

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS: POTENTIAL PROPOSALS

PROPOSAL #1

Question being addressed through the project (required): ***Can trained peers and family navigators improve engagement and retention of individuals needing treatment that we have been unsuccessful in engaging in services.***

Priority Area to be addressed (At least 1 required):

1. Increase access to underserved groups
2. Increase quality of services, including better outcomes
3. Promote interagency collaboration
4. Increase access to services

*Proposed Project meets priority areas: 1, 2, 3 and 4

Brief Description:

Peer support staff and family members provide an opportunity to engage individuals and families who are struggling to engage and remain in treatment in the community in a unique way that can often be seen by the individual and family as very supportive of their own recovery goals and building resiliency in the family. Utilizing trained peers and family members will improve access to services and is anticipated to also improve overall treatment outcomes, while promoting interagency collaboration between NAMI, MHCAN, Second Story, Mariposa Center, County Mental Health, and other community providers.

Proposal:

1. Utilize peer staff from Second Story to accompany mobile crisis team staff in the community to assist in triage and engagement of individuals in crisis and provide a linkage to Second Story crisis respite services. Assist in performing outreach to individuals seen by mobile crisis who do not follow-through with aftercare plans.
2. Utilize peer staff from MHCAN and the Mariposa Center to outreach individuals in the community who are isolated and in need for treatment, but have been difficult to engage and/or retain in services.
3. Establish a family partner program, trained family members with lived experience, to support the engagement and support of families in the community who may have difficulty engaging and remaining in services or require assistance to navigate the system of care to connect with needed services for their family member. Family partners would also complement the array of services provided by the treatment team to ensure the family voice is represented on the team.

PROPOSAL #2

Question being addressed through the project (required): ***Can we improve retention and engagement rates, and reduce the incidents of no show appointments by creating a warm and welcoming environment for consumers and family through a comprehensive approach to improving customer service.***

Priority Area to be addressed (At least 1 required):

1. Increase access to underserved groups
2. Increase quality of services, including better outcomes
3. Promote interagency collaboration
4. Increase access to services

*Proposed Project meets priority areas: 1, 2, and 4

Brief Description:

One of the most difficult decisions individuals and family members often make is their first effort at asking for help for a mental illness, either for themselves or a loved one in their family. Stigma, both societal and the individuals own feelings about seeking help, often get in the way of accessing treatment early on. It is critically important for them at the time of first contact, and throughout treatment, to have interactions with all levels of staff that supports help seeking behavior, and conveys a professional and supportive atmosphere for the client and the family. The proposal is to implement an agency wide training to ensure that clients and family members experience of working with staff is one of a welcoming and professional environment that encourages continued engagement in services and conveys the dedication and professionalism of the staff working with them.

Proposal:

1. Secure a broad based training and ongoing consultation for all staff to create an environment that supports all individuals and families in seeking and being supported in treatment, and conveys the true professionalism of the staff working with them.

Proposal #3: Is the same as #2 but adds a family advocate and peer aid to support the training and be a resource for individuals and families as they navigate through the service system.

PROPOSAL #4

Question being addressed through the project (required): ***Can a broad based, community wide anti-stigma campaign improve penetration rates and access to services in the Santa Cruz County community.***

Priority Area to be addressed (At least 1 required):

1. Increase access to underserved groups
2. Increase quality of services, including better outcomes
3. Promote interagency collaboration
4. Increase access to services

*Proposed Project meets priority areas: 1, and 4

Brief Description:

The County will develop a broad based media and community education plan to address the barrier of stigma in preventing individuals and families from seeking mental health and substance abuse treatment early on.

Proposal:

1. Develop a community education plan to educate residents and stakeholders in the county on the importance of early intervention and the efficacy of mental health and substance abuse treatment.
2. Provide educational forums to continuously engage the community in refining the mental health and substance abuse strategic plans to build capacity to provide treatment services as needed in the community.
3. Develop a broad based media campaign, based on national best practices, to combat stigma and reduce barriers to accessing treatment.