

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

RESPONSE TO 2005-2006 GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

Countywide Services Agency

Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health (43 - 51)

Findings:

Finding #1

The API community, and each of the component ethnicities within that designation, is among the most underserved populations in the county.

Response: Concur.

Recommendation #1

Using the attached Penetration Rate Chart as a reference, and employing the services of the Transcultural Wellness Center in collaboration with other programs, the county should make every effort to increase the penetration rate of API in general, and of Chinese, Korean, Laotian, Samoan, and Vietnamese ethnic groups in particular, by 1.5% within the first year of the three year plan.

Response: Concur. The county will support collaborative relationships between the Transcultural Wellness Center and other programs to ensure outreach and engagement with the API community. The county will also continue current outreach efforts and will aim to increase the penetration rate of the API community by 1.5% within the first year of the three-year plan.

Finding # 2

In a recent survey of local shelters for the homeless, more than 50% of youth, and 37% of adults have been identified as African American. In the county's general population, 14% of youth and 10% of adults are African American.

Response: Concur.

Recommendation # 2

Utilizing the services of the Permanent Supportive Housing Program in collaboration with other programs, the county should identify the African American community as a prime target of its outreach and engagement efforts in order to increase its participation in the Housing Program.

Response: Concur. The data above references the general homeless population, rather than the mentally ill homeless population. Current data show that 30% of the adult homeless mentally ill population is African American. We will continue to target this population in our outreach and engagement efforts and monitor our progress toward increasing its participation in our Permanent Supportive Housing Program.

Finding # 3

While Latinos comprise a large segment of the general population, the percentage of Latinos in local shelters for the homeless cannot be accurately stated due to discrepancies in the collection of data. It is known, however, that the Latino population has been unserved or underserved in terms of health and mental health services, due to difficulties relating to language, insurance and/or documentation.

Response: Concur.

Recommendation # 3

The county should identify the Latino community as a prime focus of culturally sensitive and bilingual outreach and engagement methods in order to increase its participation in housing and other mental health programs.

Response: Concur. Outreach to the Latino community has been a priority and the county will continue to make efforts to reduce barriers to service. We encourage and support active recruitment and hiring of bilingual and bicultural staff, and have requested that contracted agencies follow the county's practice of providing a pay differential. We will continue our efforts to increase this community's awareness of and participation in mental health services. Through MHSA funding, the county will fill two positions in our Cultural Competence/Ethnic Services Unit, and one of those positions will focus specifically on outreach and engagement activities.

Finding # 4

The oversight of the Sacramento County Grand Jury should continue through the County CSS Three Year Plan to monitor the effectiveness of the MHSA programs.

Response: Do not concur.

Thank you for your interest in these programs and we encourage your continued interest. We will provide you information when requested and remind you that the Mental Health Board, County hierarchy, and State departments are already serving in an oversight capacity over the Mental Health Services Act as defined by law. We believe that this oversight is sufficient.

Recommendation # 4

The Director, or the MHSA Program Manager, or the Ethnic Services Manager of the Division of Mental Health Services, Department of Health and Human Services, should apprise the chair of the Health and Human Services Committee of the 2006-2007 Sacramento County Grand Jury of data, as they become available, relating to the effectiveness of the five programs considered herein, in relation to services rendered to underserved ethnic groups.

Response: Concur.