FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 27, 2010

Over $7 Million in Prop 63 Funds Approved for Amador, Madera, San Francisco, and Sonoma Counties for Mental Health Services

Today, the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) approved a total of $7,196,161 for mental health services in Amador, Madera, San Francisco, and Sonoma Counties. $417,195 in Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funds were approved for Amador County. $854,297 was approved for Madera County, $4,200,900 was approved for San Francisco County, and $1,723,769 was approved for Sonoma County for Innovation (INN) programs.

The California MHSOAC is a 16-member commission charged with the oversight of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). The MHSA was approved by California voters in 2004 as Proposition 63 to provide for expanded mental health services in California.

Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funds are approved for programs that apply strategies focused on preventing mental illness from becoming severe and disabling. MHSOAC Chair Andrew Poat said, “Our prevention programs will decrease expensive emergency room visits as we provide prevention services to consumers of mental health services. Prevention and Early Intervention funds will keep kids in school, keep families together, and will avoid long term unemployment.”

Amador County will use their PEI funds for five projects. Project 4, Promotores de Salud addresses access issues to mental health services in the Spanish-speaking community. Access will be increased by providing transportation and dealing with language barriers and stigma issues.

“Prevention and Early Intervention programs will transform the mental health system. We will stop requiring consumers to “fail first” before receiving services and we will move to a “help first” system. Prevention and Early Intervention programs are a new approach to mental health in California. This program is a win for both mental health consumers and taxpayers,” said Poat.

The funds approved by the MHSOAC for Innovation (INN) purposes will help fund county mental health programs that are novel, creative, and ingenious in their mental health approaches. These programs are also being developed within communities in ways that
are inclusive and representative. Chair Poat said, “Innovation funds will help to jump start our thinking about how to improve our mental health programs.”

Madera County will be using their Innovation (INN) funds for two projects. The first will involve collaboration with emergency room staff, mental health staff, and peer/family members to create a “New Model for Access Into Services”. In this new model, the mental health and emergency room staff will assess health problems, and provide medication management, and crisis services. Then, the mental health staff will provide a link between peer/family members and clients for follow-up services. Madera hopes that by linking peer/family members with clients, the peers/family members will assist and engage the clients in recovery activities and will increase access to services while shifting services to a focus on recovery.

San Francisco County plans on using their INN funds for several projects, one of which will utilize the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) approach to educate transition age youth (TAY) about self-management tools they can use to manage mental illness and promote wellness. To reach this specific population, San Francisco will use media that is specific to TAY culture (e.g., spoken word and multi-media). TAY will engage in a competition to infuse the WRAP “tool” with youth culture by using creative approaches that will make WRAP more accessible to youth through performing, digital, or visual arts.

Sonoma County will be using their INN funds for three innovative projects. One of their projects is the Interdisciplinary Mobile Intervention Team which is a new approach to increasing the quality of services to people experiencing a behavioral health crisis. In this approach, consumers and their family members will be integrated as core members of an interdisciplinary mobile crisis response team. The goal is to learn whether including consumers and family members in significantly expanded roles as members of mobile crisis teams will lead to improved outcomes for people in crisis.

The MHSOAC met on Thursday, May 27, 2010 at the Radisson Hotel in Sacramento, CA.

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