



STAFF INNOVATION SUMMARY— ORANGE COUNTY

Name of Innovative (INN) Project: Job Training and On-Site Support for TAY

Total INN Funding Requested for Project: \$6,531,770

Duration of Innovative Project: Five (5) Years

Review History

Approved by the County Board of Supervisors June 2, 2015.

Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC or Commission) consideration of INN Project: September 22, 2016. Continuance to October 27, 2016.

Project Introduction:

Orange County proposes to increase the quality of services for Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), including better outcomes by creating a working kitchen/food service business with on-site employment and behavioral health coaches. These coaches will provide job training and behavioral health support to participants/employees of the business. The County also indicates that it will provide a stipend to “a School of Business” (p. 4) in order to develop a business plan for the business.

In the balance of this brief we address specific criteria that the Commission looks for when evaluating Innovation Plans, including: What is the unmet need that the county is trying to address? Does the proposed project address the need? Are there clear learning objectives that link to the need? And, will the proposed evaluation allow the county to make any conclusions regarding their learning objectives? In addition, the Commission checks to see that the Innovation meets regulatory requirements that the proposed project must align with the core MHSA principles, promote learning, funds exploration of a new and/or locally adapted mental health approach/practice, and targets one of the four allowable primary purposes.

The Need

The County does not provide statistical evidence of a large number of unemployed TAY within Orange County. However according to the July 2014 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) report, *Road to Recovery: Employment and Mental Illness*, “the current service system is ill suited to meet their needs. Mental illness often emerges during the late teens and early adult years, hitting the gap between child and adult mental health service systems” (p.12). This is also the same time frame when youth traditionally begin their exploration of the world of work and begin to develop work habits and skills.

Persistent mental health issues create, in the TAY age group “the highest school dropout and failure rates of any disability group” (p. 12). Orange County proposes to mitigate this with a work experience that combines developing work skills building with an environment that provides emotional and behavioral support strategies for TAY.

The County states that neither its existing FSP programs nor its TAY Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) address the need for TAY with a serious mental illness to develop job skills.

The Response

While the County acknowledges that there are similar work training/hardening types of programs throughout the County, they indicate that these are designed for foster youth, adults, criminal offenders and individuals with substance use disorders. This Innovative Project is only being developed for TAY. This Project will employ TAY and work on employment skills and emotional challenges while the youth is employed. It is anticipated that the TAY in this program will be better served by job coaches who are sensitive to their potential work place challenges and can better provide positive reinforcement and work place interventions for behaviors related to their persistent mental health issues, even as they are working.

The County maintains that this program will dedicate training only for those TAY who are diagnosed with persistent mental health challenges and will provide a “unique supported environment that will address a cognitive emotional component in conjunction with workplace inexperience. (Orange County INN Proposal, p. 1).

Following completion of a series of more academic and therapeutic courses, TAY recruited will work in the business and learn work behaviors, as well as meet work challenges related to their particular mental health circumstances. The County Proposes to serve 150 TAY per year who are not currently participating in or succeeding in existing supported employment programs and who are receiving behavioral health services in the County. The final year of the project will consist of project evaluation as well as a decision process as to whether to support these services through another Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) component.

Orange County acknowledges that this is not a new concept, per se. California county-based organizations and mental health agencies in the 1990s modelled this type of programming in mental health, largely through the California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies (CASRA). Businesses were developed for persons with mental illness. Recipients of mental health services were recruited through numerous entities such as the Department of Rehabilitation, socialization centers and group homes to be employees of these businesses.

Skill building at these businesses include “work hardening,” socialization through work team efforts, learning how to manage time as well as employment preparation in the form of occupational development were the hallmarks of numerous programs. Examples, include The Village in Long Beach, CA, Rubicon Bakery in Richmond, CA. a recycling center in Martinez, CA. and a janitorial/gardening/clerical service in Davis, CA.

What differentiates these programs from the food service program outlines in Orange County's Innovative Project is that Orange County intends to only service TAY. The vocational programs such as those identified above, initially served all adults in the mental health system. The County should further investigate the lessons learned from those examples.

For example, while the County describes some personnel expenses in its budget narrative, it does not address other issues related to running a commercial enterprise, such as workers compensation, health and safety codes, business licensing, payroll taxes, minimum wage, and insurance costs. Since it does not appear that the County intends to run this program as a sheltered workshop, these are very real issues related to doing business in California, regardless of whether it is under the auspices of a mental health program. Full development of a business plan would appear to be a necessary step prior to launching this project.

Our research indicates that supported employment programs for persons with emotional and/or behavioral issues most often are offered as part of an array of services such as housing. For example, Daniel's Place and Humanim are two housing programs for TAY in Los Angeles and Maryland, respectively, that incorporate a vocational component (supported employment). Many other programs nationwide, such as Cornerstone and the Young Adult Vocational Program and Peer Mentoring Project in Boston, offer stand-alone vocational services, not related to a business. Local to Sacramento, there are business such as Cool Beans and Crossroads Diversified Services which work with persons with mental health issues. These examples are not exclusively for TAY, however.

The Community Planning Process

Orange County conducted its community planning process for this Innovation in Fiscal Year 14/15. They state that they developed strategies to assist stakeholders throughout the process of community meetings, including providing clear definitions of the process and criteria to be used for vetting Innovation projects. They also provided stakeholders with a template for submitting ideas and provided them technical assistance via Q & A about projects that were being considered. These questions and responses are included on the County's website.

Five community stakeholder meetings were held regionally throughout the County.

Participation in these regional meetings included consumers, family members, providers, and individuals representing the larger health care community in Orange County that have an interest in behavioral health care. Invitations for participation were sent to consumers and consumer organizations as well as to individuals who represent safety (e.g., Probation and Sheriff), education, faith communities, physical healthcare providers (e.g., CalOptima, hospitals, community clinics), Social Services Agency), among others. Interpretive services were available for each of the meetings to remove barriers to participation for those whose primary language was not English. (Orange County New Innovative Project Description, page 2)

This process generated thirty-one project suggestions submitted to the County. Behavioral Health staff reviewed the suggestions for fit with Innovative Project criteria and conducted a literature review to assess whether these ideas had been tried previously or if they had, if was there something about the Orange County suggestions that differentiated them sufficiently from the previous Innovation project.

Projects that passed both these preliminary levels were then presented to the MHSA Steering Committee. “The MHSA Steering Committee voted for the Job Training and On-site Support for TAY project proposal to move forward for consideration and formal submission to the MHSOAC for approval.” (Orange County New Innovative Project Description, p.3).

Learning Objectives and Evaluation

Orange County states that the goals of this project will be to:

1. Increase participant access to community behavioral health and supportive services/programs.
2. Improve participant knowledge and/or awareness of behavioral health resources.
3. Improve participant behavioral health outcomes.
4. Improve participant global health. (Orange County New Innovative Project Description, p. 5)

The County intends to start the data gathering process in the second year of the project (first full service year) to establish a baseline for outcomes for Years 3 and 4 of the Project. The exact tools for this evaluative process have not yet been defined.

The description of the learning objectives and evaluation methodology for this project closely mirror the statements provided in the County’s Employment and Mental Health Services Impact project, also before the Commission. In both cases, the County’s specification of its learning objectives and evaluation approach needs further clarification.

The Budget

The Project is to be contracted out to a community based organization and so the County is only estimating suggested line items costs. The County indicates that the actual budget will depend on the selected provider’s proposal. Therefore, staffing and other expenses are contingent upon the contract provider’s final budget. The County’s proposed budget should clarify what expected costs will be for contracted services versus direct County costs.

The projected budget is \$6,531,770 over the five (5) year project. Evaluation costs estimated for this project are \$700,642, or approximately 11% of the total plan costs. The breakout for the evaluation dollars is as follows:

5% from Personnel (\$1,611,000)	\$80,550
5% from Operating Expenses (\$2,890,500)	\$144,525
5% from Non-Recurring Expenditures (\$160,000)	\$8,000

Staff Innovation Summary—Orange County (Job Training) October 27, 2016

25% from Other Expenditures (\$1,870,270)

\$467,567

As mentioned above, there do not appear to be any specific budget allocations or differentiation for administrative costs for County staff, or costs related to payroll, health and safety, payroll taxes, or other costs related to running a food service business, apart from leasing trucks and kitchen appliances. It may be that these particulars will be part of the scope of work provided to the School of Business selected to write the business prospectus for the County. Because these costs are not clearly delineated there are some costs, such as purchasing software, office furniture, etc. under non-recurring costs, which may not be appropriate to a time-limited Innovation project.

The project proposal has evolved considerably from the project described in the County's FY 15/16 Annual Update (Orange County MHSA Annual Update, pp. 255-256). The County is asking the Commissioners to approve a total Project amount of \$6,531,770 for five (5) years, considerably more than the funding amount included in the Annual Update discussion. The County does not clarify in its proposal how these new project amounts were determined.

Additional Regulatory Requirements

The County could provide clarifications regarding budget items (including administration expenses and purchase of software and office equipment) and more clarity on the intended evaluation outcomes anticipated for this Innovation. The proposal as presented appears to meet or exceed other minimum regulatory requirements.

References

Crossroads Diversified Services. Employment Services.

<http://www.cdsdiv.com/employment-services/>. Accessed September 13, 2016.

Eliot Community Human Services. Young Adult Vocational Program. www.yavp.org. Accessed September 13, 2016.

Humanim. Mental Health services. www.humanin.com/human-services/mental-health. Accessed September 13, 2016.

National Alliance on Mental Illness. 2014. "Road to Recovery: Employment and Mental Illness." <http://www.nami.org/work>. Accessed September 12, 2016.

Orange County Board of Supervisors Meeting minutes June 2, 2015

https://docs.google.com/gview?url=https%3A%2F%2Focgov.granicus.com%2FDocumentViewer.php%3Ffile%3Docgov_b985024cbcfec03d66fce25a3b04c04f.pdf%26view%3D1&embedded=true. Accessed September 13, 2016.

Orange County MHSA Annual Update, FY 15/16.

Orange County New Innovative Project Description. September 1, 2016. "INN 03-007 Job Training and On-site Support for TAY."

Step Up and Daniel's Places. Programs for Transitional Age Youth (TAY)

<http://www.stepuponsecond.org/transitional-age-youth-tay/>. Accessed September 13, 2016.

