



Media and External Communications Report July 2008

Media Outreach:

We've had a number of conversations with a potentially important media outlet to reach underserved ethnic and culturally linguistic communities: Radio Bilingue, which broadcasts widely in the Central Valley and coastal areas.

During a meeting at UC Davis offices with Radio Bilingue representatives and Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, we discussed ways the broadcast network may be able to disseminate information to get underserved communities involved in Prevention and Early Intervention stakeholder activities.

This, we hope, will lead to a fruitful partnership.

We've also been in communication with El Observador, a Northern and Central California newspaper with a 501.C3 non-profit component teaching journalism to Latino interns, regarding the publisher's interest in covering MHSA issues as they relate to the underserved Latino community.

It should be noted that both potential partners intend to seek MHSA funding in order to launch community campaigns to reach the underserved with information about stakeholder involvement opportunities.

Media Campaign:

We have been in contact with a number of media outlets, mainly large-circulation newspapers, regarding potential upcoming coverage during an anticipated budget debate over in the Legislature. We are giving a heads-up to our media contacts in these newspapers that a threat may exist to MHSA funds, and that county mental health directors may soon be seeking an audience with editorial boards to make their cases against such a move to shift MHSA monies to the general fund.

To this end, we are working in partnership with Stephanie Welch of the CMHDA to coordinate and communicate key points to the county mental health directors that they may share with editorial boards.

At the same time, we are, of course, following through with distribution of the Commission's letter to the Legislature and Governor's office.

Commissioner Input:

We continue to receive very valuable input from Commissioner Eduardo Vega regarding the Communication Work Plan and ways to proceed on media outreach and strategy, particularly in Los Angeles County, the nation's 2nd largest media market – and will follow up on these. Commissioner Vega is continuing to be very instrumental in helping carve out a pointed message to share with the media on behalf of continued MHSA funding.

Community Outreach:

We have been working with Turning Point in the Central Valley regarding a story about consumer employment at a coffee cart in Yolo County. This offers opportunities for continued relationship-building with providers who can help us with “story-telling,” i.e., defining a visual and compact story line that reflects what’s happening on the street with the MHSA program funds and intent versus relying solely on policy talk. The former will have a greater impact with the public.

We have also, with the diligent help of our Student Interns, been growing the Interested Parties e-mail list and now have close to 1,000 members signed up after sending out invitations.

Website Progress:

We are continuing to develop the website structure. One development that has captured our attention and efforts recently stems from the news that Viacom won a court judgment against Google-owned YouTube, which must now reveal all usernames and viewing habits to Viacom. This development, which may raise privacy concerns regarding YouTube viewing of videos, is causing us to shift from the state of California’s recommended “YouTube Channel” for ca.gov videos to a privately developed media player that has no affiliation with YouTube. With stigma and discrimination being a key concern of our constituents, we believe this is an important step toward establishing confidence in the upcoming revamped website.

Best regards,

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