



**Cultural and Linguistic Competency Committee Teleconference Meeting Summary**  
**Date: Monday, April 12, 2021 | Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**MHSOAC**  
**1325 J Street, Suite 1700**  
**Sacramento, CA 95814**

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**Committee Members:**

**Staff:**

**Other Attendees:**

Mayra Alvarez, Chair Senait Admassu Estrella Amaro-Jepesen Claire Buckley Veronica Chavez Eugene Durrah Luis Garcia Jim Gilmer Nahla Kayali Jonathan Lee Lee Lo Corinita Reyes Etsegenet Teodros Yia Xiong Richard Zaldivar	Toby Ewing Kayla Landry Tom Orrock Filomena Yeroshek	Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola Richard Gallo Stacie Hiramoto Steve McNally Tracy Lacey
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Committee members absent: Gladys Mitchell and Yolanda Randles

**Welcome and Announcements**

Commissioner Mayra Alvarez, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. She reviewed the highlights from the last meeting and reviewed the meeting protocols.

Tom Orrock, Chief of Stakeholder Engagement and Commission Grants, called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

**Agenda Item 1: Action – Approval of the March 11, 2021, Minutes**

Chair Alvarez asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the March 11, 2021, CLCC meeting.

Committee Member Garcia made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Zaldivar.

Vote recorded with participating members as follows:

- Approve: Chair Alvarez and Committee Members Admassu, Amaro-Jeppesen, Buckley, Chavez, Durrah, Garcia, Gilmer, Kayali, Lee, Lo, Reyes, Teodros, Xiong, and Zaldivar

## **Agenda Item 2: Review of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act**

### **Presenter:**

- Filomena Yeroshek, Chief Counsel

Chair Alvarez stated the Committee will hear a presentation of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and how it relates to the work of the CLCC.

Filomena Yeroshek, Chief Counsel, provided a summary of the types of meetings, purpose, notice, and other requirements of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. Committee Members asked clarifying questions about the rules and procedures.

### Discussion

Committee Member Lo asked that a process be put in place to allow Committee Members to influence and provide input on the agenda in advance of posting the agenda.

Committee Member Gilmer stated the need to include the survey feedback in the three goals of this Committee.

### Public Comment

Stacie Hiramoto, Director, Racial and Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition (REMHDCO), asked if the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act has rules about transparency. The speaker stated the public did not know about the survey and were unable to provide comment. The public should know what is being asked and about the results of the survey.

Executive Director Ewing summarized the survey questions and stated a discussion on the survey results will be agendized for the next Committee meeting.

## **Agenda Item 3: Provide Input on COVID-19 Impact Proposal**

### **Presenters:**

- Toby Ewing, Executive Director, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
- Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D., Center for Reducing Health Disparities, UC Davis
- Tracy Lacey, Senior Mental Health Services Manager-MHSA Coordinator, Solano County DHSS

Chair Alvarez stated the Committee will continue their discussion from the March 11, 2021, meeting regarding the COVID-19 impact proposal and discuss strategies for the adoption of projects at the local level. Projects to be discussed include the Solano County

Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Cultural Transformation Model (ICCTM) Innovation Project and the California Reducing Disparities Project (CRDP).

### Solano County ICCTM Innovation Project

Chair Alvarez stated the Committee discussed three overarching areas of focus at the last meeting: providing input on the Commission's Racial Equity Plan, identifying ways to document and communicate inequities in the mental health system to inform policies and practices, and identifying policy and practice reform and exploring existing efforts and model programs to address inequities.

Chair Alvarez stated the Budget Act of 2020 authorized the Commission to allocate approximately \$2 million to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health. A proposal for this funding was presented at the January Commission meeting authorizing staff to release this funding to address three priority areas:

- Replicating the Solano County ICCTM Innovation Project, which was presented at the last CLCC meeting.
- Engaging county behavioral health leaders on opportunities to adapt, expand, and replicate the work of the CRDP.
- Strengthening the Commission's Schools and Mental Health Work, with an emphasis on youth suicide risk and prevention.

Chair Alvarez asked Committee Members for input on how to move forward with implementation of these strategies to strengthen the allocation of this funding.

Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D., Director, UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities (Center), and Tracy Lacey, Senior Mental Health Services Manager and MHTA Coordinator, Solano County DHSS, provided brief overviews of their presentations given at the last meeting and shared opportunities to replicate the model in other communities.

### Discussion

Chair Alvarez stated the project invests in the capacity for counties to work more effectively with community members utilizing the nationally-recognized Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards in partnership with community. She asked for additional details on building the capacity of county staff while also giving leadership to community voice.

Ms. Lacey stated the community engagement model is meaningful. Informing the community or asking the community for feedback is different from shared decision-making and receiving solutions directly from the community. This project gives the counties the tools they need to do this better. She stated building county staff capacity while giving leadership to community voice helps the work to be done better than before.

Committee Member Garcia stated, along with the access and utilization components of the mental health services project goal, he suggested adding two more components: culturally and linguistic considerations and quality clinical care. For many years, clients and families have been blamed for dropping treatment, when, in fact, the workforce did not understand how to engage with communities of color.

Committee Member Gilmer agreed with the framework and CLAS Standards training but stated the need for the CRDP to have greater recognition and to be considered as part of the framework of this project.

Dr. Aguilar-Gaxiola stated the Center has been involved in the CRDP from the beginning. The Solano Project and the CRDP complement each other but Solano County has focused more on county work with this model, whereas the CRDP has focused on community-based organizations. He stated the best evidence for clinical trials has not been done in communities of color. The CRDP is growing evidence with promising programs and practices that community-based organizations have been doing. He stated there may be further commonalities to synergize efforts as well.

Committee Member Amaro-Jeppesen stated a systematic way of looking at how a county can implement an overarching cultural competence training program that integrates the different aspects of culture can be beneficial in honing counties' focus on increasing equity across the different aspects of diversity. She asked how this program gathers community input and expertise so that the county can target its efforts to community needs.

Ms. Lacey gave the example of another county campaign that engaged a multi-sector group of individuals to develop the ideas to do its campaign and held focus groups and community forums. The draft materials were then brought back to these groups for feedback to ensure that the county heard the groups correctly. She stated this process provides a constant feedback loop with communities.

Committee Member Reyes asked how and where peers are being utilized in the program.

Ms. Lacey stated consumers and peers were part of the health assessments done by UC Davis and were part of the training cohorts. She stated the county has Peer Support Specialists on the payroll and noted that that network is growing.

#### California Reducing Disparities Project

Chair Alvarez asked Executive Director Ewing to provide a brief overview of the strategy behind the adaptation and replication of the Solano County Project and the CRDP at the county level and how to sustain, scale, and integrate community-defined evidence-based practices such as the CRDP so that more counties can take this program to scale.

Executive Director Ewing stated the proposed focus of the \$2 million funding is to expand innovations building off the successful innovation project that Solano County has implemented. One of the things that the Commission has pushed staff to do is to support the ability to take a successful innovation and go to scale. The Solano County project is an opportunity to try to scale up but that does not mean that other counties must be identical to the Solano experience. It means that other counties can learn from and take advantage of the Solano County experience.

Executive Director Ewing stated, in addition to the work that is happening at the state level, the Commission proposed highlighting some of the opportunities coming out of the CRDP for counties so they can embrace some of those projects in ways that they can be sustained. He stated the vision is for counties to be engaged and to create greater awareness of the 35 CRDP projects so counties can consider them. Often, connections are not as strong as they need to be when projects operate outside of the county system.

Executive Director Ewing stated the goal is to identify key priorities using multiple pathways that support communities in ways that will lead to long-term systems change, with improved awareness and lessons learned to support greater advancement of equity by counties.

### Discussion

Chair Alvarez asked about other opportunities that may have come up during these conversations and about leveraging other initiatives done by the Commission to maximize this opportunity.

Executive Director Ewing stated counties get tremendous benefits from connecting together for shared learning. He stated there is a gap in emerging practices, which creates an opportunity for the Commission's work to frame out what that looks like.

Committee Member Teodros asked if there will be more direction for heavily-populated counties.

Ms. Lacey stated the goal is to have counties of any size learn the tools and skills so that they can do meaningful work in their own communities and demographics.

Committee Member Amaro-Jeppesen asked about the vision in bringing counties together.

Executive Director Ewing stated this project asks counties to change the way they do things. It is difficult for counties to be the first to do something; making investments in groups is more comfortable because it increases confidence. The Commission will contract with a state-level organization to create improved awareness about available projects within the CRDP. The idea is to make the problem clearer and the solutions easier.

### Public Comment

Richard Gallo, consumer and advocate and Volunteer State Ambassador, ACCESS California, a program of Cal Voices, spoke in support of the Solano County project. The speaker stated consumer and family voice is important. Community feedback is critical in county One-Year and Three-Year Plans. Also, counties need to promote peer support at the county level.

Steve McNally, citizen and family member, spoke in support of the Solano County project. The speaker asked why this is not the normal course of doing business in California. The speaker stated every county is required to have a cultural competency plan but they cannot be found in counties across the state. This is a good place to start. The speaker suggested finding the county cultural competency plans to see what they look like. Simple fixes are not being done.

Steve McNally suggested learning what the 59 behavioral health boards' views are on this topic. The speaker suggested expanding it outside of health care to find as many champions as possible regardless of whether they are located in a county agency, county governments, or big business.

Stacie Hiramoto asked about the next steps in the COVID-19 Impact Proposal.

Chair Alvarez stated the next step will be to present the plan on how the \$2 million will be utilized.

Stacie Hiramoto stated they have no concept of what this program will look like. The speaker asked if the contract for the three components will be sole-sourced.

Executive Director Ewing stated this proposal is to support Solano County and the Center for Reducing Health Disparities, as the experts on this project, to create a learning collaborative with counties. Additional third-party help may be required, since Solano County staff already have full-time duties. The amount of funding is yet to be determined.

Executive Director Ewing stated the suicide prevention component will be done through the Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan. This component is building off of work the Commission is already doing.

Executive Director Ewing stated, regarding the CRDP component, the Commission determined at the last Commission meeting to work with a statewide organization to help service the bridge between the 35 CRDP projects and counties in consultation with counties and the CRDP partners to focus on equity. The amount of funding is yet to be determined.

Executive Director Ewing stated the cost of this project from the perspective of partners is unknown. The options for the Commission are to present this publicly, which will take a month or two, or to make a determination now. During high-level disasters, the rule of thumb is to react and respond as soon as possible. Sacrificing deliberations is not normal procedure for the Commission but this funding is in recognition of the utter disaster that is impacting the mental health of every California community, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted this is not about perfection but it is about urgent response. He stated process must be sacrificed for speed, due to the gravity of the situation.

Committee Member Amaro-Jeppesen stated, based on the extent of the need and on the fact that there have been no comments that oppose the projects discussed today, she suggested working more toward speed and addressing needs.

## **Adjourn**

Chair Alvarez stated the next CLCC meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. The agenda will include the projected next steps for this project. The Committee will review the feedback to the survey and how that feedback can be integrated in the practices of this Committee. The Committee will also hear about the Commission's involvement in the Capital Collaborative on Race and Equity and in particular how it relates to the Commission's Racial Equity Action Plan. The Committee will also review and provide feedback on the first draft of the Commission's Racial Equity Plan.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.