

2007 CALIFORNIA NETWORK OF MENTAL HEALTH CLIENTS CULTURAL COMPETENCY PROJECT REPORT

The Beginnings of the 2007 CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competence Project

The 2007 California Network of Mental Health Clients (CNMHC) Cultural Competency Project began with the planning for a Cultural Competency Institute at the Client Forum on January 27, 2007. The initial ideas for the project began during a conference call between the CNMHC Cultural Competency Committee members, Sally Zinman, Maria Maceira-Lessley and Rachel Guerrero in December 2006. During that call, Maria was identified as the project lead for the Cultural Competency Institute.

During the call, the following premises were identified:

1. Peer support and self-help are in most of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Community Services and Supports (CSS) Plans. These programs are being developed by the “same old people,” including clients who are being hired and trained by . That is, predominantly Caucasian consumers and others who already have access to mental health services, are the “leaders” in their local areas. This traditional process will continue to perpetuate disparities and people of color will be left out of the process.
2. The CNMHC’s special expertise and domain is peer support and self-help. It is this area where we are uniquely able and willing to address disparities.
3. The goal of our Project is to open up peer support and self help programs to communities of color in addition to Caucasian. Peer support and self-help programs are being developed throughout the State, so how can we make them more inclusive and relevant to communities of color? The CNMHC could take the lead on informing the mental health community about how to create culturally competent peer support and self-help programs. A larger goal could be to provide on-going consultation to peer support and self-help programs across the State on how to be more inclusive and accessible to specific cultural groups.
4. We could start with Latinos.
Rationale: We have many Latinos among CNMHC leadership that can accompany us in our outreach efforts; we could be the face that represents transformation and tolerance.
5. In our Cultural Competency Committee meeting, we identified Latinos as the biggest unrepresented group in California.
6. We could ask questions such as:
 - a. How do we develop peer support and self-help programs that would be viable for your population?
 - b. What components need to be there for you to become a part of our organization?
7. The “deliverable” would be a brief study from the consumer’s point of view of how peer support and self-help programs can be relevant and inclusive of Latinos.
8. Method to locate areas that we would target:
 - a. Look at CSS plans that are developing peer support and self-help programs throughout the state;
 - b. Then check to see which of these Counties have large Latino populations.
9. We should seek to hear the voices of Latino clients, families, and providers, remembering that each person owns their voice in directing their mental health care.

Work Group to Develop Cultural Competency Institute

The next step to begin this project was to convene a work group to develop the focus, goals and objectives for the Institute, and to lay the groundwork for what the 2007 CNMHC Cultural

Competency Project would accomplish. We held two conference calls to prepare for the Institute. The work group consisted of the following individuals who participated in the original planning calls:

Delphine Brody, CNMHC Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Coordinator
Patty Gainer, CNMHC MHSA Central Valley Regional Coordinator
Rachel Guerrero, Chief, California Department of Mental Health (DMH) Office of Multi-Cultural Services
John Lessley, Chief, DMH County Operations, South/Central
Maria Maceira-Lessley, CNMHC Cultural Competency Coordinator (Project Lead)
Matthew Mock, California Institute for Mental Health (CiMH) Center for Multi-Cultural Development
Zula Reeves, CNMHC Cultural Competency Committee
Daniel Rosas, CNMHC Board of Directors, Far North Region
Karen Zimmer, CNMHC President
Sally Zinman, CNMHC Executive Director

Overall Goal and Specific Tasks of the CNMHC Cultural Competency Project

Based on consensus of the work group, the overall goal for the 2007 CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competency Project is to make the Network more inclusive of clients from diverse communities. Although the Network would like to be inclusive of clients from all diverse communities, in order to make the best use of our limited budget, we decided to prioritize our efforts to make the Network more inclusive of Latinos. State DMH utilization and prevalence data shows that Latinos are the most under-served ethnic population in terms of comparing the percentage of clients served with the percentage that need services (prevalence), as well as compared with the percentage of Latinos in the statewide population.

As a specific task for the statewide project, the work group agreed that we should develop focus groups for Latinos in at least two counties in different regions of California, in order to hear focus group participant ideas about what peer support and self-help programs need to do to be accessible and meaningful to Latinos, and responsive to their needs.

We agreed that the overall goal and specific task for the statewide project would be the foundation for the Cultural Competency Institute. The Institute would provide background information for the statewide project, and would serve as a catalyst to generate ideas to begin the project.

Planning the Client Forum Cultural Competency Institute¹

During our first conference call, we discussed the goals and focus for the Institute, what we are hoping to accomplish, how it will be transformative, and what information we want from the participants. We discussed what we want to call this Institute, and who the presenters would be.

We also discussed ideas about the content of the Institute presentation. An over-arching purpose is to explore how to make the client movement relevant to people of color (including people who are bilingual and monolingual). Do we want to make them fit into our way of doing things (such as recovery based services, self-help, advocacy, etc.)? Are communities of color largely absent from the client movement because what we have to offer is not relevant to them?

¹ Client Forum Cultural Competency Institute, Conference Call Agenda, January 10, 2007.

Conference call participants thought it would be helpful to provide the Institute participants with a brief history of where the Network has been, what we have been attempting to do, and where we are at now.

We are always talking about wanting to increase the Network membership, and make things more welcoming for clients of color. The problem is that for clients of color, there are always pre-designed concepts of recovery, empowerment, peer support, and self-help, which may not translate as relevant to persons of color. How can we show examples of this? It sometimes does not translate and is not relevant because when these schools of thought were created, they did not include the voice of clients of color.

In the past, mental health systems and the client movement have gone out to communities of color with a “tool box” approach, without determining the cultural coping skills that may already be in place. (We know what you need, and its recovery!) Our biggest challenge is to avoid bringing something pre-created to communities of color, expecting them to accept it without helping design it. We need to find out what has worked in their communities and what is relevant to them.

We discussed the logistics of our preparation for the Institute, including the following:

- a. Do we need a face-to-face meeting prior to the institute?
- b. How will the audience participate during the institute?
- c. What handouts will we provide?
- d. Will we need any audio-visual equipment?
- e. How will the room be set up?
- f. How many breaks will we give during the Institute?
- g. What kinds of writings, symbolism, props, metaphors, poems, etc. can we use?
- h. Who does the set-up?
- i. Who is the note taker? (We should take this information back and use it for our statewide project.)
- j. Will interpreters be available if needed?

We also began planning how the Institute could serve as a catalyst for the CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competency Project. We discussed the need to identify a county or counties with a significant population of color, where peer support, self-help, and recovery-oriented activities are provided. Determine how many persons of color are participating. If only a small number are participating, clarify why not? If many clients of color are participating, find out what is the attraction, and what the communities of color find relevant in that method. If not involved, we need to find out what works for them, not prescribe what works for them. This Institute could be a springboard for a test of these concepts. What does recovery mean to you (directed to persons of color at the Institute)? What is relevant for you?

During the second conference call, we agreed to begin the Institute with a panel of presenters introducing themselves. The facilitators would describe the “learning agreements” for the Institute and ask if the participants agreed with those or had others for the group to consider. The facilitators would then ask the panel members three to four questions and each panel member would share their experiences related to the question. Following the panel discussion, we will invite audience members to respond to the questions. Our goal will be to cultivate a very safe environment for information sharing. The panel members would include Delphine Brody, Blanca DeLeon, Patty Gainer, Rachel Guerrero, Matthew Mock, Maria Maceira-Lessley, Zula Reeves, Daniel Rosas, and Karen Zimmer. Zula and Matthew were selected to co-facilitate. John Lessley was to record real-time notes on a

laptop. We developed a planning document for the Institute to ensure our goals and assignments were clearly identified.²

We decided to meet at 9 a.m. on the day of the Institute to discuss final preparations.

Cultural Competence Institute

Our notes from the Cultural Competence Institute³ are included as an attachment to this report, but we will summarize the interactions from the Institute in the paragraphs below.

Rachel Guerrero, Chief of the Office of Multi-Cultural Services at DMH, provided opening remarks to start the Institute. Rachel introduced herself and related experiences when she was a child to illustrate how we can claim back our culture.

Maria Maceira-Lessley (project lead) acknowledged Rachel for her years of participation with CNMHC and Cultural Competency. Maria mentioned that when she first entered the client movement, many of the concepts had already been decided ahead of time. In this Institute, we want you to share things in your personal being that help you cope. Help tell us what the Network can do to be relevant, and educate us about what works in your community.

Delphine Brody, CNMHC MHSa Coordinator, proposed a set of “learning agreements” for this group process. Please note the learning agreements must be owned by the group, not imposed by the facilitators.

1. You have a right to *pass*. (Do not have to talk.) Facilitators will call on you.
2. *Confidentiality*: Keep it between you and us.
3. Right to say *Ouch*. If someone said something hurtful or judgmental, you can do so. You have the floor for a few minutes to discuss that. Respect the person -- challenge the behavior.
4. *Step up and step out*. Leave room for others to speak.

Co-facilitator Matthew Mock, Director of the CiMH Center for Multi-Cultural Development, presented a list of learning agreements to help us be mindful of each other and make room for everyone to be at the table.

1. To be fully present.
2. Turn off pagers.
3. Talk from your own personal space.
4. Speak with respect.
5. Be aware of occupied space.
6. Share the air.
7. Agree to disagree.
8. Confidentiality - You never share anything. What people share is a gift to be received. I can share what I learned, but I would not give away what others gave me.
9. Take risks -- take care of others. Pace yourself in terms of what you want to share
10. Please strive to be PC (personally compassionate.)
11. Try to contribute to social justice.

² “Cultural Competency: Honoring and Promoting Culturally Diverse Ways of Healing” (planning document for Cultural Competence Institute).

³ Client Forum 2007, Cultural Competence Institute – Summary.

12. Isms that we experience were not our invention. It was there when we came on this earth, but we have the ability to make a difference and be impactful. This process will include everyone's voices.

Co-facilitator Zula Reeves introduced herself and talked about how we cannot know what the person sitting next to us needs since we do not share the same life experiences. Zula then directed the following question to panel members:

“How do you see what is happening in the client movement now, and what got you here?”

One by one, panel members Delphine Brody, Karen Zimmer, Patty Gainer, Blanca DeLeon, and Daniel Rosas shared their personal experiences of how they came to the client movement and their perspectives on what is happening now in the movement.

At this point, several members of the audience participated by providing comments and suggestions as to what the Network can do to be relevant in diverse communities (see notes for specifics). Participant represented people from the African American and Latino communities. One participant spoke about the culture, loneliness and discrimination experienced by people who are adopted. Maria, Blanca and Patty shared additional thoughts as part of this discussion.

Some examples of participant contributions to this discussion (summarized in our notes) are as follows:

We need to acknowledge racism and put it back on the table in the Network. We should find a place, and a way to describe it so that it is something we can talk about.

There is lack of dissemination of information for the African American community – we are under-represented. As African Americans we have changed over time; we are finding ourselves, our own identity. Do not take the words we say out; do not cover up what needs to be discussed.

Part of who we are, are what we experience. Speaking out can have consequences.

We are considered a part of society in many ways. The Network can be a place where people feel that they belong, a reason to keep fighting.

I can relate to many of the panelists. I usually do not talk much. I had past experiences of mental and physical abuse. Both of my parents were African American, but I have light coloring. This conference encourages me to speak up and speak out. Jay has helped me be able to speak.

I do not speak usually, at least on this particular topic. It is a very rare culture and I feel like I am the only one who has it (being adopted). I feel discriminated against in the world and in the mental health world. Its all about genealogy, where the histories come from, and families come from. It is tough. I am lucky to at least know my mother's side. As a child growing up, I was very abused because nobody knew I had an illness. My family does not get it about mental illness. Now they know I have a mental illness. (I was diagnosed at age 30 – 10 years ago.) As long as I am dealing with it, that is OK. I feel like I am alone in this box (a glass box, where nobody can touch it).

Next, the co-facilitators asked both panel members and the audience to respond to the following question:

“What partial solutions would you like to see address inclusiveness and inequity?”

Audience participants from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds provided a number of very thoughtful recommendations relevant to this question. Many participants shared personal experiences. Maria, Rachel and Blanca offered their comments as well.

Some examples of the responses to this question include:

I would like to hear about Curanderas and massage therapy at the next conference. People with authority under Medi-Cal should be saying you can receive all kinds of treatment, not just the white man's treatment.

Many non-US born communities do not approach agencies because most of the time we do not identify ourselves there. We feel we do not belong there. Suggestion – communities can come together around community gatherings, potlucks, dances, family, and education (e.g., teaching people how to read). Many people need basic life skills, e.g., how to dial a number, and alternative medicines. Many people do not want to take pills; they only want to get a job and housing. We have traditional medicines, herbals, etc., but the state will not fund them.

The client movement and cultural diversity do not seem to come together. It seems like something that is addressed on the side. We should have something like this at the plenary session. The website could show something about this.

I am from Guatemala. My mother is Indian, and my father is Hispanic (so I am Mestiza). When I came to the states, I did not speak any English. In order to keep my culture, I just learned enough English to get by. I struggled with that. Everybody thinks that we are the same, and we are not. When we go to any clinics, the forms just say “Hispanic”. I am not Hispanic, I am Mestiza. One of the biggest issues is the language. If someone is from a little village in Guatemala, making \$1 per day, and they now work for \$4 to \$5 per hour, they are making \$50. If they have a carpet, a TV, a phone, they are successful. Systems tend to push people to have a better life. From their point of view, they are successful, and we do not respect that. Recommendation – Change the forms. Be explicit about the ethnicity.

I went to my first Forum in 1999. I thought there was a sea of Caucasian mental health clients, but not many people of color. This time I came, and I noticed we are getting better. We are doing something right, but there is still something wrong. The criminal justice system puts barriers in front of me so I would not succeed. There is white privilege. Somehow, the white male's major depression is different from my major depression. My mom took us to the restaurant and put us in the back. Other people went to the front. The civil rights movement taught me that no matter what color you are, you are a second-class citizen if you are a mental health client. The movement must seek to get our trust. What can the Network do for me? Can they get rid of my two strikes? (Prison is a large mental health treatment system in California, as are the jails – mostly black and Hispanics.) It will take the Network and people here to do the right thing. People here go out to their communities and say, “Come to the next Forum.” You can be yourself; you do not have to separate your illness.

I want to see more of a relationship between the communities and the Network. We cannot get a snapshot by meeting quarterly. There needs to be a relationship, a commitment, a passion. Do we really know what is happening there? I ask the Network to be more connected with what is happening in the communities.

We have to have something to offer these communities, so when we do come to the door, we have something that makes sense to them. We have to be willing to make mistakes and ask forgiveness. We have to change what we do and ask them what makes sense for their communities.

The challenge is what do we have to bring to diverse communities?

Statewide Cultural Competency Project Goals

After the Cultural Competency Institute was completed, Maria Maceira-Lessley agreed to complete the Statewide Cultural Competency Project for CNMHC. The goals for the project were:

1. Develop and facilitate a Cultural Competency Institute at the Client Forum 2007 (already completed).
2. Develop focus groups for Latinos in two counties. These focus groups will attempt to answer the question of what peer support and self-help programs need to do to be accessible, meaningful to Latinos, and responsive to their needs.
3. Write a report of the findings of these focus groups with the goal of informing the mental health community how to create culturally competent peer support and self-help programs.

Work Group Conference Calls to Plan the Statewide Project

In order to design an effective, inclusive process for the focus groups in the two counties, a work group was formed. An invitation letter to prospective work group members is included as an attachment to this report.⁴ We wanted to include certain partners in the process, including representatives from CNMHC, State DMH, CiMH, and community partners.

Prospective group members were invited to join a “Google Group,” a website where documents related to the project can be posted, and members share information about the ongoing process.

Once work group members were confirmed, we asked them to identify prospective dates for conference calls. Two conference calls were held, on April 19 and May 7, 2007. Participants in the calls included the following work group members:

Maria M-Lessley	CNMHC (Cultural Competency Consultant) <i>Facilitator</i>
Catherine Bond	CNMHC <i>Note taker</i>
Delphine Brody	CNMHC / Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Director
Iris Frazier	DMH County Operations (Madera County Liaison)
Patty Gainer	CNMHC MHSA Coordinator (Central Valley)
Juan B. Gonzalez	Alameda County Pool of Champions
Lori Hack	DMH Information Technology
Troy Konarski	DMH County Operations (San Bernardino County Liaison)
John Lessley	Chief, DMH County Operations, South/Central Regions
Michael McPherson	CNMHC / Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (PAI)
David Weikel	Mental Health Association / MHSA Coordinator (Madera/Fresno)
Sally Zinman	CNMHC Executive Director <i>Timekeeper</i>

⁴ Invitation Letter to Prospective Work Group Members, March 30, 2007.

At the beginning of the April 19 call⁵, Sally Zinman provided background information. An overarching goal of the CNMHC since 1983 has been to increase the diversity of CNMHC membership. Although we have made some progress, we are “aware and still striving.”

Maria described the focus of this year’s Cultural Competency Project to the work group members, explaining that this year we are focusing on how peer support and self-help programs can be relevant to the Latino community. CNMHC is planning to do focus groups in two counties with large Latino populations that have begun to develop peer support and self-help programs.

Maria introduced the concept of Learning Agreements to the work group, explaining how they were effectively used at the Cultural Competency Institute. It will be up to the work group whether to adopt or modify the Learning Agreements. Delphine Brody summarized her contribution to the Learning Agreements.

Sally read quotes on “beginner’s mind – expert’s mind,” posted on the Google Groups website. “The mind of the beginner is empty, free of the habits of the expert, ready to accept, to doubt, and open to all the possibilities. It is the kind of mind that can see things as they are which step-by-step and in a flash can realize the original nature of everything” (quoting Shunryu Suzuki). Maria learned about the beginner’s mind as a graduate student. This concept can help an individual teach in ways that facilitate non-traditional ways of learning, and is one of the basics to hearing from communities with which we are not so familiar. Maria explained that the beginner’s mind could help us understand that we do not want to bring a pre-defined “tool box” approach to the focus groups. In keeping true to the beginner’s mind, we will be able to allow the Latino community members to self-define what would be helpful to them. Additionally we can meet them where they are at, and possibly learn any cultural coping skills that work in their community. Maria said that she is sharing information that may help our process, and encouraged others in the group to post any ideas or concepts they feel would be helpful.

The project objectives were described. Initially, the two counties proposed for the focus groups were Madera and San Bernardino. Maria explained that these counties were identified because both counties have a high percentage of Latinos, relatively high utilization of mental health services, and self-help and peer support are present in those counties. A recent news story⁶ mentioned a state-of-the-art drop-in center opened with Proposition 63 (MHSA) funds in Madera County, which may indicate initial success providing self-help in a county with a large Latino population. DMH County Operations liaisons for both these counties participated in this conference call. Maria reported that she had contacted both counties to see if there was interest and initially received positive responses.

We discussed the idea of finding local “team leaders” from the community. Sally and Maria both mentioned that the team leader concept was used in one of the first CNMHC regional projects written by Maria ten years ago, which was re-named the “What Do You Want Workshop” and “Peer to Peer Training.” Maria suggested that it would be helpful if CNMHC would find a way to pay local people to do the outreach, and that we could ask the host counties to assist with support for outreach.

Other ideas recommended by work group members included doing outreach where the Latino community members spend time, such as the barrios, migrant camps, low income housing, laundromats, primary care clinics that serve the poor, and places where menudo and pan dulce are

⁵ CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competency Project Teleconference Notes, April 19, 2007.

⁶ ABC-30 Action News, “Madera’s House of Hope,” October 27, 2006.

served on Sunday mornings. Additional suggestions included contacting bilingual Latino radio and television stations, as well as El Concilio and California Rural Legal Assistance (legal aid).

Maria suggested going to Madera first since it is the closer of the two counties. John said that DMH County Operations liaisons could help with contacting people, so that the counties may be able to help with food, meeting place, outreach, etc. The group supported the decision to go to Madera the first week in May.

The work group agreed to hold a follow-up call on May 7 to discuss the visit to Madera and work on focus group questions and logistics.

MADERA

A Window Into What Could Be Possible...

As I was walking up, I heard Mexican music coming from a small speaker that was outside of Hope House, playing just loud enough to make out the words. To the right was an outside picnic canopy and people were sitting around it, laughing, smoking and enjoying the music. I noticed that the outside of the building had been decorated, so you would easily know you were going to some kind of celebration. I told myself, "Wow, I just love that music." As I went through the entranceway, I got a whiff of someone making comida and my senses did not lie, chorizo (my most favorite comfort food that my mother made for us as children) was being cooked inside. I thought to myself, "I'm home."

At the entrance, we were greeted by an individual, who sat behind a desk. We were also welcomed by others who were sitting on the couches. Our greeter politely asked if we could sign in and make a nametag. Tim, the program manager, greeted us and then escorted us to the main area where the Town Hall meeting was to be held. He graciously introduced us to others in the room. I noticed immediately how happy everyone appeared. Most were smiling and talking with one another, waiting for the Town Hall meeting to start. Personally, I could not wait to taste the food being prepared. ;-)

Shortly thereafter, the Town Hall meeting started. Using a microphone, Tim and others started working through a list of things with our greeter from the desk sitting nearby taking notes. Hope House holds this meeting on a monthly basis. Meaningful participation was so apparent. I felt so much community, so much ownership and respect. Information was being exchanged for all to comment on. One of the purposes of the Town Hall meeting is to provide a regular time for the consumer community to share any successes, announcements, and/or concerns. Participants mentioned the CASRA conference they attended. Upcoming events were discussed and flyers passed around. They went around the room to ask if anyone had anything to say. Anyone from the Madera community can attend; they are open to the public. At first glance, I could not tell who staff was and who clients were. One of the distinctions apparent to me was a badge; the other was if someone introduced themselves as staff, consumer staff included.

There was so much food. I had chips and salsa, chorizo con papas, tortillas maize con queso which even out did the chorizo dish. Snow cones with fruit and small colored hats for decoration were being served. There was jalapeños galore ;-). Being memory challenged, I cannot remember all that was available. I do know that I over-ate and had to take a short break. After a while (it takes me some time to catch on to things), I determined that staff (including consumer staff) was serving the whole group. There were no sad faces. No empty stomachs!

After we finished eating, a large group started dancing. There was a woman strolling around with a guitar singing Tejano songs. She is a very talented singer! At different times, I started dancing (cumbias) as I made my way across the room for more food.

They played a mixture of Tejano music and American disco. Everybody was dancing with everyone all at the same time. It did not matter if you had a dancing partner; they just were having fun. No one ever got upset, raised their voice or appeared angry. There was no one who appeared over-medicated in the room. Maybe just me with all that I take now ;-)

As we were mingling and getting to know everyone, we shared our desire to hold a focus group in their Latino community. They eagerly welcomed the idea. For starters, Hope House staff as well as others has graciously agreed to help us. Several others mentioned an interest in starting a local client network.

Fifty-plus attended, with the vast majority being from the Latino community. Additionally, a significant number of African Americans and a smaller portion were Caucasian. This community of folks definitely cared for one another. Being a Puerto Rican/Mexican/Chicana who was raised in a family of fifteen, the group looked and acted like a big family. Both Zula and I were invited back next month to their 50's theme event. Overall, Hope House and its community members sure know how to celebrate Cinco de Mayo. For both Zula and I we are very fortunate to have spent our Cinco de Mayo in Madera.

Statewide Cultural Competency Project Conference Call – May 7, 2007

We held a conference call with the project work group on Monday May 7, 2007, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Maria and Zula co-facilitated the call, which was an open discussion format, with Zula and Maria offering brief background information to facilitate dialogue. Please refer to the conference call agenda.⁷

Participants in the call introduced themselves. In addition to the work group members, John Pacheco client and employee of Hope House in Madera, joined the call. (John Pacheco is also referred to in this document by our nickname for him, “JP”.) Maria, Zula, and JP described the visit to Madera, which was a very positive experience.

We discussed the notes from the previous conference call and asked work group members for clarification on discussion items in which they were involved.

We discussed whether to go to San Bernardino County or San Benito County for the second county in the focus group process. Maria shared data on the two counties. Both have a large Latino population and serve a high proportion of Latinos according to State DMH prevalence data. The data shows that San Benito serves a higher percentage of Latinos, in fact, the percentage served is about the same as the percentage of Latinos in the county population. A newspaper article described a drop-in center in San Benito that was recently opened in downtown Hollister using MHSA funding. The option of conducting focus groups with Latinos in San Benito would use fewer funds from our very limited budget. Going to San Bernardino would require additional funds for overnight travel on each trip.

The next agenda item was pre-planning discussion, team member development, meeting logistics, agreed-upon timelines and participants. We discussed the concept of recruiting local Latino clients to

⁷ CNMHC Cultural Competency Statewide Project Conference Call Agenda –May 7, 2007.

outreach into their own communities. We would like to empower local clients by having them identify places to conduct outreach, and make final decisions on focus group questions and locations. During this process, we hope to cultivate local client leaders from the Latino communities.

We discussed general time frames for the project. We planned the next two Madera visits, including the next visit on May 11, 2007. A table listing the planning conference calls and all business meetings / visits to both counties is provided as an attachment to this report.⁸

Second Visit to Madera County on May 11, 2007

Background Information

Maria Maceira-Lessley and Zula Macchell Reeves visited Madera on May 3, 2007, and discussed the Cultural Competency Statewide Project with several individuals at Hope House, a MHSA funded wellness center in Madera. We agreed to come back each week until the project is completed. The May 11 meeting was to follow up on the original meeting May 3.

Visiting Hope House

Maria, Zula and John Lessley returned to Hope House. Two consumer staff at Hope House (John Pacheco and Lori Nieto) and a client at Hope House (Carlos) were interested in helping with the project. We informally met with them, other staff, clients at Hope House, including the Program Director (Tim), and the Day Resources Coordinator (Alfonso). We found out that Randy, the Madera County Ethnic Services Coordinator, and the Patients Rights Advocate, both have an office at Hope House. Tim told us that 83% of the work hours at Hope House are consumer work hours. Ten of the 12 staff are consumers.

Before Hope House was opened, a grassroots effort by local consumers resulted in peer support at two consumer “cottages,” which were volunteer-run with a “canteen.” Weekly meals were served for a Town Hall meeting. The cottages are where the counseling center was located. Since Hope House opened, the client-run services have moved out of the cottages, which are now used for storage.

The individuals interested in helping with the Cultural Competency Statewide Project began to share background information about themselves. John served on the Madera County Mental Health Board for two terms, and has been involved with the Mental Health Association. John came from Albuquerque.

We began talking about employment issues, including the “Ticket to Work” program from the Social Security Administration (SSA). Maria remarked that the SSA has someone in every community whose job it is to help you return to work. We talked about the availability of state-sponsored training in many areas related to consumer employment, which is coordinated by Edie Covent, who works with the Department of Mental Health/Department of Rehabilitation Co-Operative program. Maria added that in Stanislaus County, DRAIL (an independent living center) helps educate individuals on how to work under the “Ticket to Work” program.

We agreed to provide Lori, Carlos and John with copies of everything.

Zula correctly reminded us that we had begun sharing background information. Carlos said he had worked at Hope House previously, but was now coming there as a client. Carlos shared that several years ago, he participating in a self-help center in Covina (in Southern California). The center was staff-run, but included education and groups.

⁸ CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competence Project - Listing of Business Meetings.

John and Lori were working at Hope House on Friday. To respect their work schedules, we all met during their lunch break at Sal's Mexican Restaurant. While waiting for the lunch hour, we met with Diana, who is multi-talented, performing music at Hope House events. Diana volunteers for Hope House and provides a very valuable, heart-felt service. Today Diana was making Hope House T-shirts for a NAMI walk, customized for each participant with their name and individualized artwork. Diana gave us T-shirts with our names, and in return, we donated soft drinks for the community of clients.

Discussion and Planning

At our lunch meeting, we talked about how to implement the Statewide Project in Madera. The goal for the focus group is to reach the Latino community.

We will be reaching out to the monolingual/bilingual population who are not aware of the CNMHC organization or the voluntary services they value such as peer-support and self-help.

We will need to develop a plan. We brainstormed ideas on what would be an effective approach. Lori, John and Carlos suggested that we should get the word out about the focus group, using flyers, radio, and word of mouth. Develop relationships with people who you would like to participate in the focus group. Be mindful of respect for the community members. Take time to tell them about the event.

What do we want to call the event? Lori expressed concern about what if nobody shows up. Some ideas for the name of the event included "Comunidad Unidos," "Better health," "Healthy mind, body and spirit," "Journey to..." (fill in the blank), "Road to..." (fill in the blank), and "Communities united for a health mind, body and spirit." Our brainstorming during this meeting was the genesis for the eventual name of the event and our leadership group in Madera: "Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad," or "Latino Communities United."

We need to be aware of where the likely participants get their food. We could go to tiendas to advertise and do some social marketing for the event. To help reach the community, we can ask people we know where do you shop. Do you know someone who works at a store? Lori knows someone who works at the "Bridge Store."

We discussed the idea of not identifying this as a mental health consumer event, but instead a community event. Mental health can be a touchy subject. During the focus groups, we can ask the participants what makes you feel better. What makes you happy?

Places identified to advertise the event were the food bank on Road 26, the swap meet held on Wednesday and Sunday. One of the swap meets is located at the drive-in across from Wal-Mart.

We could create two flyers, one in Spanish and one in English. We could give out raffle tickets for a prize(s). We could have balloons. We discussed that CNMHC will pay for balloons and other supplies. Please let Maria know what supplies are needed.

Bertha, who was holding cooking classes, might be able to help cook the food and help interact with Spanish speaking participants.

We discussed the location for the event. Griffin Hall would not be a good location, as El Migre showed up there in the past for other events. One suggestion was to hold the event in a park. If holding an event outdoors in June, the weather could be hot. Pan Am Park (near Cleveland and Lake

Streets) could be a good location, since it has a large meeting room and kitchen area. John indicated that a City Council member might be able to help us not get charged fees for the use of the room.

We began discussing a time to meet again. Lori indicated that Friday is a good day, but Maria and John have another meeting next week on Friday (May 18). Tuesday and Wednesday are not good for John due to his work schedule. Thursday would work, except for a 10 am Anger Management meeting. Lori, John and Carlos will let Maria know what dates and times would work best for them. Maria will communicate with everyone regarding what dates work for Maria, John and Zula.

Between now and our next meeting, John, Lori and Carlos will meet again to develop the ideas for the event. Some things we discussed include:

1. What day can Maria and Zula meet with them the week of May 14-18?
 - a. Either Wednesday and Thursday works for Maria
2. Decide the name of the event.
3. Decide where to hold the event, what date and time?
4. If possible, follow up to determine if the meeting room at Pan Am Park is available, and whether the room could be obtained for free or for a reduced price.
5. Begin thinking about how to phrase the questions for the focus group.
6. Develop ideas on how to advertise the event. If time allows, begin developing a flyer.
7. Let Maria know if you need to start making purchases so she can request funds.
8. Let Maria and Zula know what assistance is needed for the project, such as in-kind support, transportation, internet access, money to make purchases, menu development, etc.

Between now and our next meeting, Maria will work on the following:

1. Type up minutes from our 5/11 meeting and email to Lori, John and Carlos for their review and consideration. Remember to include pictures taken at Hope House.
2. Contact Kathy Trevino to request initial budget funds we will need in Madera.
3. Create a petty cash system prior to visiting Madera this week.
4. Send Lori, John and Carlos the link to join our Google work group.
5. Suggest working together on a Saturday, either here in Salida or in Madera.
6. In addition to visiting Madera once a week, suggest a conference call during the week too.

Madera CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – May 19, 2007

Maria, Zula, and John L traveled to Madera on Saturday, May 19, 2007 and met with three Madera client leaders (John P, Lori and Carlos) at a local restaurant.

The group talked about using computers during our next meeting in Madera to work on the community event flyer. Maria will bring both laptops so we can work on the flyer together. Maria will also be introducing them to Google Talk and Google Groups. Lori shared that Tim has agreed to let JP and Lori use Hope House computers for during their non-work hours.

Maria agreed to send an email invitation to JP and Lori to join Gmail, Google Talk and Google Group.

Outreach ideas:

- Set up table at Spanish church services to pass out flyers and encourage attendance.
- Pass out flyers at the swap meet near the Bridge Store, at the interfaith community events and migrant housing.

At our event, community members will be offered the choice of filing out the CNMHC MHSA survey in both Spanish and English. In addition, we will have a description of CNMHC available in both languages.

Lori has already spoken with five possible participants in the event that no one attends. Lori shared that it is easier for her to explain the event to individuals who speak English than for person who are monolingual Spanish speaking.

Things to do during the time period of May 20-31, 2007:

- JP agreed to contact someone with the City Council to discuss the possibility of in-kind support for the use of a conference room at the Pan Am Community Center. Maria will provide JP with a letter on behalf of CNMHC requesting to utilize the Pan Am Community Center.⁹
- Lori agreed to talk with Tim to clarify the possibility of using Hope House staff computers during non-work hours.
- Lori agreed to work with Maria on the flyer and a script to explain our event to prospective participants. (High Priority)
- Lori and JP agreed to meet (including Carlos) to develop focus group questions and brainstorming on how to have them translated into Spanish.
- We discussed how comfortable the group is with seeking in-kind support from Behavioral Health. Lori agreed to speak with Tim G. as to appropriateness.

JP shared his list of priorities for our event as follows:

1. Meeting days and times-place for leadership team
2. Flyers/Pamphlets
3. Translator
4. Outreach/Places to go
5. Building/Conference room
6. Food
7. Transportation

Local Outreach

Immediately following our lunch meeting, part of our group (John P, Maria, Zula and John L) visited several possible locations for the community event / focus group. We went to the Pan American Community Center. The location has a large multi-purpose area used for weddings and other large gatherings. We spoke with a man who helps set up the events for the center, named Danny. We mentioned that we might be interested in using the center. He gave us a tour of the facility, including a smaller room (capacity of about 80 people) that might be more appropriate for our purposes. John P described for Danny the goals of our project, including holding a community event in order to hear from the Latino community regarding what has worked to keep them healthy. We felt it was much more helpful during outreach for a local individual to do most of the talking.

Danny told us about another community event which was happening the same day, sponsored by the Madera Ministry, a local group consisting of many local churches. We briefly visited this community event. The Madera Ministry held their event that Saturday at a church with plenty of room to set up activities. The church is located across the street from a migrant housing apartment complex, and some residents of the migrant housing participated in the community event. Representatives from local churches provided food and drinks, and organized activities for children. Local businesses were allowed to have booths at the event, as long as they did not charge for anything they provided. We

⁹ Request to Utilize the Pan American Community Center, Madera, May 30, 2007.

spoke with Stephanie, who organized this event, and exchanged contact information. She told us she would be willing to help refer us to local community resources, such as someone to provide food for the event we are planning. We enjoyed the festivities for a short time.

Leaving the Madera Ministry community event, we drove past other sites where we are considering for outreach locations. We stopped at the Bridge Store, where many Latinos shop. A vendor in the parking lot was cooking and selling barbecued food. We then stopped at the local drive-in theater, where large flea markets are held on Tuesdays. Many Latinos attend the flea market. We thought this would be an excellent place to distribute flyers and tell people about the event in both English and Spanish. Our last stop before leaving Madera was Rotary Park. We observed several covered areas with large groups of tables throughout the park. JP told us that the covered areas are available through the local Parks and Recreation Department to be reserved and rented out. We noticed that many of the people at the park were Latinos.

Madera CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 3, 2007

The Madera community members helping with the project (JP, Lori and Carlos) traveled to Maria and John's home in Salida for the June 3 meeting.

We discussed the need to confirm the location for the community event. JP has experienced difficulty reserving the Pan Am Community Center. So far, the City of Madera has not agreed to give us a reduced price for renting the Center and it is only available on limited dates, mostly during the week. The City council meets on the 13th for other than regular business. Use of public funds is a barrier, to waiving usage fees. For these reasons, we might need to look for locations other than Pan Am. Some ideas included the area near Bridge Store. How about schools, since JP knows someone in charge of Adult Education at the schools? Washington School is in the area. There is a community center near the Bridge Store, where they hold Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings. A senior citizen center is located in the same building, and NA is held in the back. The Parks and Recreation Department is in charge of the use of this community center. The Department of Social Services may have a meeting room we could use. Are people comfortable going there? Does migrant housing have a center? Would it be possible to use the water tower? After all our discussion, the group agreed that our first choice is to see if the Hispanic community center, where NA is held, is available. JP will inquire about the price. After we pay, still may be able to get fees waived and have them refunded.

JP wants to include more community members to help with the project. JP would like to ask people what areas they would like to help with. For example, Diana can take over the music. We need to form committees to be responsible for food, decorations, and childcare. We need to add Cecelia (childcare person) and Robbie (translate script) to our list of people to help with the event. Cecelia knows many of the people we might want to recruit. JP's neighbor Marcella could attend. JP's whole apartment complex can attend.

We discussed plans to conduct outreach. JP said he could set up a table with materials at St. Joaquin Church after their Spanish mass. Virginia (a clinician with Madera County Behavioral Health Services who has been assigned to assist with our project) has already spoken to Father Sanchez, who was very willing to help with outreach. JP called Danny last night and left a message regarding his assistance with the ministerial association.

Everybody is most comfortable with holding the community event on a Thursday. What about a weekend? Everyone seems to think the weekend would be best. June 30 looks like the best date.

We discussed the report that will result from the focus groups. The report goes to the county only when we have a final draft. The data and information will be very valuable to the Department. This might help with getting the Department to provide in-kind support. They can help with money to pay for items we will need for the community event. Should they talk to Tim to let him know we are meeting with Janice? Maria has already shared with David Weikel (MHSA Coordinator) the initial in-kind support needs for this project and did not think there was a problem. Before we approach Janice (Behavioral Health Director), we need to see what we cannot obtain through other methods.

Transportation would be a very important in-kind support. Food is also a need.

This group needs to agree on how decisions will be made on spending the funds. Everyone needs to communicate with one another to update each other and get consensus on decisions.

Discussed the “script” that project members will use during outreach to describe the project and the community event. We agreed to use the word “junta” for a discussion group. “Hablar con esa gente.” “Vamos a partir esta platica.” “Podemos ayudarte en algo.” “Bien estar.” (These were phrases we discussed using in the script.)

During the meeting, we agreed on a draft script in both English and Spanish. As an attachment to this report, we have included the fourth draft of our script¹⁰, which was revised on June 9. Note that as of June 9, we had agreed to use Rotary Park as the location for the community event, since the Senior Citizen’s Center was not available.

We also agreed on a timeline to accomplish project tasks in the following week. (We are providing this timeline as an example of timelines produced throughout the project.)¹¹

Madera CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 8, 2007

During this meeting, Maria Maceira Lessley and Lorilynn J.B. Alcarez (Client support person from Stanislaus County) met with John Pacheco and other Madera clients at Hope House. We discussed the status of project activities. JP reported that the Senior Citizen’s Center is not available. The Parks and Recreation Department said that they do not rent the center out. The use of the Senior Center is limited to the senior activities and Narcotics Anonymous groups. We decided to make plans to utilize Rotary Park for our community event.

We had hoped to meet with a larger group of people involved in the project to coordinate tasks and confirm who will participate on committees responsible for food at the community event, transportation to the event, and identifying questions that we will use during the focus group. Maria had invited a larger group via email, but many clients and support staff had other obligations in their schedules that were unable to re-arrange. We decided to schedule a meeting for next week (June 13) with the entire leadership team of clients and support staff involved in the project.

During our previous meeting on June 3, Maria and JP had planned to meet with Janice Melton, Behavioral Health Services Director to request the following in-kind support:

1. Access to county computers, printer, copying, fax and telephone in support of this project.
2. Transportation of focus group participants to and from community event (June 30).
3. Help with food and refreshments for the event (tortillas, shredded beef, rice, and beans).
4. Paper plates, plastic cups and silverware.

¹⁰ Script for Recruiting Focus Group Participants, Fourth Draft, June 9, 2007.

¹¹ Madera Cultural Competency Project Weekly Timeline, June 3, 2007.

5. Raffle prizes.
6. Van and driver to distribute flyers.

Janice Melton was out of the office, so JP agreed to approach Janice early next week with these requests.

Maria provided JP with \$96.00 in funds from the CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competency Project budget to reserve picnic areas 3, 4 and 5 at Rotary Park on June 30, 2007. When JP reserved the site at the park on June 11, the Parks and Recreation Department requested an insurance policy since the event was open to the public. CNMHC was able to provide Maria with a copy of their liability insurance policy to address this need.

Madera CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 13, 2007

On June 13, a meeting was held with the project leadership team for Madera to finalize preparations for the community event. Persons present at the meeting were John P, Virginia, Carlos, Zula, Maria, John L, Diana, and Roseann and Stephanie (from Mission Madera Ministry).

We identified a facilitator (JP) and note taker (Zula) for this meeting.

Carlos mentioned that we should tell the participants the information that is share remains confidential. We will use their information but not their names.

Nametags would be one way to help communicate with people while respecting confidentiality. (Only if members are comfortable.) We should have nametags available at welcoming desk (table) and let participants complete the nametags themselves.

Stephanie does an event the third Saturday of every month (note: JP, John L, Maria and Zula attended one on May 19; see notes above) with 40-100 people, set up crew, has a shopper. Love Inc. is the clearinghouse for the church. Their contact information is Mission Madera Community Outreach, 101 West Adell Street, Madera. Mission Madera collaborates and celebrates recovery with New Hope of Madera, and they collaborate with other churches. John P said we could help each other out with in-kind support. Stephanie can offer Roseann's help, maybe with serving foods. We have a team that does crafts and face painting, but they are not available that weekend. New Hope has a team that can help. The contact person is Ron Jiovanetti. The new chaplain at Rescue Mission, Virgil, can get people to help. Jesse Perez, New Hope Madera, helps at-risk males 16-25, for set-up and clean up. We can contact Roseann to coordinate assistance from Mission Madera and the groups they collaborate with.

We reviewed draft versions of the flyer to advertise our community event. The group completed the final revision during this meeting¹², including a Spanish language version.¹³ Many of the ideas for the flyer were developed by Virginia and Diana, staff support persons assigned to assist with the project.

As the flyer was completed, we discussed where to conduct the outreach and how many flyers to distribute. Support staff suggested that distributing more than 100 flyers might result in too many people showing up at the event, not having enough food for everyone, and having too many people to be able to manage a focus group. For this reason, the group decided not to do outreach at the flea

¹² Flyer for Latino Communities United Community Event at Rotary Park June 30, 2007.

¹³ Flyer for Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad – Rotary Park June 30, 2007 (Spanish).

market on Tuesdays at the drive-in movie theater. Alternative ideas for outreach were for the following individuals to go to specific locations and bring a limited number of flyers to distribute.

- 1) Virginia – First Five
- 2) Carlos – Bridge Store
- 3) John- at the apartments where he lives
- 4) Welfare office (Department of Social Services) – confirm volunteer

The leadership group also suggested that Diana help with outreach; she would be great at this. We also decided to keep track of people who are invited, including transportation needs and children attending (include gender and age if possible for age appropriate activities) so we can better be prepared on the day of the community event.

We reviewed and discussed our timeline. Since Maria will only be able to come to Madera once per week between now and June 30, we need to rely on local clients and support staff to complete most of the tasks that need to be completed in order to make the community event a success. The tasks still to be completed include:

1. Visit Rotary Park to plan set-up of environment and confirm logistics
2. Confirm committee creation for decorating, food, music, child activities and transportation needed for the event
3. Identify greeters and other people to help out, e.g., Robbie, Cecilia, David and Gwen
4. Review script for accurateness, finalize for outreach, and role-play prior to taking out to the field.
5. Develop plan for outreach such as physical locations, media organizations and other identified community agencies.
6. Recruit for event participation. Keep track of people who are invited.
7. Finalize focus group questions to ask community event participants.
8. Encourage committees to meet at least once or more per week to work on project.

We decided to meet next on June 21, 2007, from 9 a.m. to noon at Hope House.

Madera CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 21, 2007

On Thursday June 21, at 9 a.m., Maria and JP met with Janice Melton to confirm whether Madera County would be willing to pay for the food for the community event as an in-kind contribution. Janice was very supportive and agreed to reimburse our project for up to \$250. Janice agreed to provide transportation and to have three of her staff, including a clinician, available to assist on the day of the event.

This was great news, in addition to the fact that Hope House, as an independent contractor to the county, agreed to provide tables and chairs, and to set up an informational booth at the event. We must also give Hope House management, staff and clients much thanks for allowing us to hold meetings at their location, provided release time for some of their staff, and invited us to all of their events that occurred during the project.

Later, Maria and Madera clients and support staff involved in the project met to discuss the following outstanding issues:

1. Determine status of in-kind support from local businesses, e.g., paper plates, plastic cups and utensils, raffle prizes, balloons, piñata, bouncing bin and snow cone machine for child activities. Discuss follow-up plan, next steps, and identify volunteers.
2. Confirm roles with each individual who will be assisting, e.g.,
 - a. Diana – Introductory remarks, guitar-playing, decorations. Agree on specific things to mention during the introductory remarks.
 - b. Virginia – Mental health table.
 - c. Confirm committee child activities and transportation responsibilities for event.
 - d. Identify greeters and other people to help.
 - e. Confirm who will volunteer to be the timekeeper, and who will keep track of who is next to be called on to speak?
3. Finalize plan for outreach to specific physical locations and community agencies identified at 6/13/07 meeting. (Refer to list from the 6/13/07 meeting shown above.) Discuss follow-up plan, next steps, and identify volunteers. Identify specific people who will go to which places on which dates.
4. Identify who will translate the questions into Spanish. (Perhaps Diana and Carlos.)
5. Identify things not to do at the community event in order to be respectful (no-no's).
6. Confirm availability of bounce house (JP).

Preparatory Tasks Completed During the Week of June 25-28

Maria purchased T-shirts for volunteers at the event (including T-shirts of sizes requested by each volunteer) and went to Office Depot to obtain iron-on logos “Latinos Unidos en el Comunidad” for the T-shirts. We purchased supplies, such as paper plates and plastic cups, for the event.

JP conferred with Maria by telephone, providing an update that we will not be renting a bouncing bin or snow cone machine because there are no electrical outlets in the picnic areas of the park that we are renting.

Madera CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Preparation – June 29-30, 2007

Maria and Zula went to Madera the day before the community event to discuss final details and tie up any loose ends. Iris Frazier, the State Department of Mental Health County Operations liaison to Madera County, also traveled to Madera with Maria and Zula. Maria, Zula and Iris met with JP and Carlos to review the progress on outreach and strategize on logistics for the event. We discussed and made plans to complete all last-minute tasks.

We confirmed that outreach was conducted during the last day (Friday June 29). Virginia gave Lori a ride to DSS and suggested it would be best to leave the flyers with the receptionist. (Confirm the other locations for outreach and when the outreach occurred, e.g., First Five.) Carlos conducted outreach at the Bridge store at an earlier date.

On Friday afternoon, we stopped by Rotary Park, observing that the picnic tables were dirty and needed to be cleaned up. On Friday evening, Maria and Zula went to Wal-Mart, the T-Shirt Outlet,

and Office Depot to purchase supplies needed for the event. JP, Carlos, Maria, Zula, Iris and John met at Sal's Mexican restaurant for a dinner meeting, and continued the meeting at the Holiday Inn Express, working on last-minute follow-up items. After the meeting adjourned, Maria, Zula and John ironed the "Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad" logos onto the T-shirts using the iron at the hotel. (This task took a bit longer than expected, finishing up in at 3 or 4 in the morning.)

On Saturday morning, Iris obtained a helium kit for balloons at the event. JP set up the event location at the park. (Note: JP and his friends had to clean up a mess from previous occupants of the picnic areas.) They cleaned off the picnic tables, covered the tables with tablecloths, inflated and fastened helium balloons, set up the piñata, and set up the arts and crafts table. Hope House representatives set up their informational table.

Maria, Zula, John and Iris arrived at Rotary Park. When we arrived at the park, we were very impressed with how much John and his friends had transformed the picnic area. We noted a few items that still needed to be purchased. John and Iris went to obtain those things.

The food caterers began to arrive and set up the buffet. They brought very traditional Mexican food, including carnitas, beans, rice, and fruit punch. The caterer was arranged by Roseann and Stephanie of Mission Madera, so this was definitely a collaborative community effort. The food preparers spoke mostly Spanish, and were assisted by Mission Madera volunteers who helped lift large food trays and containers of ice.

MADERA COMMUNITY EVENT FOCUS GROUP
Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad Leadership Committee
June 30, 2007 Focus Group - Madera County
Note Taker/Recorders: Iris Frazier and John Lessley

Diana provided introductory remarks, stating that everything said here will be confidential. By this, we mean we will not use participants' names, and if an individual does not want us to include what they share in our report, we will honor their request. Diana stated the purpose of the focus group: "We are gathered to welcome the Latino community. Thank you for coming. We have come to hear what kind of peer support and self-help programs we need in Madera." (Carlos then interpreted in Spanish).

Participants:

- Approximately 36 participants
- 7 Children
- Approximately 14 known Latino adults
- Approximately 15 non-Latino adults

Italics = Consumer Community Member Comments

Questions and Answers

Question - Do any of you participate in peer support and self-help programs?

I go to Hope House. It helps me out. They helped me get a car.

Do you go anywhere other than Hope House?

Yeah, places to go like Oakhurst.

Hope House is like family.

I like to go to Hope House for groups to cope with depression. A Hope House group helped me with anger management. I like the classes. I will start going to a group called DBT dialectic, and I will go to the AOD services for drug counseling.

Question - Does anyone cope with depression without using mental health?

I need the services to cope.

When services are not available, I play basketball and sports. It burns off my endorphins, which makes me think clearer.

A Staff participant presented a Latino gentleman who asked her to tell us that, "He is very embarrassed to go for mental health services. He thinks they will point him out at the clinic. He is more embarrassed due to stigma.

A lot of the members are afraid to go to mental health because of stigma, so they come to Hope House, then later move into counseling.

All colors are equal including Hispanic people. Hispanics have always been good to me. Even in high school. (Michael from Sacramento)

Carlos stated the theme of the group in Spanish.

Can I find a job in mental health?

Carlos said yes. There are programs. There is a lady name Linda Fitzgerald she can help you get a job. She will take you to put in applications at different places.

The network of care that is being set up now, where will it be?

There will be representatives here to tell you today (from the California Network of Mental Health Clients or CNMHC).

Will work affect my SSI, if I get a job?

Carlos said no.

(Clarifying Note: Ticket to Work and other programs can help protect your SSI benefits, but you should refer to the Social Security Administration and county mental health to find out how this would work in your specific situation.)

Do you have a website? (A client directed this question toward a CNMHC representative.)

Zula said yes. We will make it work.

Question – What would you like to see in your community for services?

We need transportation (for migrant workers) when they cannot get to the outskirts of Madera. Because they are farm workers, they cannot come in (for services) until after 5 PM.

Are you going to be able to reach out to them? Send someone out to them to let them know what is available, since they are cut off from everyone else.

Virginia stated that her job would be to do outreach to the Latino community. We will target the Latino community with an extension clinician who will provide services. We will also do outreach to the Native American community. We will do therapy in their home or in our office. Or maybe make use of Hope House.

People are afraid to come in. It took five years for my son to get the help he needed. My son had bipolar disorder. We had called the police because he acted out. Mental health needs to listen to people, even the schools. When a parent is crying out for help, people need to listen. When I went into a depression, I did not seek services, because I was already mad at the system about how long it took them to give my son services. I eventually started seeing a counselor at mental health.

Follow-up Question – Did you look for help anywhere else?

I go to AA because when I am depressed, I use alcohol and drugs. I have to take responsibility for myself to see my kids.

Are you going to take clients to parks, or places away from their homes?

Virginia stated that her goal is to bond with the client, and meet them where they are at; to ask the client what they need and try and do that.

Maria commented that the idea of clients meeting away from home in the park is a good one. Maria shared that long ago when she was afraid, her therapist used to take her to a park.

When I was going through depression, my pastor's wife would take me to the park and counsel me. It really helped; it was more relaxing.

Are you going to gear the next event towards African Americans, as well as Hispanics? African Americans are almost treated as if they are invisible in Madera.

Yes, and that should go in our report.

Patty Gainer of CNMHC said she wants to show her support for what you are doing here in Madera. Patty would like to come here and help in a different way. In some communities, the spiritual guides are important to their mental health (as a theme). Also, families are a theme.

The generation that does not use mental health services – their children will be more prone to needing them. It might be too late for the older generation.

Question – What else in the community do we need to do to reach the youth?

We can take them out to play baseball or bowling, or something like that.

Madera is a model county in the valley due to David and others.

My son was nineteen years old, when became mentally ill. I did not know what to do. I am from the Bay area and I moved to Madera four years ago. The caseworkers are awesome in Madera. There are

a lot of resources. Hope House is great for classes and a great place for my son to be. My son is now in a board and care. I now know who to call and who will help me.

Hope House may be getting a grant to work with the police. They need sensitivity. They need to know how to treat people with mental illness. Many clients at Hope House have shared that they have been harassed by the police.

When I called the police, 911, because my son was acting out, I always made sure I told them that he had mental problems so they would not hurt him. I would tell them to not come in to hurt him, he just needs help. I would always be afraid that they would hurt him or take him to jail. Now when I call 911, I know what to tell them so they will not come in with guns blazing. But the police need to be trained better on how to deal with clients.

Police officers now have a prayer group, with a handful of officers.

There are a lot of concerns about transportation in the community. Also, sometimes clients say that they have to stay in the hospital a long time to wait for an opening in a board and care.

Question – Do you have any suggestions for reaching Latinos?

It would be a good idea to have a line for Spanish speaking people to call. They end up calling 911. Maybe Hope House can have a line. Other counties may be doing that.

We need to communicate to the police, do not come in with your guns blazing. Officers need to be trained. We need a code to tell them it is a mental health client. My son got tazered.

It would be nice to set up a booth at the swap meet at the drive-in, to reach out to the Latino community.

Maria said we wish we could know what would help the un-served...if you have Latino friends who do not come.

My mom does not know where to go and I do not know where to take her.

Lori stated that she went to Social Services. They acted like they liked what I was talking about. But they didn't come. I reached them but it is very frightening for them. They come from an old world into a new world.

I am stuck in the country and isolated. I had to call 911 for services. My mother had to move to town.

Maybe we can contact the T.V. stations and Radio stations and put a write an article in the Spanish newspaper, and also the Madera Tribune Newspaper. Barbecues are advertised.

End of Focus Group Questions and Answers

Zula introduced the CNMHC representatives and said a few words on behalf of CNMHC.

At this point, the group started to break-up for lunch, etc., since the food had been ready for some time and people were becoming hungry.

Lunch and Caterer Interview

We enjoyed a wonderful, spicy lunch. I have challenges eating enough, but I ended up going back for seconds. After the meal, we were enjoying informal conversation and waiting to transition to the children's activities. While standing near the food serving area, John experienced one of those rare moments we all have from time to time when something important suddenly dawns on you like a lightning bolt. He was mindful that the food caterers are Spanish-only speakers, and they were busy getting the food ready while we held our focus group. Maybe the catering women are the most representative people at the event of monolingual Latino community members. John mentioned this to me, and we had a bilingual Madera community member ask them if they would mind us interviewing them about what people in their community do to keep healthy, and what peer support and self-help programs need to do to make them want to find out more about our organization. The senior catering woman agreed to the interview. Diana agreed to interpret during the interview. The following reflect our notes from this important interview.

Question - What would the California Network of Mental Health Clients and your local mental health agency need to do to make people from your community want to become involved?

Papers (documentation) would be helpful. Because they do not have social security numbers, they feel they will be denied support. A lot of them do not recognize they have a mental illness and sometimes it takes a family member to recognize this. A lot of people who are not documented do seek support, but the system tells them what they need and don't need. They ask about social security numbers.

Car insurance is expensive. Even if living in town, they are afraid to drive. It is not worth risking driving to the clinic. Instead, they handle mental health problems on the home front.

Question – What things do you do in your own community to keep healthy?

We use herbalists and healers. There will be a cost if using mental health services, such as how to pay for medications. If we apply, we will be deported. It is not worth risking fake ID, etc.

Question – What would make it more comfortable for you to receive support?

A Spanish-speaking provider, who will communicate without an interpreter would make it comfortable. It takes a long wait to get an interpreter, so I would get angry.

Question – Would it help if the support person came to your house?

There is more trust inside a home than in a clinic. I would feel validated if they came to my house.

There is stigma. People see the clinic as for crazy people. Our culture would say “loca” instead of “depressed” because people are not educated.

Question – Can you think of anything else the CNMHC and local mental health agency can do to make you feel comfortable being involved?

Parents with children would get very depressed due to lots of children, and the parents don't have a lot of coping skills. The women need some kind of respite. Some education on that will be helpful. Taking care of children sometimes would be helpful.

People need to go and canvas the community. They don't know what's going on in town because they are not documented, and they will ask for your social security number.

I am a care provider for children, so I see a lot of things that go on in homes. I offer support by reading the word of God. Friends and family also give support.

Transportation is part of it. For men, if you have papers, there is no problem accessing services. If there is a problem in the family, they would not take their children for services because of the risk of the whole family being deported. This would be true even if the child was extremely ill.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE MADERA COMMUNITY EVENT

Background Information to Provide Context to “What We Learned”

As mentioned above in the description of our first project visit to Madera County, we first contacted local client leaders to assist with our project at Hope House. Nearly all of the Hope House employees are clients, but the program manager is a professional employed by Turning Point, a contractor with the County. Two of the three most active client leaders in our project were Hope House employees. Several other consumer staff at Hope House did not actively participate in our project, but later expressed that they were reluctant to participate because they were concerned about perceived conflict between their jobs and participation in the project. They were not comfortable asking for release time or to participate in the project while at work. At times, this dynamic resulted in an awkward relationship between the consumer staff working at the drop-in center and the project.

In Madera County, local client leaders were successful in arranging staff support from Madera County Behavioral Health Services. We appreciate the flexibility and generosity of Janice Melton, Behavioral Health Director, who contributed financially to the supplies and materials we purchased for the community event, and assigned several county staff members to assist our local leaders. The County staff provided a great deal of direction, expertise and support. They were active participants during the final several weeks at meetings where the flyer in English and Spanish were finalized, and plans were made to conduct outreach during the last two weeks before the community event. The county support accompanied local client leaders to conduct outreach. Flyers were left with the receptionist the First Five and County Social Services Agency. Originally, the local client leaders agreed to conduct outreach in person at these community agencies, as well as at the Bridge Store, swap meet, and migrant housing. The outreach efforts were scaled back as the event approached, due to concerns that more intensive outreach might attract too many participants. County staff members also provided valuable support during the activities at the community event and during the focus group, including interpretation for event participants who spoke Spanish only.

Process Conclusions – What We Learned

Teaching Leadership Skills

The model used to develop community events in the two counties for the Cultural Competency Project is based on local grassroots organizing. First, we identified local clients from the Latino community, and then assisted them to obtain the tools and resources to conduct outreach to mobilize the community in support of the event. The first lesson we learned is that it is necessary to cultivate leadership skills in the local client leaders. The local leaders need these skills in order to plan, organize, and carry out the event.

In Madera County, the leadership skills were cultivated through the following methods and approaches:

- Modeling
- Providing current literature on leadership within the consumer movement
- Asking local leaders to take turns facilitating the meetings
- Asking local leaders to be responsible to follow up on group tasks that need to be completed
- De-briefing after the meeting
- Phone and email support in-between meeting dates
- Cultivating local client leaders' awareness of the need to share the leadership role and sensitivity to the feelings of others in the leadership group

During the process of developing the Madera community event, we noticed how the local leaders gained leadership skills. JP took on a leadership role in scheduling meetings, negotiating in-kind support from the County and project participation by Hope House. He also successfully interacted with community organizations to secure a location for the event. Many mental health clients in the Hispanic culture are afraid, or not sure if they can make decisions or successfully complete tasks, such as developing flyers or handing out materials during outreach for the event. Lori and Carlos developed confidence in their own leadership abilities, and at the community event, both stepped forward and assumed roles as leaders in facilitating the focus group. We noticed these three leaders taking on a sense of ownership for the project, in that they believed in what the project could accomplish and were truly motivated to make it succeed.

How to Get in Touch with the Community

During first several meetings, we worked with our local leaders to develop ideas on how to get in touch with the community. We asked the local leaders to generate ideas for how to make Latino community members comfortable in coming to the community event and sharing their perspectives. In this way, our Latino client leaders tailored the approaches and strategies for outreach to the culture in their community. The group acknowledged there is no "cookie cutter" approach that will work in every Latino community. Honoring and valuing the perspective of the local leaders helps open doors to the community. We made every effort not to guide or mold the approaches the local leaders felt were important and useful.

Some examples of the approaches that Madera local client leaders recommended were as follows:

- Go to places where Latinos naturally congregate to conduct outreach.
- Develop flyers in Spanish and English to distribute to Latino community members.
- Develop a script for how to explain the community event to Latino community members.
- Set up table at Spanish church services to pass out flyers and encourage attendance.
- Pass out flyers at the swap meet near the Bridge Store, at the interfaith community events and migrant housing.
- Identify a location for our community event that is frequently utilized by the Latino community.

Sufficient Funding is Needed to do Outreach

One important lesson we learned is that funding for outreach must be sufficient to provide training to conduct outreach. Funding should be sufficient to provide financial incentives to value and reimburse local client leaders. Unless there is sufficient funding from project budgets and local in-kind support, it is more difficult to provide needed guidance and support, and local leaders are left on their own. This can leave the local client leaders at a disadvantage in completing the project tasks.

To make the project successful, we needed to provide some degree of transportation and food. In the Latino culture, gathering and meeting in conjunction with sharing food can oftentimes be a useful tool to develop relationships. The client leaders we worked with were on a limited income. It would have been helpful if this project were funded sufficiently to provide incentives such as stipends or gift cards for the local leaders as they planned the outreach and the event. Although we were able to pay for some meals, the budget should be sufficient to pay the local leaders for their expertise and work. By making the local client leaders involved and valued, true ownership of the project can be created.

Process Moving Forward – How We Strengthened Our Strategies for San Benito

Based on our real-time experience in Madera, we made conscious decisions to use the following strategies for the community event in San Benito:

- Regardless of funding, we decided to visit more frequently. In order to provide much more needed support and training, we made every effort to visit the San Benito leadership group twice per week (rather than once per week as were the pattern of visits in Madera).
- We remained in continuous contact by email, phone and written correspondence.
- Minutes and agendas were made available to provide a written record of the project, and guidance for follow-up completion of tasks.
- We continued to organize the meetings around something to eat for the client leaders, including potlucks and meetings at pizza restaurants.
- Incentives were paid to the local leadership group, through the project budget or through in-kind support arranged through the County (example: Target cards).
- During leadership meetings, the group assigned responsibility for follow-up tasks. We called people in advance of the next meeting for a status update.
- We asked the local leadership group to meet on their own in-between our trips to San Benito County.
- We supported the local leadership group to ask the County to take over providing in-kind support, such as food, incentives for local leaders, staff support, computers, and meeting space.
- The group made efforts to ensure balanced leadership roles. Different leaders specialized in distinct areas of interest. Decisions about the project were made together.

Summary of Process Experiences Learned

The following are invaluable elements to support any grassroots organized community event:

- Funding
- Consistency
- Viability
- Support
- Valuing and Respect
- Education of the mental health system (valuing the things we value such as self-help, peer support)

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE SAN BENITO COMMUNITY EVENT

Background Information to Provide Context to “What We Learned”

We originally took notice of San Benito County through a newspaper article in the Hollister Pinnacle on the Esperanza Center, a self-help center in Hollister that was opened with MHSA funds. When we

first visited the Esperanza Center, it was still new and building its identity. Several classes were offered to clients, and it included a kitchen and a place for clients to take showers, and wash and dry their clothes. Esperanza Center was in the process of building its schedule of events and activities. San Benito County Behavioral Health operates the Center and employs the staff members who work there. Although it is possible that some of the staff were clients or family members, they did not appear to openly identify themselves in that way. One of the support staff who assisted our project disclosed that she is a family member.

SAN BENITO

According to the California DMH Client and Service Information (CSI) data, 49% of the clients served in San Benito County are Latino, which is very similar to the Latino population in the county (48% according to U.S. Census data). Additionally, prevalence data provided by DMH indicates that the prevalence rate¹⁴ for Latinos in San Benito County in Fiscal Year 2003/2004 was 60%, compared to 25% statewide. This means that in San Benito County, 60% of the Latinos who need mental health services are receiving them. Statewide, only 25% of the Latinos who need mental health services receive them.

Due to these demographics, we ascertained that San Benito is a county where many Latinos live, and the county is doing a very good job at reaching and serving the Latino population who need mental health services. On May 19, 2007, we noted an article in the Hollister Pinnacle¹⁵ featuring a new self-help center in downtown Hollister that was recently opened through MHSA funding. The article title stated that the Esperanza Center (Hope in Spanish) is targeting Spanish speakers and transitional-age youth. The article adds that the center includes a full working kitchen, washer, dryer, and offers groups on making and keeping friends, domestic violence, cooking, music and art.

This information was very intriguing, and confirmed that San Benito County would be an ideal location to conduct our second focus group if the county was willing. A call to Alan Yamamoto, Director of San Benito County Behavioral Health confirmed that the county was willing to support our project. We decided to begin our involvement with San Benito with a visit to the Esperanza Center on May 29, 2007. Maria requested through Alan Yamamoto Behavioral Health Director and Patricia Ayers, his assistant, that we meet with local Latino clients who may be interested in helping us plan and conduct our focus group. A group meeting was scheduled for 1 pm on May 29.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – May 29, 2007

Maria, Lorilynn and John drove to Hollister on May 29, 2007. We found the center in the middle of a downtown block, near the YMCA and other local businesses. The neighborhood was in good repair, and it appears the downtown area has been renovated in the past several years. The Center was very beautiful, although new and needing time to develop that lived-in feel. The layout had a large multi-purpose room at the entryway. There was a sign-in sheet at a table by the front door. (We signed in, giving name, age and ethnicity.) The large room included a wide-screen TV and recreational items. The Center also includes a smaller meeting room, several office-sized rooms, two restrooms, a large kitchen, a restroom/shower area, and washer/dryer area. The rear exit included a large parking lot area that can be used for outdoor activities if necessary.

¹⁴ Prevalence rate is a percentage that compares the number of people served with the number of people in need of services.

¹⁵ Hollister Pinnacle, "Esperanza Center Targets Spanish Speakers and Transitional-age Children," May 18, 2007.

We arrived early enough to chat with Patricia Ayers, who had an office at Esperanza Center. Alan Yamamoto also joined us for part of our meeting. Alan and Patricia told us the Department was able to renovate the building with MHSA start-up funds. We asked them about the tele-medicine that is provided at the Center. They told us that many of their transitional-age youth and some adults like the technology-based treatment, which is provided via camera by a psychiatrist in Fresno. If someone does not want to participate in the telemedicine, his or her wishes are respected. The Center employs a number of staff. It is not known whether the staff include clients or family members. A schedule of activities was posted, and our “focus group” was included on today’s schedule. We notice there was a cooking class in progress during the noon hour.

At around 1 pm, we convened in the small conference room with a group of clients. Most of the clients were Latino, two were African American, and one was Caucasian. We introduced ourselves, and they introduced themselves as Cindy Salcido, Maria and Roger Lezcano, Johnny Hammock, Maria Irma Munoz, Eleanor Zapata, Wanda Lampkin, Marquinita Saucier II, Antonio Pina, Phylcia Mattos (Esperanza Center staff support person). Wanda and Marquinita had joined the group after the cooking class had ended.

Maria then described the CNMHC Cultural Competency Statewide Project, including how the project began at the CNMHC Client Forum in January 2007. The statewide project this year will focus on Latinos because the data shows that statewide, many Latinos are un-served. Maria stated that we chose to come to San Benito County because Latinos comprise 50% of the population, 50% of the clients in San Benito County are Latino, and they are beginning to offer peer support and self help. What we hope to accomplish in San Benito County is to support the local clients to hold a focus group with individuals from the Latino community in the county.

We would like to find out from Latino community members what makes you well at home, outside of mental health. Things that we do in our homes to keep healthy. We would like to ask people who are un-served.

One of the group members stated that some Latinos keep knowledge about programs to themselves. I do not know about it (mental health programs) until I find out about it myself.

We discussed the plans for recreation activities that will be developed at the Esperanza Center. A group member said that the facilities in Daly City (where she used to live) included recreation equipment. Recreational activities such as ping pong tables, music, reading, art, and computers will be provided for the Esperanza Center.

We discussed the focus group. Maria will provide technical support. This group will do the project. Maria (or the group) can request technical support from the Mental Health Director. This group can go into community and ask them some questions. People in the community sometimes will not come forward because of shame. We would like the community to tell this group what works for them.

We discussed some of the logistics about the project. We will need food at the focus group to make the event successful. Music, such as Mexican guitars or mariachis would also be nice. It would be helpful if childcare is provided onsite for community members who have children.

We briefly discussed possible locations for the focus group. The San Andreas School was mentioned since it is located in a neighborhood that is mainly Latino. Could we have it in a church? Can we pay for a meeting room out of the budget? We should use the budget money as much as possible for the community members. There is only a small budget for this project. The budget will go farther if we can find a location for a meeting that does not cost anything.

Who wants to help? Roger said he knows a lot of people who have disabilities who he could ask to come to the focus group. Where can we find people to participate in the focus group? Think about where people who do not come here can be found. Ideas included churches (there is a new church), migrant camps, primary care clinics, and Section 8 housing.

Who could make a flyer to advertise the event? Maria Irma, who is an artist, could make a flyer. We will need help translating written materials, and interpreting during the focus group. Who will be facilitating, translating, and developing flyers?

We will need to use computers during the development of the project. Perhaps the Behavioral Health Department might be able to provide use of computers.

We might be able to obtain some of the items we need through donations. Lori shared that the consumer network in her county solicits many donations over the phone, such as food, drinks and water for events. They use donations from community businesses. The county can also help pay for things.

We discussed the date and time for our next meeting. We will meet next Tuesday, June 5, from 1 pm to 3 pm. We will cook some food at Esperanza Center during the cooking class. Some food items participants will bring to cook include potato salad and Mexican food dishes.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 5, 2007

We met at the Esperanza Center on June 5. The group had wanted to center our meeting around a meal, so we purchased some items at a local market. Most of the group members brought authentic food already prepared, or materials to cook at the Center. The result was an excellent collaborative meal.

After eating, we convened for our project meeting. Persons present were Roger and Maria Lezcano, Maria Irma, Johnny, Antonio, Angela (Antonio's daughter), Gia (Angela's daughter), Wanda, Marquinita, Eleanor, Phylcia, Mary Watson (Parent Partner/Case Manager), Lorilynn, and John Lessley (note taker) and Maria Lessley. The notes from our meeting are as follows:

Maria discussed ideas about ways we can share documents and other information. How often do the people in the group come to the Esperanza Center? If the group members come often, perhaps Maria can email the documents to Patricia Ayers to provide copies for group members. We can also use postal mail to send copies.

The most important task for this group to accomplish is to decide where to hold this event. We also need to convene committees to work on specific areas of responsibility within this project.

We need someone to make a flyer and translate it. We also need someone to develop a "script" for how to tell community members about the event. Maria read from a script that is being developed in a different community (Madera).

Roger said he would like to work on the flyer. Wanda has a computer and a program for flyers. Maria Irma is artist who can make a sketch to base the flyer on. She can also help with translation between English and Spanish.

We discussed where to put the flyers, such as clinics, migrant camps, laundromats, markets, flea markets, parks, and the Catholic mission in San Juan Bautista. Johnny said the Catholic mission is a good place to hold the event. Other ideas for “advertising” the event included Mexican radio stations, newspapers, Channel 67 and other local TV channels, Telemundo, and Gavilan College.

Johnny could help with the music by playing guitar. Someone said he should wear a sombrero.

We discussed some ideas for the script. Roger said, “Hi, my name is Roger. We represent the Latino community, and we are going to have an event to tell you about what we are doing.”

The first committee will be called the “Ad Committee.” Roger, Maria L., Maria Irma, Wanda and Angela expressed interest.

The second committee will be responsible to find a location for the event. This committee will also organize the set-up and clean up, childcare, music, food, and decorations. Group members referred to this as the “Logistics Committee.” Angela, Antonio, Johnny, Eleanor, Marquinita, and Phylcia expressed interest in helping on this committee with one aspect or another. Marquinita would like to help solicit donations from local stores and businesses. For childcare, it would be nice to get a bouncing bin for the children. These could be obtained from “Jump to It” or “Party Jump.” Maybe they would donate the use of the equipment in exchange for advertisement space.

Angela suggested we include some focus on teenagers because of gang issues.

We discussed the location. One suggestion was a location behind Albertsons. Other suggested locations included San Andreas School and the Sacred Heart Gym. Father Rudy of Sacred Heart was at the opening for the Esperanza Center. More suggestions included the Vet’s Hall, the YMCA Community Center, the Grenada Theater, Jovena Antono Hall (senior citizen’s program), and the Vets Park area with the picnic tables and covered area. Most of the group liked the idea of the Vets Park.

Some group members were concerned about not knowing what the weather will be like. We would have to reserve it through the Parks and Recreation Department. We discussed what day of the week would be best, and most of those present agreed that Saturday would be good, between 12 and 5. Due to other events that are occurring on previous weeks, July 14 would be the first Saturday that would work.

For food we discussed having carne asada, barbecued chicken, Spanish rice, frijoles, and macaroni salad. We could get some of these things donated, and make it ourselves; or, go to Las Palmas and get some prepared food such as beans and rice donated.

What support will we need from the Behavioral Health Department? We could use help with transportation. Besides providing rides, bus passes or bus tickets might be more useful for some of the community members. We could use help with having color copies of the flyer produced. We would also like a county van to go drive the group around to post flyers. Another idea was to request help with arranging childcare. The Ad Committee will need the use of computers and telephones to help them complete their work.

We discussed the need for committees to meet and begin their work. It is essential to identify a location so we can know what to say in the flyer and the script. Members of the Logistic Committee agreed to find out if the Vets Park area is available on July 14, and how much it costs.

We discussed a time for the group to meet again. It is on the Esperanza Center calendar for every Tuesday this month. In order to get the committees started, we would like to meet on Monday from 1:00 to 3:00 pm, since Monday appears to be a good day for most people to come to the Esperanza Center. There is a group scheduled for this room on Monday, so if we do meet Monday we will have to meet in the front area. Phylcia will ask her supervisor if Monday is possible and let Maria know. The back-up plan will be to meet on Tuesday.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 11, 2007

Persons Present: Roger and Maria Lezcano, Phylcia, Eleanor, Wanda, John and Maria Lessley, Zula, and Lorilynn

Maria asked if everyone knows about the MHSA. Eleanor said the Department is on San Felipe Road. Proposition 63 gave the State money. Zula explained about CNMHC and the Oversight and Accountability Commission (OAC). Maria Lezcano is going to Sacramento to be on a consumer panel at a MHSA Full Service Partnership Conference on June 27.

Maria distributed a couple of documents to talk about how a group is run and how to own a group. Maria will request to have a volunteer to co-facilitate next time. When you have time, please read “Zen Mind, Beginners Mind.” It is about meeting the group where they are. The group ownership document was created at the Client Forum. These guidelines will help us with the questions, how you want to frame them, and what we want out of the questions.

Roger said the bottom portion of the Zen reflects what he has been going through during this process. Maria said you have to be especially respectful about not pre-packaging approaches, when working with hard-to-reach populations. Some people will be very shy when they see someone in a suit. Some will get offended or scared. Roger said, “I have worked in the financial area. I used to wear a suit and a tie. Some would be dressed as I am now. They would shy away when I would approach them.”

Maria said when she first started getting involved in committees she was afraid to talk. In addition, her mother raised her that if you do not have anything good to say, do not say anything at all. Roger said he could identify.

We need to look at the contact list and make sure everything is correct. Roger corrected his address (Apt B6). Wanda Kato is on the list, and she came to the Esperanza Center open house.

Maria asked for a volunteer to co-facilitate the next meeting, tomorrow (Tuesday). Eleanor might consider it the following time. Maria Lezcano asked what she would have to do. We would work on it together. This is your group, not ours. We are here to facilitate your group. Maria Lezcano will co-facilitate next time.

Ad and Logistics Committees: Angela and Roger were supposed to get in touch with each other. We did not have contact numbers but now we do. Maybe we can spend a little time on the flyer. We will need to identify the date and time for the community event to include the flyer.

Phylcia will call and ask everyone if they are coming tomorrow, and let Maria know if enough are coming to make it worthwhile.

Maria thinks it is important for us to identify what we need from the county. Could the county allow someone to drive us around to see places where we might consider holding our community event?

One park on Sunnyslope has a picnic area, where they used to do the Community Pantry. Other possible locations are Veterans Memorial, Dunn Park, and Hilltop Park. A park by Calaveras School is also in a Latino neighborhood. Next week we will drive around and look at the places.

We need to develop a draft of a flyer. Roger suggested a heading "In Support of Our Community," with an Aztec logo in the background, a family portrait in the front of the Aztec logo (father mother and child). We can work on the title. We could put Esperanza Center in support of our community. We should write the flyer In Spanish and English. It is best to develop it in Spanish, and then translate it into English. We have to focus on what the service is about, to help the family. We need to go back to what we were talking about, that a lot of people in our community are not being sufficiently helped with medical assistance, help for older people getting to appointments, substance abuse, and a crisis center to help them with rehabilitation.

Where are we going to place the flyers? Baylor Market, the other market in BH (other side of town going east). We know the owners there so we can ask them if they can place the ad there. Also, we can ask them for donations. We can post the flyer on the community board by the county court house, at the migrant camp by where the county vehicles are kept, the trailer park area, the community center, and the Pantry. Other locations to post flyers are the clinics, the new check-cashing place that just opened, Aloha Blue, and the representative payee service. On the side of the building at Line and Fourth Street (owner is Don Chon), the business is a small store, in front of Camacho's Tires.

We discussed having menudo on Tuesday; do not forget the cilantro and chiles. Maria Lezcano agreed to make the menudo.

We discussed needing entertainment for the children (of all ages) at the community event. We discussed in-kind support through county. We can use the computer and phone up front (at Esperanza Center) and the fax machine. The County would be able provide transportation. We can ask Safeway and Target for donations. Maria would like someone there making tortillas. Then everyone talked about tamales.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 12, 2007

Persons Present: Roger, Maria, Phylcia, Eleanor, Maria Irma, Antonio, Micaela, Johnny, Marquinita, Maria M-L, John, Zula, and Phylcia

Maria M-L distributed the contact list and asked us to review for any changes since the last week. Everyone gave permission to contact other persons on the contact list.

Next week we plan to go look at the possible locations: Park Hill looks too secluded. The ones to focus on are Veteran's Park and Calaveras Park. They have picnic tables and a playhouse. A bounce house would attract many kids. They have a kitchen in the middle and many Latinos live near there. The street it is on is called Buena Vista Road. All the Mexican stores and Laundromats are nearby, and there are plenty of parking spaces. The school parking is right there. Veteran's Park is similar. It has more space, but the only thing we would have to worry about is entertainment for the kids. Both are available through the Parks and Recreation Department, and need to be reserved. We need to inspect it before the event and leave it as clean as we found it. When reserving, we need to let them know to open the toilet area.

Maria Irma thinks we need a DJ for Mexican Music. Angela said she has a friend she is going to speak with.

Update on the Ads and Logistics Committee: Who is going to create the script and the flyers? Roger, Maria, Maria Irma, Angela, and Marquinita will ask for donations. Maria M-L will send Marquinita the IRS non-profit letter and a letter asking to donate to help the event. Antonio and Maria are in charge of the music. Who will find advertising time on Gavelin TV?

Identify dates and times for focus group. We decided on July 14, if that date is available.

Update on in-kind support: Marquinita is asking local businesses for in-kind support. Whom would Marquinita ask to assist her? We need plastic cups, paper products, plastic utensil, plastic or paper tablecloths. Decorations, rolls of decorating paper, and balloons might be available From A to Z Party Rental (831-638-9191). We also need miscellaneous items, such as piñatas (and candy), hula-hoops, drinks, sodas, ice (pick up the day of event), cases of bottled water, containers (buckets with handles) in red, green and white (at Big Lots), and face paints. Maybe the theater can donate some face make-up. Pizza from pizza places (each one could donate one or two). Can we also ask the local mental health department for support? Can Phyliscia help us when we need to pick up donations? Albertson's, Safeway, and Don Chon are possible places to seek donations.

We should have someone supervising the children. We can call that the child activities. Calaveras has basketball and handball courts. We can create games for the kids (ring toss) and have prizes for the kids. Other children's activities can include pin the tail on the donkey, musical chairs, and relay race face painting with Maria Irma.

We need to obtain donations for Raffle and door prizes.

We should raise funds to keep this thing going after our event.

Bill Gates gives out money; maybe he could donate something.

Maria Lezcano is feeling very motivated and happy. It is making me be somebody. I always had a dream when I was a teenager that I wanted to help somebody. Roger is happy about this too; he needed to do something.

When can we meet with the Director? How about this Friday? On the other hand, maybe Alan can come here. Wanda Kato may be coming next time. Linda the QIC person also called some of the participants.

Who will be the point person to let Maria M-L know when Alan is contacted? Marquinita will do that.

This group will meet next Friday at 3 pm. On Thursday night, Marquinita will call to remind everyone.

The group discussed possible names for their group. Irma said Esperanza Gang. Them That Can. Esperanza United. Juntos Podemos. (Together we can.) Later on, this could be One for All. Barrios Unidos. Can we ask Alan to have T-shirts made with this name on it and a logo with two hands together? We might rather make up our own logo. Something with all flags? What symbol represents together? The hands together. The handshake; the arm shake. (Hands in three different positions.)

Who will facilitate the meeting in two weeks? Maria M-L will call Antonio to build the agenda together.

Maria will email clip art to use in the flyer. On Friday, Phylcia will help the group with the flyer.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – June 26, 2007

Persons present: Marquinita, Wanda, Antonio, Maria Irma, Roger, Maria, John and Maria Lessley

John and Maria Lessley traveled to Hollister to meet with the Juntos Podemos Leadership Committee. The meeting began at 1:00 p.m. As agreed at the last meeting, Antonio was the facilitator. We distributed the committee contact list so we can communicate with each other between meetings.

Committee members provided an overall update on current projects they have been working on since the last meeting. Marquinita has contacted Safeway for a donation and plans to go a week before the event to pick up the donations. She also requested a donation from the Jumper's Tank for a Bouncing Bin. Wanda will contact K-Mart, Rite Aide, Dollar Tree, A-Z party supplies, Save-Mart, and Target, going to all these locations to ask about donations for our focus group. An update will be given next week.

Marquinita, Wanda, Tony, Maria Irma, Roger, with Maria Maceira-Lessley's support, will request that County Behavioral Health make I.D. badges for the committee members who are representing Esperanza Center when asking for donations, so the community knows who they are, where they are from, and so the stores know that this is a true actual event taking place.

Maria Irma is working on getting balloons donated for the event and will be taking pictures. Tony is working on getting face paints for children's activities. The group is also working on a balloon dartboard for children to win prizes. The group also wants to get a snow cone machine, cotton candy and popcorn machine donated.

We will try to meet again on July 3 at a local pizza place or restaurant. Some of the group members thought it might be very crowded due to the July 4 weekend, when many motorcycle enthusiasts come to Hollister. We will phone each other this weekend to discuss whether it will be possible to meet next week.

(Note: We later agreed to cancel the July 3 meeting until the following week because of crowds of people in Hollister, and because the Esperanza Center was closed during the holidays.)

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – July 10, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria Irma, Angela, Antonio, Marquinita, and Maria M-L.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – July 13, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria, Roger, Antonio, Angela, Eleanor, Marquinita, Maria M-L.

The Juntos Podemos Leadership group met on both July 10 and July 13. The pace of the project was very quick during this time period due to finalizing plans and preparations for the community event. As a result, we were not able to keep notes and agendas so the specifics of these meetings are not available for this report. Suffice to say, during this period, members were very busy making arrangements for donations for the event with various business and community organizations.

Wanda Lampkin was also busy putting together contents for gift baskets from donated items, which were wrapped at a subsequent meeting on July 24.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Meeting – July 17, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria, Roger, Maria Irma, Marquinita, Phylcia, Veronica Johnson, Zula, Maria M-L.

We met at 1:00 p.m. at Jesse's Pizza, near the Esperanza Center. Roger and Zula co-facilitated the meeting. Maria Irma distributed documents and materials we used during the meeting. Roger requested volunteers to take notes and co-facilitate at the next meeting, Friday July 20. Zula led a discussion on dyads, which provide rules for group facilitation. Zula and Wanda reviewed a draft flyer for the community event with the leadership group. Wanda then led a discussion of the transportation plans for the group to travel to Maria and John's home in Salida for the planning and skills training on Friday. Roger led a discussion on the tasks that group members will complete before the next meeting on Friday, and who would be responsible for each item. Maria M-L distributed a task list. Roger discussed the plans for volunteers from the group to make reminder calls Thursday night for the trip to Salida on Friday. Maria M-L ended the meeting with a discussion about the Storybooks distributed to each member, where they can keep materials and their notes from each meeting, which would generate a storybook on the focus group project.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Planning and Skills Training – July 20, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria, Roger, Maria Irma, Marquinita, Eleanor, Zula, John, and Maria M-L. Mary Watson, support staff from San Benito County, provided transportation for some of the leadership group members.

The group met at Maria and John's home in Salida, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. John began the meeting with an overview of the day's events and review of the agenda. We started late so we may need to prioritize items on the agenda. We began talking about Learning Agreements. We developed some Learning Agreements at the Cultural Competency Institute at the Client Forum '07. We shared that list of agreements as an example. The group brainstormed some agreements they consider important.

We discussed ideas about outreach. John shared the outreach script that was developed during the Madera Cultural Competency Project. The group came up with the following ideas for what to say during outreach to recruit people to participate in the community event on August 4. (We noted that these are just talking points, to help us be consistent with what we say. The words can be adapted to the comfort level of each person doing the outreach.)

"We are holding a community event at the Esperanza Center on August 4 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. You are welcome to join us. We will have food, drinks, raffle prizes, and information about services at the Esperanza Center. Do you have children? We will have things for them to do. We have a phone number to call in case you need transportation or have special needs. We will also be holding a focus group to help people learn how to keep themselves healthy."

During outreach if the people in the community ask about the focus group, you can go ahead and ask them questions such as, *"What do you do in your community to stay healthy?"* and *"What can Juntos Podemos offer to make you want to come? What would make you feel welcome?"* We will need to keep notes from our conversations with people during outreach.

We took a break to eat lunch. Everyone brought something for a potluck. All items were extremely delicious.

We discussed where to do the outreach. Some of the locations for outreach ideas were Laundromats, the Hazel Hopkins Community Clinic, markets (Baylor, Hollister, Don Chon), and the Guillensa Tacqueria. Roger also mentioned the Las Cuantes Restaurant, which he suggested approaching for donations of Mexican food, beverages, and ice cream for the children. Wanda mentioned doing outreach at the clinic where her daughter works. There was agreement that the completion of the badges, and flyer were very important to the success of their outreach efforts. John agreed to attend meeting on Friday (July 27) to complete his training on outreach.

Maria M-L provided a discussion of the philosophy of the client movement. Maria provided a handout on the client movement, written by Sue Budd. It is from the book, Reaching Across. Juntos Podemos members read paragraphs from the handout and discussed how these words made them feel.

Wanda did not feel there was enough time to work on the baskets that we will use as prizes, so we decided to work on that later when there is more time.

John asked for an update on the donations. Wanda has obtained a bouncing bin, and a certificate for four hours use of a bouncing bin as a raffle prize. She also has obtained a donation of a snow cone machine. Members of the group will be going to Nob Hill, Save Mart, Safeway, Dollar Tree, and Target for other donations of food and prizes for children. We will try to get a gift card donated from Starbucks. We need donations for decorations for the event. Roger and Maria Lezcano agreed to take Eleanor and Maria Irma with them as they requested donations for decorations. They will share the outcome on Tuesday.

Since everyone was becoming tired from the long day, we decided to close the meeting. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, July 24, at 1 p.m. at the Esperanza Center. Maria also shared that she will try to be in Hollister at least three days the week of the event on August 4, 2007.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Event Planning and Skills Training – July 24, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria, Roger, Maria Irma, Antonio, Eleanor, Zula, Maria M-L.

Maria M-L facilitated the meeting at the Esperanza Center, which began at 1 pm. This meeting focused on the skills training needed to move forward toward readiness for outreach to recruit participants for the Juntos Podemos community event and logistic planning.

We began with introductions and check-in, including group sharing, learning agreements, and what we hope to accomplish during the meeting. Maria M-L discussed philosophy, using the example of Leadership and the Conspiracy of Hope.

Maria provided background and context for our community event by discussing the experience she gained from the Madera community focus group event. Next, Wanda assisted the group with preparing the gift baskets.

Maria led a discussion and review of our plans for outreach, including locations for outreach and target audience, distribution of flyers, strategies for outreach (including the survey and script about the

community event), and note taking/recording of survey results. We then clarified ideas for the script and survey to be used during outreach, note taking strategies, and draft questions to ask participants (to be finalized next week). We used the template from Madera as a springboard for discussion.

We updated our individual task lists and discussed logistics on completing projects. We discussed the status of community in-kind support, provide (county) in-kind support, and progress toward producing color identification badges that the leadership group will wear during the community event.

We updated and tracked the status toward completing preparations for the community event. Wanda and Maria Irma are organizing the children's activities, including planning for weather considerations, space for bouncing bin, snow cone machine and other activities, and assigning individuals to supervise the children. Maria Irma is arranging for volunteers to cover the greeter's table. The entire group collectively will be responsible to plan and organize the food that we will provide at the community event. Maria Irma, Eleanor and Wanda will be responsible to obtain and organize the decorations. Roger will be responsible for other arrangements that need to be made.

At the next meeting, John will provide a discussion and training on the meaning of prevalence and how that led to our decision to conduct a community focus group event in San Benito County.

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Event Planning and Skills Training – July 27, 2007

Persons present: Antonio, Wanda, Roger, Maria, Marquinita, Angela, Eleanor, Maria Irma, Mary Watson, John, and Maria M-L. We met in the morning at the Esperanza Center. Part of the group identified places for outreach. Other leadership members met with Maria M-L and Patricia Ayers at the Center to discuss county in-kind support possibilities. Later in the morning, we all met at Mountain Mike's Pizza in Hollister to conduct our planning and skills training meeting.

Community Event Planning

After enjoying pizza, we began our meeting by discussing plans for the food each member of the leadership group will bring to the community event:

- Irma - Green salad
- Angela – Potato salad
- Antonio – Carrots
- Wanda – Chili beans
- Maria ML – Flautas and Guacamole
- Roger and Maria – Arroz a la Valenciana
- Marquinita – Macaroni and Cheese
- Eleanor – Macaroni salad or Watermelon

Marquinita will call Johnny to ask if he will do the music.

Members discussed their outreach efforts identifying the sites already visited and areas still needing to be contacted so flyers can be posted. We will need more flyers. Esmeralda has the flyer on her computer and can print color copies. We talked about all the items that are being donated and a few other items we still need (e.g., tables, chairs, raffle tickets, more prizes for children).

Group agreed to barbecue during event. Roger mentioned Mansmiths, who can do the cooking if we like. Roger will get a quote.

Prevalence Discussion

A bulk of the day was spent on discussing prevalence, outreach to Latinos and other ethnic communities. John L explained the background information for a document on “San Benito County Prevalence Data,”¹⁶ which Maria distributed to the group previously. (Please note that we provided similar prevalence data to Madera client leaders.)

John explained that the CSI data shows that in State Fiscal Year 2003-2004, 49% of the clients served by San Benito County Behavioral Health were Hispanic. For comparison, only 23% of the clients served statewide were Hispanic. 49% is similar to the percentage of Hispanics in the overall population of San Benito County.

The prevalence and unmet need data in the table estimates the number of Hispanics who need mental health services in San Benito County with the number currently receiving mental health services. The difference between the two results in “unmet need.” In San Benito County, approximately 60% of the Hispanics in need of mental health services are served. This compares favorably with the prevalence rate for Hispanics statewide, which is only 25%. Overall, the data from DMH shows that San Benito County is doing better than the rest of the state at serving Hispanics, but more work needs to be done in outreaching to Hispanics in this county, because almost 40% of those Hispanics who need services have are not being served.

The data, which shows that San Benito County is doing a good job beginning to outreach to Hispanics, along with the fact that they have opened a wellness center that serves a good number of Hispanics, led to the decision to conduct the Cultural Competency Project focus group in San Benito County.

Individual Action Plan(s)

We discussed what each person has agreed to do up until the day of our event.

- Set up – Everyone to meet at the Esperanza (Hope) Center 8:00 am (sharp)
- Decorations – Everyone
- Clean-up – Everyone.
- Greeters table - Maria Irma
- Bouncing bin supervision
- Agenda for the day (program flyer)
- Volunteers can be floaters who will relieve people in shifts
- Some people have asked their friends to help
- Mary will see if members from TAY would like to volunteer to help with the children’s activities
- Wanda – Friendly reminder calling everyone the night before event
- Everyone agreed to fill out their Individual Action Plan (write down what they will do)
- Face painting – Wanda and Maria Irma
- Everyone must attend the focus group
- SBCBH, WIC and CNMHC will each staff a table providing information about their prospective programs.

¹⁶ “San Benito County Prevalence Data,” based on information produced by California Department of Mental Health, Statistics and Data Analysis Section, CSI data and Prevalence and Un-Met Need Data.

Leadership and Recovery

Maria continued to discuss Leadership and Recovery, what leadership in the community is and what is not. Maria asked people if they had read about the sea rose, from the document “Recovery and the Conspiracy of Hope.” Maria said the next thing to do is to read the document and she will ask each group member whether or not they have ever been a sea rose.

Quote of the day:

“Every achiever I have ever met says my life turned around when I began to believe in me.” – Wanda

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Event Planning Meeting – July 31, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria, Roger, Maria Irma, Antonio, Angela, Marquinita, Eleanor, Zula, Maria M-L.

The meeting was held from 10 am to 3 pm at the Esperanza Center. The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

This meeting will focus on moving forward towards doing outreach to recruit participants for the Juntos Podemos community event. Group members will visit various sites in Hollister to distribute flyers. If time permits, group members will also seek donations while doing outreach.

Agenda Topics:

1. Meet at Esperanza Center (All) 10:00 am
2. Role modeling for outreach, demonstrating examples of conversations with prospective focus group participants (Maria) 10:00 – 10:15 am
3. Continuation of outreach at identified community locations 10:15 – 11:45 am
4. Continuation of seeking donations at identified community locations 10:15 – 11:45 am
5. Informal lunch social time (Potluck) 1:00 – 1:30 pm
6. Confirm completion of Individual To Do List 1:30 – 2:45 pm
7. Wrap-up and Follow-up agreements 2:45 – 3:00 pm

San Benito CNMHC Cultural Competency Project Event Planning Meeting – August 3, 2007

Persons present: Wanda, Maria, Roger, Maria Irma, Marquinita, Eleanor, Angela, Antoinette Arriola, Maria M-L.

This is the final day before the community event. We met beginning at 10 am, and continued our work throughout the day, focusing on last minute details. Items we discussed and completed were:

General Preparation Items

- Confirm content and status of everyone’s Individual Action Plan. Provide update and/or request assistance.
- Continue with outreach and the requesting of donations. Remember successful outreach is done by building a relationship with the person you are inviting
- Develop agenda for the day of the community event (program flyer). Determine how much time is needed for the focus group, eating and other events.
- Determine how raffle will take place, who will take the lead, and when raffle should occur

- Determine if we need to make more name tags for volunteers, depending upon priorities and time available
- Confirm outgoing message on Juntos Podemos (Together We Can) answering machine. Message should be stated in Spanish then in English.

Focus Group Preparation

- Work on developing questions for focus group and what time within the program the focus group will take place.
- Confirm who will conduct focus group inside.
- Recruit volunteers to manage/supervise different station(s) while we conduct the focus group.

Donated Items to be Picked Up

- Confirm all donated items, vendor contact information, scheduled pick-up date and time, and person responsible for pick-up. Request volunteer to organize and type donation list so that Thank-You notes can be sent ASAP. We must submit all receipts for tax-exempt status.

Pick Up Items from County Mental Health

- Pick up raffle tickets from county mental health – Mary or Phylcia
- Pick up safety tape & safety cones from county mental health – Mary or Phylcia

Food and Beverage Menu for Event

- Determine food preparation assignments
- Do we have enough food for 50+ people? Request volunteer to list all food and beverages we will have at the event
- BBQ duty and relief
- Cooking food inside
- Serving gloves and utensils, paper products and beverages

Room Set-Up

- Prepare chair set-up for focus group (seating 50)
- Identify locations for SBCBH, WIC, and CNMHC tables to provide information about their respective programs

Children's Activities

- Confirm all back-up volunteers to relieve each station. Identify TAY, family and friends who may wish to assist with children's activities and relief of other stations
- Confirm who will supervise bouncing bin and snow cone area, including keeping children safe within parking lot and out of the alley (including back-up)
- Identify Volunteers assigned to children's activities to assist/supervise and ensure safety
- Confirm all assignments and back-up (relief) for each work station
- Identify a floater to provide breaks

Decorations

- Meet to decorate inside of Esperanza Center at 3 pm on Friday and to discuss room set-up for event tomorrow (Everyone)
- Confirm volunteers (floaters) who can relieve people in shifts for breaks. Discuss transportation needs and contact information for evening reminder calls.

- Finalize focus group questions and confirm what time within the program the focus groups will occur
- Complete any tasks from Thursday that were not finished
- Pick up donated items per schedule (Wanda, Roger, and Marquinita)
- Call everyone Friday evening to remind them of assignments Saturday (Wanda)

SAN BENITO COMMUNITY EVENT FOCUS GROUP

Juntos Podemos Leadership Committee

August 4, 2007 Focus Group - Hollister, San Benito County

Note Taker/Recorders: John Lessley and Lynda Yoshikawa

Everyone met at the Esperanza Center early in the morning to begin preparations. The bouncing bin was delivered at 8 am and assembled by the vendor. The bouncing bin was provided at a reduced price, and County Behavioral Health agreed to pay the price as an in-kind support. Several of the Leadership Team and support persons made trips to various stores to pick up last-minute items. At the Greeter's table, we placed our community event flyer¹⁷ and event schedule brochure for the day¹⁸, and a sign-in sheet.

Last Minute Preparation List on August 4

- Set-up physical environment at Esperanza Center 8 am Saturday (Everyone)
- Pick up donated items per schedule (Wanda, Roger, and Marquinita)
- Set-up Greeters Table (Maria Irma and a volunteer back-up)
- Face painting (near greeters table?) (Maria Irma and Wanda)
- Bouncing bin supervision schedule (including back-up) - (Persons assigned)
- Snow cone machine supervision schedule (including back-up) - (Persons assigned)
- Safety assignment (including back-up) to ensure children stay onsite (Persons assigned)
- Food preparation assignment (Marquinita cooked the barbecue food)
- Clean-up after event (Everyone)

Italics = consumer community member comments

Pre-Focus Group Interactions

Before the focus group, while people were arriving and socializing, John asked a few people some questions based on what we will be asking participants during the focus group. A transition-aged male youth arrived with his girlfriend, both of whom are homeless. I explained that we are here to find out what people do in their own communities to keep themselves healthy.

The young man asked, "What about people who don't have mental health problems, but just need housing? Can we get housing referrals?"

You may be able to get housing referrals through the Esperanza Center, or if you have a case manager, they can help you with all types of referrals.

We discussed the idea of putting out our sleeping bags on the City Hall steps (for homeless people standing up for themselves) and having a sleep-in. In San Francisco, you can get arrested for harassment if you tell a homeless person not to sleep in the doorway.

¹⁷ Juntos Podemos Community Event Flyer, August 4, 2007.

¹⁸ Juntos Podemos Event Schedule Brochure, August 4, 2007.

Focus Group

Attendance: About 29 total, including 17 clients, 12 staff or family members). This count does not include children, most of whom will still enjoying the bounce house and other fun activities.

Juntos Podemos members introduced the group and welcomed everyone.

Roger provided an introduction.

Wanda welcomed everyone. She said she normally stays at home. Since we have been meeting to prepare for this focus group, she gets out of the house and feels much better about herself.

Eleanor said she gets out and is active, rather than staying at home not doing anything.

Antonio encouraged others to join the Juntos Podemos group and said he is trying to contribute.

Roger discussed training programs and rehabilitation for the community. Roger also encouraged participation in the Juntos Podemos Group.

Maria Irma said that she sees a psychiatrist, and she would be lost without the Esperanza Center. She said she is grateful for the services for her and the community (homeless, etc.), enjoys socializing and visiting with good friends in the community. She wants to be included in the community.

Maria Lezcano stated that this is a big event to bring the community together. Help is available for adults and teenagers. While Juntos Podemos was preparing for the focus group, Maria began talking to people, even though she was uncomfortable previously.

Ireni (identified herself as Brazilian): I have a question. How can we spread the news about this place? I would like more advertising so the community is aware of this service. I saw the flyer for this event at Behavioral Health. I would be glad to help put flyers around.

New parenting classes would be good in these offices.

Wanda: Mental health will sometimes pick you up. We have a number where you can leave messages.

Shennade (Maria and Roger's daughter): Advertise throughout the community. Go door to door to advertise. People think they are "crazy" and not normal. Educating the community would be helpful to encourage more participation.

Roger: A gentleman here earlier asked me about some needs that could be handled by this place, such as jobs, resumes, and housing placements.

How often do you hand out flyers?

Maria Lessley explained the background information on how the group started. Maria introduced herself as a consultant to the California Network of Mental Health Clients. The funding for this project comes from the State Department of Mental Health. Our purpose is to develop Latino leaders and people of color leaders. There is a high percentage of Latinos within this county. The project is being held in San Benito and Madera. The California Network is an advocacy group, using its voice

to advise the State Department of Mental Health. Here in San Benito County we are asking what is being done and receiving suggestion. This has been a three to four month project. The group of clients here has been meeting twice per week to develop the focus group. The Juntos Podemos members have strengths as community organizers. They are able to get donations from businesses in the community on their own. One of our purposes is to identify leaders from the local consumers.

Marquinita: We bring people from the community, north, east, south and west and central of the county, doing outreach for people of color.

This community needs more centers to be available.

Question 1 – What do you do in your community or home to keep well?

Sometimes you need to take a break from your routines to connect with your family. You start feeling depressed and it becomes bigger. Simple things like a meal with your family. Little things that keep us a part of the group or family or community.

John, homeless man: The Center has developed at the right time. There are three homeless clans. I have to keep my clan fed and clean. We are not drinkers, and we are well educated. I was in a military family and moved a lot, so I was used to not having a permanent home. This can happen to anyone. I started speaking up and people did not like it. You get threatened by law enforcement if you start siding with the oppressed. An art center, or an attorney, is a great help.

Gail, homeless woman, John's partner: I have trouble getting a job because I am well-known and I recycle, and people think I am a transient. We just want the chance to get from the curb to the sidewalk. "I just want a hand up, not a hand-out."

Sylvia: Family really helps (including friends). Talking to them every day, and helping build low-income housing. Where I live is a community. We work together to build homes. Working together (is what I do in my community to keep well).

I see how the police handle the mentally ill. They take them to jail. They need places like this, not jail. We need to train the police officers.

Even in the jail, they need some kind of programs. In Santa Clara, they have training and classes.

Sylvia: Give them places like this, bigger, better places. Her (Maria Irma's) family (brothers) do not really understand her mental illness and what they can do to help her. With the Hispanic community, it can be "hush-hush." They want it hidden. They will not take the person for help because they are embarrassed.

Maria Lezcano: The community used to look at us as if we are weird. This group has helped. It is like our family at this Center. None of our real family really reached out to help us.

John: There is another place, First Presbyterian Church, where you can take showers. A lot of them do not want to use these facilities because they have to give up their bottles.

Roger: I sold my truck for \$500 instead of the \$3,000 it was really worth, so I could pay the first month's rent for housing for my family.

Maria Maceira-Lessley: I have taken psychiatric medications, but my mother did not believe in taking medications. Has anyone had heard of “dichos,” or folklore wisdom? (Quite a few had.) When I was young, my mother used rice water and hot oil to rub on my stomach. My mother would only allow her family to take medications in the worst-case situations.

My family said I had “nervios,” (nerves) and I was not taken to the doctor. I am family-oriented but am “hush-hush” because I was taught to survive. I do not complain a lot. I was raised that if you do not have anything good to say, do not say anything at all.

My family says not to take this medication. The doctor ordered the medication. How can they learn? They have to respect what the doctor says.

Maria Maceira-Lessley: I take medication, but it is not one-way decision, it is always a conversation between my doctor and me. A family can be together with the doctor having a conversation.

Question 2 – We know that a large population of Latinos and people of color are not aware of the CNMHC. What would you want to see offered to make peer support and self-help work for you?

Eleanor: Communicate.

It helps that we really care about each other. Paperwork and waiting does not make receiving services very easy.

Frank: Rent is too expensive. Housing assistance would help. I have bad habits and need help with housing despite that. My habit is what is tearing me up.

Rogelio: My wife and kids spend time in the library, and surf the web to find benefits that can help us.

Sara: Sometimes we do not know how to use the help you provide us. Getting into the programs can be difficult, as we do not know how to fill out the paperwork. It is good to have a program like this that can help us. A case manager can help with that. If a receptionist gives you a bad face, that might stop us. We can educate ourselves in a group like this. Treating us with respect helps. Sometimes they stereotype us. If we do not feel welcome, we do not want to talk; we walk out of the door and never come back. Waiting one to one and a half hours, for example. I have a life, I am busy with four children and cooking, etc. and I need to get a job, so I walk out the door. I volunteer in the community to get friends to the support they need, such as emergency housing and getting a job.

Sylvia: Sometimes before you get to the case management person, the receptionists turn you off.

Maria Maceira Lessley: Some people are uncomfortable having to go up and ask for help. If it is too costly to our pride (and respect), we will not do it.

Sylvia: I see that. People coming to the counter need help. No one even acknowledges them. It helps when you have friendly staff. At my department they offer customer service training.

John: Sometimes the receptionists are short because someone has been short with them.

Roger: I would like to see some form of training for different jobs. Housing, job training, placement, activities and services for teenagers, would help people more easily seek support.

Maria Maceira-Lessley: I was raised to value work, which is part of my identity. It is a challenge to find a way to work while on medications.

Question 3 – Do these words mean something to you? The California Network of Mental Health Clients (CNMHC). Peer Support. Peer Advocacy. Self-help.

Maria Maceira-Lessley: CNMHC has a very large statewide membership and provides information about peer support and peer advocacy and self-help.

Sara: I heard about it at school. Persons who advocate for children, for mental health, and nutrition. Thanks to them, I learned about the services.

Wanda: My case manager helped me a lot in learning about these things. My bills are paid (through a payee), so I can focus on recovery from back surgery. My paperwork to receive services is completed by my case manager. I receive money each week from my payee.

Roger: The focus group would like to welcome others to become involved with CNMHC. What are the needs of the community?

To get back on the horse.

John and Gail: “Out of the gutter, back to the curb, to walk on the sidewalk on their own.” Maintain contact. Get the help you need.

Roger: We can add more people to the group. Juntos Podemos can do more with more people. We can do more outreach in the community. This focus group has informed the homeless. We appreciated the event. The homeless people at the Center want to help themselves. It is a slow process and it will grow.

Sara: “La union es la fuerza.” (The union makes the force.) People sometimes do not jump into the boat until the boat goes away.

This is a generous community.

Alan Yamamoto, Director, San Benito County Behavioral Health: I am supporting the efforts of the focus group, and staying out of the way, as I do not want it to be taken over.

Roger: We look forward to your continued support.

John: This is a place to socialize, rather than sitting around the house. We can pursue other interests here.

Alan: We want to build on strengths so people can gain independence, rather than building dependency, which builds resentment. For this reason, we restrain the level of help, providing a hand up, not a hand out.

Notes from Interview with Eugene and Penny, homeless individuals:

Question 1 – What do you do in your community or home to keep well?

There is only one left in my family. I try not to bother anyone. I do not want to be a burden. I do a little work, which helps. Food stamps do not get me through the month. I sometimes work without pay, for example, I worked for someone who gave me a ride to the Social Security Office. I do not have a driver's license. I hurt my back in 1986 doing construction work. I have had the same doctor for ten years. Nancy, my caseworker, did my intake, but has not been able to help me with the Social Security Administration, small loans, or to get my driver's license.

Question 2 – What would you want to see offered to make peer support and self-help work for you?

I have been participating at the Center. I came here for a shower, referred via the homeless task force. I participate in many activities. Communicating with other people here helps.

It is good to have a place to go off the streets. I feel comfortable here. Can we get job referrals from at the Center? If I get a job in construction, I could pay to get my back worked on.

Question 3 – Do these words mean something to you? CNMHC. Peer Support. Peer Advocacy. Self-help.

If I cannot help somebody then I do not ask for help (due to pride). If I need something, I will ask to work for a little cash.

Notes from Interview with Barefoot Timmy and Annette, homeless individuals:

Question 1 – What do you do in your community or home to keep well?

Happiness, cleanness. No negative vibes. Love.

Question 2 – What would you want to see offered to make peer support and self-help work for you?

Hygiene kits, to shave. Medical care. Have an RN here for emergencies; band aids to treat cuts. Help for asthma, and a counselor for depression. The shelter should be open year-round. There should be funds for job training.

Question 3 – Do these words mean something to you? CNMHC. Peer Support. Peer Advocacy. Self-help.

Self-help means you help yourself. Pan handling.

Additional Comments

You cannot drink beer or smoke cigarettes outside in the park. You cannot be out after 9 p.m. in Hollister public areas (past dusk, until sunrise). These restrictions pose a major problem for individuals who do not have a home.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE SAN BENITO COMMUNITY EVENT

Background Information to Provide Context to “What We Learned”

We originally took notice of San Benito County through a newspaper article in the Hollister Pinnacle on the Esperanza Center, a self-help center in Hollister that was opened with MHSA funds. When we first visited the Esperanza Center, it was still new and building its identity. Several classes were offered

to clients, and it included a kitchen and a place for clients to take showers, and wash and dry their clothes. Esperanza Center was in the process of building its schedule of events and activities. San Benito County Behavioral Health operates the Center and employs the staff members who work there. Although it is possible that some of the staff were clients or family members, they did not appear to openly identify themselves in that way. One of the support staff who assisted our project disclosed that she is a family member.

Although the CNMHC Cultural Competency Project for 2007 focused on outreach to the Latino community, during our first meeting at the Esperanza Center, two African American women wanted to participate in our effort. They took issue with the concept that this project was only for the Latino community. Early on, we decided to encourage their participation and embrace what they could add to the project. This turned out to be a very wise decision indeed, as Wanda and Marquinita made outstanding contributions to the project, through their initiative, creativity, imagination, and willingness to interact with local businesses and community members on behalf of the event.

We were encouraged by the number of people and diversity in the core client leadership group we worked with in San Benito County. Eight clients were regular participants and contributors to the project. The clients were in a wide range of places related to their personal recovery in mental health, and came from varied backgrounds. Each one contributed in a unique way, through their own talents, including creative arts, analytic problem solving ability, social skills and initiative. There was a wide range of ages, including one individual who was very interested in transitional age youth issues.

We also appreciated the openness and flexibility of Alan Yamamoto, the Behavioral Health Director. When we originally expressed interest in conducting a focus group in San Benito County, Mr. Yamamoto was willing to have us visit the Esperanza Center with only a few days' notice. He and his staff recruited eleven clients who were interested in our project, provided a support staff, meeting space, and gift card incentives for the clients who participated in the meeting. The County also provided gift card incentives for some of the later project meetings, and a great deal of in-kind and staff support during the project.

Process Conclusions – What We Learned

Consistent Support for Leadership Skills

In San Benito County, we saw examples of true leadership skills unfolding in the client leaders when we were present in the county on a more consistent basis. As mentioned above, project support individuals (Maria, John, Zula and Lorilynn) often met with the Juntos Podemos leadership group twice per week, as compared to once per week in Madera. We also spent two days in Hollister working with the leadership group as they finalized preparations for the community event and focus group on August 4, 2007. The local client leaders really blossomed and began to feel comfortable taking on tasks on their own, including donations, outreach, flyers, and logistics for the event.

Changes in Strategies Paid Off

As mentioned at the end of the “Process Conclusions” for the Madera Cultural Competency Project, we decided to change our strategies to strengthen the process in San Benito. To briefly summarize, the changes in strategies were:

- Regardless of funding, we decided to meet with the Juntos Podemos leadership group twice per week.
- We remained in continuous contact by email, phone and written correspondence.

- We decided to be very conscientious about keeping minutes and agendas to guide follow-up completion of tasks.
- We continued to organize the meetings around something to eat for the client leaders, including potlucks and meetings at pizza restaurants.
- Payment of incentives to the Juntos Podemos leadership members was identified as an important priority.
- During leadership meetings, the group assigned responsibility for follow-up tasks. We called people in advance of the next meeting for a status update.
- We asked the local leadership group to meet on their own in-between our trips to San Benito County.
- We supported the local leadership group in asking the County to provide in-kind support, such as food, incentives for local leaders, staff support, computers, and meeting space.
- The group made efforts to ensure balanced leadership roles. Different leaders specialized in distinct areas of interest. Decisions about the project were made together.

We learned that our changes in process strategies really paid off. As a result, the group was able to identify key tasks and sub-committees agreed to work on securing a location, developing a flyer, conducting outreach for community members to attend the event, contacting local businesses for donations, and planning the logistics for the event. The Juntos Podemos leadership group made progress each week on all of these tasks. The group also met with the local Behavioral Health Director, Alan Yamamoto, and Assistant Director, Patricia Ayers, and agreed on what the County would provide for the event.

The success of this combination of strategies was partly due to the outstanding initiative of the client leaders in San Benito County, and partly because we came into San Benito knowing what was needed to succeed. Early on, we clearly explained our project to the client leaders and County Behavioral Health management, and provided them with well-prepared literature.

Other process successes were documenting the project in a way that was useful for the Juntos Podemos leaders. For example, we took many pictures during the planning meetings and the focus group event that we were able to share with them after the project was completed. We develop a photo show using online software that documented the entire process. In San Benito County, we also distributed “story books” for the local client leaders. The storybooks were binders that contained every document we created during the project, including minutes, agendas, flyers, and supporting materials discussed during our planning meetings. They included dividers to organize the binders into sections and sheet protectors. We included a place for the leaders to take notes during meetings. We felt it was important for the Juntos Podemos leaders to be able to refer to a document their group had created, making the project experience more tangible and meaningful. The photographs also helped the group identify with the process they had created.

Other important steps in ensuring group ownership was preparing name tags for the Juntos Podemos leadership group during the event, as well as T-shirts with a Juntos Podemos logo, sign-in sheets, brochures and flyers for the event. The local client leaders helped with every step of developing these items.

The challenges that we encountered in Madera proved to generate successes in San Benito. The Juntos Podemos leadership group was able to complete the logistics of the community event, without relying significantly on county staff during the final days before the event. Project support persons (Maria in particular) spent two days in San Benito immediately leading up to the event, to ensure support for the efforts of Juntos Podemos.

“CELEBRATING YOUR LEADERSHIP” JOINT MEETING WITH MADERA & SAN BENITO CLIENT LEADERS

On September 29, 2007, many of the local client leaders from Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad (Madera) and Juntos Podemos – Together We Can (San Benito) came together at the home of Maria Maceira-Lessley and John Lessley for a joint post-focus group celebration and meeting. We sent an invitation¹⁹ to the leaders from both counties and provided them with an event schedule²⁰ upon their arrival. This was the first opportunity for both groups of leaders to meet each other. Persons in attendance for Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad included Esther Capuchino, Carlos Garcia, Lori Nieto and John Pacheco. Those attending from Juntos Podemos were Wanda Lampkin, Maria Lezcano, Roger Lezcano, Maria Irma Munoz, Kevin Lezcano (Maria and Rogers’s son), and Shennade Lezcano (Maria and Roger’s daughter). Project support individuals in attendance were Lorilynn J.B. Alcaez from Stanislaus County, John Lessley, and Maria Maceira-Lessley. Wanda Kato, State DMH County Operations liaison to San Benito County, also joined the celebration.

After everyone arrived, we went around the room for introductions. Each table had nametags and we arranged the seating so that people from different counties could sit with each other, interact, network, and build relationships. The leaders compared experiences and learned a great deal from the different processes in the two counties. Ortiz and Sons Catering of Atwater provided a delicious luncheon as people informally chatted and got to know one another. We enjoyed bagels with cream cheese, tortilla chips and guacamole dip, shrimp ceviche, corn beef and chicken flautas, spicy parmesan olive-mushroom linguine, and spring mix, cranberries, carmelized walnuts and baby tomatoes coated with a balsamic vinaigrette dressing.

After lunch, Maria Maceira-Lessley individually acknowledged the local leaders, awarding each one a certificate and comments about how each person contributed in their own leadership style to the project. We viewed a photo show with the group, displaying the teamwork and contributions of everyone in the two counties. Before closing the meeting, we agreed to meet again in the near future at a location somewhere between Madera and San Benito, as we acknowledged that it was a long way for most people to travel to Sacramento. Everyone seemed to enjoy this nice conclusion to the project. Many lifelong friendships were built.

CONCLUSIONS

Skills Learned Throughout the Process by Local Client Leaders

The process of meeting together and planning for the community events in the two counties resulted in the development of many skills in the local client leaders. This learning process began with our first meeting in the counties and culminated in the completion of a complex project by each leadership group.

Through the process of preparation and carrying out the successful focus groups in their counties, the local client leaders learned the following skills:

- Public speaking
- Soliciting donations,
- Developing a checklist of donation items needed from local businesses
- Meeting facilitation

¹⁹ Invitation to “Celebrate Your Leadership” Meeting with Madera and San Benito Client Leaders, September 29, 2007

²⁰ Latinos Unidos En Nuestra Comunidad / Juntos Podemos Event Schedule, September 29, 2007

- How to conduct outreach
- Creating documents such as flyers, brochures and nametags on computer software
- How to create meeting agendas
- Communication within leadership group between meetings
- Project management skills including keeping track of tasks on a flow basis
- General computer skills
- Communication with county mental health leadership
- Peer support, self-help and advocacy

The skills the local client leaders developed during the project will better prepare them for leadership roles, including development of local client networks, leadership roles in peer support and self-help, and advocating at the local and/or state level.

What We Learned From the Focus Groups

As described in the introductory part of this report, the main goals of the project were to go to the Latino community in two counties in California, and ask questions that will elicit responses to the following broad questions:

1. What things do you do in your community or home to keep you well or healthy?
2. What would make it more comfortable for you (and people in your community) to participate in peer support and self-help?

In the different focus groups, we encouraged the local client leaders to develop specific questions in their own way, with an overall guideline to prompt discussion that would provide answers to these main topic areas.

In the two counties where the Statewide Cultural Competency Project was conducted, several themes emerged from the focus group discussions. The process of outreach and planning for the community event/focus groups were not done using a “cookie cutter” approach, but individualized in each community, based on the local culture and how the local client leaders designed the strategies. For the same reasons, themes arising from the focus groups reflected the local communities who participated in the focus groups. Again, the challenge is to avoid generalization, when each community is different in many ways.

Themes From Madera Focus Group

What things do you do in your community or home to keep well or healthy?

We use herbalists and healers.

Friends and family give support.

I need the services to cope.

When services are not available, I play basketball and sports. It burns off my endorphins, which makes me think clearer.

What would make it more comfortable for you (and people in your community) to participate in peer support and self-help?

In the Madera focus group, immigration issues were a prominent theme. People are afraid to come in for any type of services. We need to ensure that undocumented persons are not asked for social security numbers. They fear being deported, so they will not seek services. Additionally, car insurance is too expensive to purchase, so they cannot risk driving to a clinic.

Madera community members valued reaching out to them, including going to their homes or meeting in a park. Non-clinic locations are more comfortable and less threatening for many Latino community members. There is more trust on the part of traditional people if the provider comes to a home.

Transportation to a central area can be a barrier for many Latinos, especially migrant workers, who typically live in rural areas.

Offering peer support, self-help or mental health services after 5 p.m. would increase Latinos' comfort level, since many migrant workers and other employed persons are working before 5 p.m. and cannot take time off work without jeopardizing their job security.

Offer a Spanish-speaking provider. It takes a long time to wait for an interpreter, and people will leave if they have to wait too long.

Education, childcare, and respite for women who are taking care of their children would be very helpful.

In order to make it more comfortable for Latinos to receive self-help and peer support, CNMHC and Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad should set up a booth at the swap meet at the drive-in theater, to conduct community education and outreach for what we offer.

Establish a phone line for Spanish-speaking people to call.

Stigma keeps people from receiving support. Our families call us "loca" rather than "depressed," because people are not educated. (The recommendation would be to educate the community through outreach.)

The recommendation that police need sensitivity training was a repeating theme.

Interesting Quotes from the Madera Focus Group

"I am stuck in the country and isolated. I had to call 911 for services. My mother had to move to town."

"There is more trust inside a home than in a clinic. I would feel validated if they came to my house."

Other suggestions and comments

There was a suggestion that the next project should be geared toward African Americans (the commenter said they are almost invisible in Madera).

Themes from the San Benito Focus Group

What things do you do in your community of home to keep well or healthy?

Sometimes you need to take a break from your routines to connect with your family. You start feeling depressed and it becomes bigger. Simple things like a meal with your family. Little things that keep us a part of the group or family or community help us keep healthy.

Family really helps (including friends). Talking to them every day, and helping build low-income housing. Where I live is a community. We work together to build homes. Working together (is what I do in my community to keep well).

My family said I had “nervios,”(nerves) and I wasn’t taken to the doctor. I am family-oriented but am “hush-hush” because I was taught to survive. I don’t complain a lot. I was raised that if you don’t have anything good to say, don’t say anything at all.

What would make it more comfortable for you (and people in your community) to participate in peer support and self-help?

Homeless, housing referrals and job referrals was a major concern among many of the participants in the San Benito focus group. Juntos Podemos did a good job outreaching to the homeless community, and many people from that community attended the focus group.

A Transitional Age Youth asked about housing referral if you don’t have a mental health problem? Can Esperanza Center or Behavioral Health still help you get housing?

We need to train police officers. The mentally ill need places like this, not jail.

Knowing how to get into programs and help filling out the paperwork would make it more comfortable.

Advertise throughout the community. Go door to door to advertise. People think they are “crazy” and not normal. Educating the community would be helpful to encourage more participation.

Places to take showers are helpful. (Esperanza Center offers a place to take showers and wash clothing.)

Discourteous treatment by receptionists can turn you off. People go to the counter and no one acknowledges them. Customer service training was recommended.

In the Hispanic community, mental illness can be “hush-hush.” They want it hidden.

It would be helpful if Hollister allowed people in the park after 9 p.m. No one is allowed in public areas after 9 p.m.

Hygiene kits and medical care would be helpful. It would be nice to have an RN here.

Interesting Quotes from the San Benito Focus Group

“I just want a hand up, not a hand-out.”

“Out of the gutter, back to the curb, to walk on the sidewalk on their own.”

“La union es la forsa. (The union makes the force.) People sometimes do not jump into the boat until the boat goes away.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The specific task for the Statewide Cultural Competency Project was to develop focus groups for Latinos in at least two counties in different regions of California, in order to hear focus group participant ideas about what peer support and self-help programs need to do to be accessible and meaningful to Latinos, and responsive to their needs. The workgroup that developed the Cultural Competency Institute at the Client Forum 2007 identified this task during its initial conference call (see page 2 of this report).

Based on the experience during the process of organizing the focus groups and the themes that arose from the focus group questions, we offer the following recommendations for outreach, training, peer support and self-help strategies, funding, and local leadership.

Outreach

In order to successfully reach into the Latino communities in local counties, several factors must be present:

1. There must be a consistent CNMHC presence in each county. In the two counties we worked with, there was very little organized CNMHC presence. For that reason, the CNMHC presence was reliant on project support staff traveling frequently to the counties. It is important for the CNMHC Board of Directors, Regional Directors, and the Executive Director to maintain a strong relationship with local consumers of color (Latinos).
2. Project support staff must continue to be aware that you cannot expect the Latino community to come in to CNMHC for peer support and self-help. We must go to them, and utilize trained local Latino client leaders who the Latino community can identify with culturally, linguistically, and based on common life experiences.
3. It is important to maintain strong connection and frequent meetings with the local Mental Health Director. The local Mental Health Director's department can benefit immensely by the outreach CNMHC can provide, which can result in reduction of disparities. CNMHC can request in-kind funding and support from the Director. When staff support is offered by the local mental health agency, it is important to be mindful their role should be to provide support for what the local client leaders want to accomplish, not to provide direction, guidance, therapy, or leadership.
4. Relationship building is important in order to be successful at local grassroots community organizing. In order to develop relationships with local client leaders who will complete the important hands-on outreach to hard-to-reach communities, the project support persons need to be in the community on a constant or at least frequent basis. It is essential that the same project support persons go to the community, to ensure that we develop lasting relationships with local client leaders. If a project sends different people each week, trust and relationships would be more challenging to develop. Forming relationships are a basis for local client leaders to develop a sense of ownership of the project and its outcomes.

5. As part of the relationship building process, it is important to provide incentives for the local client leaders. The process must implicitly value their contributions, so we cannot ask them to contribute their time and efforts for free. The types of incentives can include cash stipends, gift cards, providing meals, or other incentives, depend on the preferences the local client leaders.
6. Provide the following information in both English and Spanish:
 - a. CNMHC membership form
 - b. Flyer/brochure
 - c. Descriptive information about CNMHC
 - d. History of the consumer movement
 - e. Information on the Mental Health Services Act, including position papers
 - f. MHSA Client Survey
7. Community organizing and outreach have costs, so funding must be sufficient to support the project. Major costs include:
 - a. Incentives for the local client leaders (as mentioned above)
 - b. Project support staff travel to the local community (mileage, food and hotel costs)
 - c. Costs to support planning meetings and outreach for the community event (food, copies, binders, mailing supplies, postage, photographic costs)
 - d. Costs for materials to conduct the community event (space rental, food and supplies, children's activities, copies, printing costs for production of program flyers, Logo T-shirts for local leaders, helium balloon kits)
 - e. Funding must be sufficient to support all the project costs. If the local county mental health department and community businesses are willing to assist the project with funding and in-kind support, this factors into the amount of CNMHC support that is necessary.

Training

At times during the interaction between local client leaders and county staff, there can be a disconnect. Often, county staff may not have the background experience to value what the clients have to offer in terms of peer support and self-help. Sometimes the county wants to put peer support and self-help into their own array of services, which are not client-run and may not hold true to the underlying values of peer support and self-help. This disconnection can lead to role strain and competition between county staff and client leaders.

We believe that community education for mental health professionals and other stakeholders can begin to shift this dynamic and help county staff and community members to more easily understand and value what the client leaders, peer support and self-help have to offer. As a first step, we recommend that CNMHC, in conjunction with the local client organization, provide the following trainings in each county:

Community Education

Annual training for mental health professionals, line staff, community members, and other relevant stakeholders, to be held in both Spanish and English. Training must be held in the local Latino communities.

Training topics:

- Peer support
- Self-Help
- History of the consumer movement

- CNMHC as an organization

Mental Health Board Training

We recommend holding an annual training for local Latino clients and community members about the role of the Mental Health Board. It is important to inform the Latino community that there is an advisory body where they can be represented. Many counties historically experienced challenges in keeping consumers and consumers of color on the MHB, as required by law.

Peer Support and Self-Help Strategies

In order to reduce disparities in peer support and self-help as utilized by the Latino community, the client movement must develop a strategy to make peer support and self-help available and accessible within the Latino community. One message we heard very clearly in the focus groups is that many Latinos are unwilling to go to a central location they are not familiar with to obtain services or other kinds of assistance. Since immigration is such a powerful issue, undocumented individuals are not willing to risk deportation to obtain support. Self-help and peer support must find a way to morph itself, or modify its mode of operation. Is it possible to provide peer support or self-help in someone's home or in a community setting where Latinos are comfortable? Can the structure of what we offer be flexible? Can we provide materials in Spanish as well as in English? Can we send bilingual clients who are familiar with the local community to provide peer support and self-help to the under-served Latino population? The voice of the Latino community as expressed in the focus groups seem to indicate an eagerness for services in their homes and community, in their language, from people they are familiar with.

Funding

Although project support staff appreciates the funding provided by CNMHC, we estimate a budget of \$10,000 to \$25,000 per county would be required to connect successfully with un-served Latino populations. The budgeted amounts would depend on how much support the local county is willing to provide, and how far the project support staff is required to travel in order to maintain consistent contact with local client leaders. It is necessary to truly gain the trust of people who are afraid to come in to participate in peer support and self-help programs. CNMHC can only gain their trust by asking local Latinos what they need (in their specific location) in order to feel comfortable with peer support and self-help. In many places, this will mean CNMHC will need to be willing to go to them, in their homes and communities. Many people in this population group live in rural areas and do not have transportation to come to a central location or conference. One positive action would be for CNMHC to establish local affiliates in smaller counties, where local client leaders can be cultivated, making the community outreach one step closer.

Local Leadership

During the process of this Cultural Competency Project, we affirmed that local communities are just waiting for someone to come. Once local client leaders are identified, cultivated and supported, many great things can be accomplished. We strongly recommend that CNMHC provide support for the local community members, and allow them to tell CNMHC how to do outreach into their communities. It is sometimes difficult, but CNMHC must be vigilant in not trying to tell the community members how to do it. Remember to value the beginner's mind and resist having the "expert mind" take over and dominate. Recall the Shunryu Suzuki quote earlier in this report on page 6: "The mind of the beginner is empty, free of the habits of the expert, ready to accept, to doubt, and open to all the possibilities. It is the kind of mind that can see things as they are which step-by-

step and in a flash can realize the original nature of everything.” Our role is to support the local client leaders in finding out what works in their community and how the current structure of self-help and peer support can be adapted to be supportive of those practices.

With much loving support and continuous funding, we believe it is possible for organizations like CNMHC, or even local mental health systems, to conduct meaningful outreach into the local Latino communities. The most important lessons we learned during our project are that outreach must be done by local people in their own way (not by experts telling them what to do, and not using a toolbox approach), and in acknowledgment that a successful Latino outreach project will have costs, the project must be funded according to the results it finds acceptable.

MANY THANKS TO...

Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad Leadership Group

Carlos Garcia
Lori Nieto

John Pacheco (“JP”)
Esther Capuchino

Madera County Behavioral Health Management, Contractors, Staff and Volunteers

Janice Melton, Behavioral Health Director
David Weikel
Virginia Sanchez
Diana Solano
Judy Comer

Timothy Gallemore, Hope House Director
Alfonso Lopez
Gwen Palmer
Hope House staff and volunteers

Madera County Community Members and Businesses

Madera County Behavioral Health Services
Mission Madera Community Outreach
Mission Madera volunteers

Lunch Caterers
Roseanne
Stephanie

Juntos Podemos Leadership Group

Wanda Lampkin
Roger Lezcano
Maria Lezcano
Maria “Irma” Munoz

Antonio Pina
Angela Pina
Marquinita Saucier II
Eleanor Zapata

Kevin Lezcano
Monica Lezcano
Shennade Lezcano
Gia Pina

San Benito County Behavioral Health Management, Staff and Volunteers

Alan Yamamoto, Behavioral Health Director
Patricia Ayers
Lynda Yoshikawa
Esmeralda

Phylicia Mattos
Mary Watson
Esperanza Center staff and volunteers

San Benito County Community Members and Businesses

Attitudes & Images
The Bounce Company
Belinda’s Heaven Scent Day
Spa & Salon
Baskin-Robbins
The Community Pantry
El Nopal

Las Cuates
99 Cent Store
Nob Hill
Maria “Irma” Munoz
Marich Confectionery Co.
Metropolis

Papa Murphy’s Pizza
San Benito Co. Behavioral
Health
Save Mart
Starbucks (4th Street)
Togo’s
Windmill Market

CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competency Project Support Persons

Maria Maceira-Lessley
John Lessley
Lorilynn J.B. Alcaez

Zula Macchell Reeves
Patty Gainer

Iris Frazier
Wanda Kato

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR ATTACHMENTS / REFERENCES TO FOOTNOTES
(Listed Numerically by Footnote)

1. Client Forum Cultural Competency Institute, Conference Call Agenda, January 10, 2007
2. "Cultural Competency: Honoring and Promoting Culturally Diverse Ways of Healing" (planning document for Cultural Competence Institute)
3. Client Forum 2007, Cultural Competence Institute – Summary
4. Invitation Letter to Prospective Work Group Members, March 30, 2007
5. CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competency Project Teleconference Notes, April 19, 2007
6. ABC-30 Action News, "Madera's House of Hope," October 27, 2006
7. CNMHC Cultural Competency Statewide Project Conference Call Agenda – May 7, 2007
8. CNMHC Statewide Cultural Competence Project - Listing of Business Meetings
9. Request to Utilize the Pan American Community Center, Madera, May 30, 2007
10. Script for Recruiting Focus Group Participants, Fourth Draft, June 9, 2007
11. Madera Cultural Competency Project Weekly Timeline, June 3, 2007
12. Flyer for Latino Communities United Community Event at Rotary Park June 30, 2007
13. Flyer for Latinos Unidos en Nuestra Comunidad – Rotary Park June 30, 2007 (Spanish)
14. Footnote #14 defines "Prevalence rate" as a percentage that compares the number of people served with the number of people in need of services, but does not include an attachment.
15. Hollister Pinnacle, "Esperanza Center Targets Spanish Speakers and Transitional-age Children," May 18, 2007
16. "San Benito County Prevalence Data," based on information produced by California Department of Mental Health, Statistics and Data Analysis Section, CSI data and Prevalence and Un-Met Need Data
17. Juntos Podemos Community Event Flyer, August 4, 2007
18. Juntos Podemos Event Schedule Brochure, August 4, 2007
19. Invitation to "Celebrate Your Leadership" Meeting with Madera and San Benito Client Leaders, September 29, 2007
20. Latinos Unidos En Nuestra Comunidad / Juntos Podemos Event Schedule, September 29, 2007