder involvement on: mental health policy, program planning and implementation, monitoring, quality improvement, evaluation, and budget allocations. (W&I Code section 5848; MHSOAC FY 2015-16 MHSA Annual Update Instructions (pg 3)).

**Recommendation #4:** The County must include a description of how stakeholder involvement demonstrates a partnership with constituents and stakeholders throughout

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the process that includes meaningful stakeholder involvement on mental health policy, program planning and implementation, monitoring, quality improvement, evaluation, and budget allocations in the approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update and each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter.

**Finding #5:** Santa Cruz County did not specify the methods and activities to be used in each of their Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Programs, to change attitudes, knowledge, and/or behavior regarding being diagnosed with mental illness, having mental illness and/or seeking mental health services including timeframes for measurement in the approved FY 2019-20 Update.  
(Cal. Code Regs., tit. 9, § 3755(f)(3)).

**Recommendation #5:** The County must specify the methods and activities to be used in each of their Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Programs, to change attitudes, knowledge, and/or behavior regarding being diagnosed with mental illness, having mental illness and/or seeking mental health services including timeframes for measurement in the approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update, and each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter.

**Finding #6:** Santa Cruz County did not include a description in the approved FY 2019-20 Update the County's plan to involve community stakeholders meaningfully in all phases of Innovative (INN) Projects, evaluation of the INN Project, decision-making regarding whether to continue the INN Project, or elements of the Project, without INN Funds (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 9, § 3930(b)(2)).

**Recommendation #6:** The County must include a description of the County's plan to involve community stakeholders meaningfully in all phases of INN Projects, evaluation of the INN Project, decision-making regarding whether to continue the INN Project, or elements of the Project, without INN Funds in the approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update and each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter.

**Finding #7:** Santa Cruz County did not specify in the approved FY 2019-20 Update the total length of the INN Project, or provide a brief explanation of how this time period will allow sufficient time for the development, time-limited implementation, evaluation, decision-making, and communication of results, including new effective practices and lessons learned. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 9, § 3930(c)(8)).

**Recommendation #7:** The County must specify the total length of the INN Project, or provide a brief explanation of how this time period will allow sufficient time for the development, time-limited implementation, evaluation, decision-making, and communication of results, including new effective practices and lessons learned in the

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approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update and each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The Findings outlined above pertain to the approved FY 2019-20 Update. The following items represent a list of technical assistance provided to the County during the review call on May 11, 2021 and pertain specifically to inconsistencies and clarity issues identified in the approved FY 2017-20 Plan. All Findings, Suggested Improvements and Technical Assistance items on this Performance Contract Review report must be addressed by the County in all future Plans and Updates.

**#1.** The County must submit the approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update to DHCS within 30 days of adoption, and for each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter. The County should retain a copy of the email that accompanies the Plan and Update to DHCS for verification of submittal date. (W&I Code section 5847(a)).

**#2.** The County must provide an assessment of its capacity to implement mental health programs and services in the approved FY 2020-23 Plan and FY 2021-22 Update, and each subsequent Plan and Update thereafter. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 9, § 3650(a)(5)).

**SUMMARY**

The Department of Health Care Services' MHSA Program Monitoring Unit conducted a review of Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health Services' approved FY 2017-20 Plan and FY 2019-20 Update on May 11, 2021.

Santa Cruz County's approved FY 2017-20 Plan and FY 2019-20 Update provided full program descriptions, including: community impact of programs, challenges and barriers to program implementation, and detailed information on how the challenges and barriers would be addressed.

The County was able to modify their provision of services as a result of COVID-19 and purchase over 100 iPads to deliver psychiatry, therapy, and case management field based services to clients. This adjustment allowed the County to transition from a paper to an electronic verification system – allowing the County to expedite and obtain needed signatures. Additionally, the County has been able to implement and provide a vast amount of COVID-19 prevention services and procedures to ensure the health and safety of clients while still providing in person services to clients in need.

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Santa Cruz County's challenges have included a surge in workload due to funding that the County received for managing COVID-19. The County has had to adjust to working remotely, and has also suffered a significant loss of staff. County staff have found themselves wearing multiple hats within the department, facing even more challenges during the transition to provide remote services.