

OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (OSHPD)
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT
PROGRESS REPORT (FY 08/09)
(Reporting Period: 7/1 – 12/31)

Health Professions Education Foundation
Mental Health Loan Assumption Program

The initial MHLAP award provides up to \$20,000 in loan repayment for mental health providers in exchange for a two-year service commitment in the PMHS. Each subsequent renewal only requires a one-year service commitment and a maximum of \$10,000 per year. The award can be renewed up to 4 times for a total award amount of \$60,000.

The program is restricted to the following mental health professions: Licensed Psychologists, Registered Psychologists, Postdoctoral Psychological Assistants, Postdoctoral Psychological Trainees, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Marriage and Family Therapist Interns, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Associate Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Psychiatrists, Registered Psychiatrists, Licensed Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners, and Registered Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners.

During Year One of the MHLAP, the program is intended to use the existing LMHSPEP's programmatic infrastructure, currently administered by the Foundation. The inclusion of MHLAP within the existing LMHSPEP infrastructure includes the following significant changes:

- Adding the professions of Licensed and Registered Psychiatrists and Licensed and Registered Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners.
- Creating county allocations: DMH has divided the \$2.5 million to direct specific funding allocations to each county. Thus, each county has a specific amount of funding designated for applicants working in that county. Unused funding designated for a county cannot be used for an alternate county for which it was not originally intended.
- Prioritizing Public Mental Health applicants: To be eligible for this program, applicants must work in the Public Mental Health System. The "Public Mental Health System" means: publicly-funded mental health programs/services and entities that are administered, in whole or in part, by DMH or the County. It does not include programs and/or services administered, in whole or in part, by federal, state, county or private correctional entities or programs and/or services provided in correctional facilities.

The process for developing and implementing the MHLAP included:

- Ongoing meetings with DMH staff
- Hiring staff to implement the loan repayment program
- Developing a Marketing and Outreach Plan
- Developing program materials, fliers, and other forms
- Collaboration with CMHDA on county outreach

To accommodate the significant changes that differentiate MHLAP from LMHSPEP, the Foundation has:

- Updated the 2009 application to include the additional qualifying professions, the “Public Mental Health System” as a qualifying facility, and a line for applicants to list their county of employment.
- Created new marketing materials to reflect the additional professions which are eligible under that program.
- Notified previous applicants who were not awarded from the Fall 2008 cycle of the opportunity to benefit from the amount of funds available for this cycle, by way of a non-award letter, mailing of a new application, and a follow-up postcard.

Brief summary of the major activities performed during FY 08/09

- **Regulations**
While DMH recently held a public hearing on regulations for the Workforce, Education and Training component of the Mental Health Services Act Five-Year Workforce Education and Training Development Plan, regulations for MHLAP were not included. According to an agreement by DMH and the Foundation, the regulations heard will not apply to MHLAP. During the next two quarters, the Foundation and DMH will collaborate to develop the regulations for MHLAP.
- **Scoring and Criteria Finalized**
DMH and the Foundation have finalized scoring and criteria of applicants. Applicants will be scored based on work experience, cultural and linguistic competence, career goals, community service, community background, and fluency. All applicants are considered eligible by submitting a completed application, personal statement, employment or volunteer verification form, educational debt reporting form, lender statements, two professional letters of recommendation, and proof of registration or licensure. All documents must be postmarked by the cycle deadline. Awardees must commit to serving in the PMHS for at least two years.
- **Selection Committee Process Determined**
The selection committee will be composed of two county representatives, two DMH representatives, approximately four to eight representatives from the corresponding licensing Boards or public stakeholders, and Foundation staff. Committee members will be recruited and will be asked to fill out an application. The application process will be similar to the application process utilized by LMHSPEP. Foundation staff will use these applications to form a selection committee and will then invite the individuals to participate on the committee. The full MHLAP committee will need to be in place by August 2009.
- **Marketing Plan Developed and Implemented**
The Foundation has developed a marketing plan and marketing materials for the program. Marketing strategies include sending out correspondence to previous applicants who would benefit from this program, discussing county outreach with the County Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA), conducting analysis of high priority counties, and identifying mental health networks.
- **September 2008 Cycle**
Typically, programs at the Foundation offer two award cycles per year and such was intended with the MHSA funding. Given that the Administration did not approve of the BCP until late September, the Foundation was unable to hire the additional staff and

conduct the marketing needed to implement the new program with the commencement of the new fiscal year. As a result, the Foundation began the hiring process in late September and hired staff in October, putting the September cycle out of reach.

Identify 2 or 3 activities or accomplishments that are considered highlights and help further the intent of the MHSA (e.g., achieving system change)

- Staff hired for MHLAP: The Foundation followed the timeline set by the approval of the State Budget. Soon after the approval of the BCP, the Foundation began a hiring process to fill new positions created by the Mental Health Services Funding and hired two staff services analysts.
- Application finalized for year one and year two: Through on-going collaboration with DMH, the Foundation finalized an application for year one and is in the process of completing the application for year two. It was agreed that a hybrid application would be utilized for year one, while year two will utilize a separate application. The application for year two places the responsibility with the applicant to obtain county verification before they send the Foundation the application. Whereas during year one, the Foundation will be responsible for obtaining county verification.
- Marketing Plan and Materials Developed: With the collaboration of DMH, marketing materials for the MHLAP program were developed. Those marketing materials consist of a program flier and an e-mailer. The Foundation has also developed a marketing plan and has included specific strategies focusing on outreach to counties, collaboration with CMHDA, and utilization of existing agency avenues. Planned activities include on-site presentations to counties, presentations to the CMHDA Directors, Small County Directors, and Workforce, Education and Training Coordinators, and technical assistance calls.
- Priorities for the Next Reporting Period: During the next reporting period, the Foundation plans to implement the marketing plan by visiting many county events, offering presentations on the program and application workshops, conducting technical assistance calls to applicants. Aside from marketing, the Foundation will focus on finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding with DMH, collaborating with DMH to develop regulations for the MHLAP program, and finalizing the Selection Committee membership. Once the deadline is realized, the Foundation will focus on selecting awardees through the Selection Committee, and finalizing contracts with each awarded applicant.