



DRAFT

June 20, 2008

TO: Honorable Commissioners, Mental Health Services Act Oversight and Accountability Commission

FROM: Patricia Ryan, MPA, Executive Director;
Stephanie Welch, MSW, Associate Director, MHSA

SUBJECT: Position on Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Statewide Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building funds as of June 20, 2008

CMHDA continues to be solution-oriented in our approach to promptly and efficiently implement Statewide PEI Programs. We are diligently working in collaboration with the State Department of Mental Health (DMH) to develop language that will provide local authorities and their stakeholders with the assurances needed to support the assignment of local assistance funds to the state for the administration of three of the five statewide PEI projects. We support the state administration of these projects because it will be the most expeditious mode of implementation and programs targeted to begin in 2008-2009 FY.

In line with the commitment described above, CMHDA strongly recommends that steps be taken by the Oversight and Accountability Commission (OAC) to ensure that the Statewide PEI Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building funds (\$6 million per year for 4 years) be expeditiously implemented and reflect adherence to the initial goals of such programs. These funds are intended to –

Improve the capacity of partners outside the mental health system, i.e. education, primary health care, law enforcement, primary care providers, to assist in prevention and early intervention efforts. Statewide training and technical assistance will serve as an incentive for counties to improve their strategies in addressing the five priority impact areas of PEI.

As counties continue and near completion of the PEI planning process, there is an urgent recognition that significant training, technical assistance, and capacity building must take place to support successful outcomes in PEI programs. **These resources must be implemented in FY 2008-09.** Counties, their partners, and potential new partners are eager to approach this issue on a **statewide basis to promote efficiencies both in cost and time.**

Counties have demonstrated their support of a statewide approach to MHSA training and technical assistance as outlined in the April 2008 position paper attached to this memo for your consideration. Such an approach will coordinate and deliver the highest of quality training and technical assistance possible to continuously improve the transformative impact of the MHSA within California's mental health system. A centralized entity that could gather, process and

disseminate international, national, and state expertise, in addition to, identify, foster and build upon emerging local practices in diverse communities across the State. As a centralized statewide entity, it would be paramount to have a broad scope of participating stakeholders and experts to advise the work of this administrative structure. Specifically, CMHDA identified needed and active participation from the following critical partners:

- The California State Department of Mental Health
- MHSA Oversight and Accountability Commission
- California Network of Mental Health Clients
- NAMI California
- California Council of Community Mental Health Agencies
- California Alliance of Child and Family Services
- Organizations representing ethnic, cultural and linguistic populations
- Organizations representing under and unserved populations
- County Alcohol & Drug Program Administrators Association of California
- California Mental Health Planning Council
- United Advocates for Children and Families
- California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies
- MHSA Regional Workforce Collaboratives
- Educational Institutions

The PEI Statewide Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building resources could be effectively implemented through an approach outlined above – but the current situation is that these resources are “stuck” and unable to be used on FY 2008-09 for the following reasons:

- a. they have not been made available to counties in the form of planning estimates,
- b. the guidelines that determine how the funds should be used have not been developed by DMH – and these must be informed by principles and direction from the OAC, and
- c. DMH has not requested the legislative budget authority required for both administering these funds and for spending county MHSA funds for these projects -- contingent upon receipt of county assignment of the funds

CMHDA offers this position for consideration by the OAC:

CMHDA recommends that the Statewide PEI TA, Training and Capacity Building funds be allocated to counties, as required, to be used for a statewide program(s) of TA, Training and Capacity Building. Counties, as allowed by statute, may act jointly through a Joint Powers Authority or other means to have this program administered by the California Institute for Mental Health, an entity capable of coordinating and delivering this program on a statewide basis.

We believe that this position accomplished the following common goals:

1. Supports “state-wideness”, meeting the aim of the OAC and other community stakeholders’ goals to implement on a statewide basis.
2. Would distribute and implement resources in communities within the 08-09 FY
3. Efficient use of small amount of money (\$6 million a year for 4 years, totaling \$24 million)

4. Support counties' growing the ability to act jointly to implement additional statewide programs in the future – not limited to training and technical assistance.
5. Would further the interest of some commissioners in the development of a clearinghouse for MHSA information and resources.
6. Supports CMHDA's position adopted April 2008 – *That State-level Training and Technical Assistance will be an important component of the successful implementation of the MHSA. (See attached Position Paper)*

This requires OAC direction and guidance which can be provided through approval of expenditure plans, participation in the development of guidelines and participation in the proposed Advisory Committee. We believe immediate action is important to avoid any further delays and assist DMH in decisions about other PEI funding notices that need to be issued.

CMHDA appreciates your consideration of our position.