



MENTAL HEALTH QUICK UPDATE

CFRA's continued participation in the MHSOAC stakeholder meetings and workshops has resulted in an abundance of relevant information for family-strengthening organizations. CFRA is committed to being an active voice at the state level, but it is clear that if you want to have your communities' voice included in the transformation of the mental health service delivery system, you have to be involved at your local county level as well.

- The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) has made it clear that to the extent possible, recommendations, clarifications, disagreements, concerns, and questions about each of the county plans for the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) should be addressed during the county planning process.
- It is essential that you participate in the planning meetings at your county level (raise questions/concerns, share possible solutions, share your data)
- Consider participating on your County's:
 - Steering Committee: Most steering committees are being established to be as diverse as possible, even though most committees might be set, some counties might have a vacancy that you might be able to fill. If the committee is full, find out who is on the committee and identify one or two allies that you can communicate your concerns to;
 - Stakeholder Meetings: Most stakeholder meetings are being held by invitation, so get yourself on their list by contacting your county's MHSA Coordinator as an interested party. (Follow this link http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/Prop_63/MHSA/docs/MHSACoCoordContacts_Revised_10-18-07.pdf to view the updated list of the MHSA County Coordinators);
 - Community Meetings: Some counties are holding separate stakeholder and community meetings. The difference is that the stakeholder meetings are geared for individuals or organizations that have been identified as serving some of the priority populations that the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) guidelines list. Community meetings are more for general community input, but they are both open to the public. (Follow this link http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/Prop_63/MHSA/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Plan_Guidelines.asp to view the PEI guidelines).

- You have an opportunity to ask for written clarification or an explanation to any of your concerns by submitting a written request to your county Department of Mental Health anytime during the ir:
 - Planning process (meetings and committee participation);
 - 30-day public comment period (after the final draft of the implementation plan is posted);
 - Community forum meeting to discuss the final version of the plan (usually held at a County Supervisor meeting in order to give the final approval to submit the plan to the state);
 - If your concerns are not responded to by the county, you have the option of bringing this to the attention of the MHSOAC, a single commissioner, or your representative statewide association (i.e. CFRA) to raise the issue on your behalf, or anonymously;
 - If the issue is not brought forward to the county before the plan is submitted to the state, the issue will have a very small chance of being addressed by the MHSOAC at the state level.