

BERKELEY-ALBANY MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

Annual Report – 2017

Introduction

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) is comprised of residents with mental health and related expertise and experience who advise the Division of Mental Health for the Cities of Berkeley and Albany on policy, programming, implementation, evaluation, budget allocations and expenditures. This Division has an approximate annual budget of \$13-14 million. The Berkeley City Council further relies on Commissions to expand its expertise and conduct analyses, as well as adopt positions of advocacy in specific spheres. The purpose of this Annual Report is to inform the City Council about the accomplishments undertaken by the Mental Health Commission in 2017.

MHC Membership

Under the Welfare and Institutions Code § 5604, the Mental Health Commission is mandatorily required to comprise its membership of individuals with mental health expertise. The Commission is comprised of 13 members pursuant to this state statute: 11 from the City of Berkeley, and two from the City of Albany. One member represents the City of Berkeley Mayor's Office.

There are further statutory requirements for Special and General Interest members. In the Cities of Berkeley and Albany, there must be seven Special Interest members. At least three persons must have or be receiving public mental health services, and at least three must be parents, spouses, siblings or children of persons who have received these services. There are also five General Interest members who have knowledge in multiple disciplines related to mental health.

MHC Powers and Duties

The powers and duties of the Mental Health Commission for the Cities of Berkeley and Albany are aligned with the Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 5604 and accorded in the City of Berkeley Resolution N.S., 65,495 dated November 27, 2012. These powers and duties of the Commission are:

1. Review and evaluate the community's mental health needs, services, facilities and special problems;

2. Review any City agreements entered into pursuant to WIC Sec. 5650, if submission of a performance contract is required by the State;
3. Advise the governing body and the local mental health director as to any aspect of the local mental health program;
4. Review and approve the procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process;
5. Submit an annual report to the governing body on the needs and performance of the City's mental health system;
6. Review and make recommendations on applicants for the appointment of a local director of mental health services. The Commission shall be included in the selection process prior to the vote of the governing body;
7. Review and comment on the City's performance outcome data and communicate its finding to the State Mental Health Planning Council;
8. Pursuant to WIC 5604.2(a)(8), the City Council may transfer additional duties or authority to the Commission;
9. Develop By-Laws in accordance with WIC Sec. 5604.5, and approved by the City Council, including, at the discretion of the Commission, the creation of an Executive Subcommittee.

MHC General Meetings

The Mental Health Commission holds regular meetings on the last Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm except in August and November. Generally, the Commission's meetings occur at the North Berkeley Senior Center located at 1901 Hearst Street, Berkeley, CA 94709, and all meetings are held at accessible public buildings. The Mental Health Commission further welcomes public comment at its meetings.

MHC Subcommittee Meetings

The Mental Health Commission has 8 subcommittees; they are temporary. The Commission or the Chair with the approval by the Commission may appoint members to subcommittees; they must not comprise a quorum of members. A full body of the Commission provides a specific charge or outline of responsibilities with a target date to report back to the full Commission with recommendations.

Currently, the Mental Health Commission subcommittees are:

1. Data Notebook
2. Site Visit Committee
3. Fiscal and Programmatic Accountability
4. Amend Mental Health Commission Enabling Resolution
5. By-Laws
6. Annual Report-2017
7. Clinic Waiting Room Survey
8. Children and Youth

Accomplishments of Mental Health Commission in 2017

Subcommittees Formed in 2017: The Data Notebook, Fiscal and Programmatic Accountability, Amend Mental Health Commission Enabling Resolution and Clinic Waiting Room subcommittees were formed in 2017.

Mental Health Month: The Commission recommended to the City Council to declare “May is Mental Health Month.”

Recommendation to City Council: To support AB89 and communicate support to legislature and the Governor’s office.

Suicide Prevention Resources Council: The Commission authorized the preparation of a Suicide Prevention Resources Council report, and further passed this report.

Suicide Prevention Resourced: After receiving a presentation, the Commission recommended to the Berkeley City Council that the Department of Housing and Community Services issue an RFP for a consultant with expertise in suicide prevention to research suicide prevention strategies in other jurisdictions and recommend strategies to be utilized in Berkeley.

Suicide Public Records Research: There was a public records search of suicide related calls that revealed all zip codes in Berkeley are impacted by the need for suicide prevention; no single zip code carried a burden greater than others.

Berkeley Wellness Center: The Mental Health Commission invited the Executive Director, Lorna Jones, of Bonita House to make a presentation about the delivery of services and floor plan for the Wellness Center.

Crisis Triage: The Mental Health Commission addressed applying for MHSOAC Crisis Triage grant and is currently considering providing a letter of support for the Request for Application on the

Second Round of funding for SB 82 grants. Three Commissioners attended the Crisis Triage Grant Information Gathering Meeting on June 27, 2017 held in Berkeley, CA.

The Commission further recommended the Mental Health Division and the Department of Housing and Community Services apply for MHSOAC Crisis Triage monies made available under SB 82 unless the proposal is fiscally or otherwise unreasonable for the City of Berkeley to manage. The recommendation was made in light multiple crisis needs.

Housing Trust Fund RFP: The Commission recommended that a certain percentage of the units be prioritized for the homeless population that meets criteria for severely mentally ill and that the development include supportive housing.

Mental Health Board Training: A mental health board trainer, Susan Wilson, led a full-day training on December 9, 2017 for the Mental Health Commission.

MHSA Public Hearing: The Mental Health Commission held a public hearing to review the Mental Health Services Act Three Year FY 17-20 Plan and to obtain public comment before obtaining approval of this Plan for submission to the State of California.

Results-Based Accountability Presentation: The Commission had a presentation on Results-Based Accountability.

Mental Health Workers: The Mental Health Commission approved a recommendation to Berkeley City Council that the Council identify funds for 24/7 qualified and well-staffed mental health workers for the Cities of Berkeley and Albany.

Fiscal and Programmatic Accountability Subcommittee: The Commission approved a motion for the Fiscal and Program Accountability subcommittee to identify mental health services provided to homeless persons including persons in shelters, encampments and on the streets.

The Commission approved the Mental Health Services Act FY17-20 Three Year Program and Expenditure Plan.

Conclusion

This is the first annual report prepared by the Mental Health Commission. It is not yet possible to report what impact the work of the Commission has had on the community. This will be reported in future annual reports.

The Mental Health Commission is pleased to present this Annual Report 2017 to the Berkeley City Council, and thanks the Council for taking the time to review it.

