

Sacramento County Mental Health Board Adult System of Care (ASOC) Meeting

MINUTES – IN PERSON MEETING HYBRID PARTICIPATION OPTION

Monday April 7, 2025

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Committee Member	Present	Absent
Brad Lueth (Vice Chair)		X
Laura Bemis	X	
Mallika Walsh	X	
Melinda Avey	X	
Patricia Wentzel (Chair)	X	

Agenda Item

I. Welcome and Introductions

- Introductions
- Acknowledgement of [Conduct Agreement](#)
- Announcements by MHB ASOC Committee Members

Chair Wentzel commenced the meeting at 6:03pm, introductions were made and the Conduct Agreement was acknowledged.

Announcements:

Chair Wentzel announced that NAMI Sacramento is having its annual walk, [NAMIWalks](#), on May 3, 2025, at William Land Park from 8am-12pm.

II. Public Comments Relating to the Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services Adult System of Care – Items Not on Agenda

- No public comments were made.

III. Presentation on Peer Workforce

- Presenter #1: Andrea Crook, MHSA Health Program Manager
 - Andrea began the presentation by stating that Sacramento County has been a leader within the state for creating Peer positions. Before the MHSA and the mandate to employ Peers, Sacramento County had created various Liaison positions back in 1974 that were similar to the Peer position.
 - Andrea stated that Peer support is a system of giving and receiving help based on shared experiences and empathy. Individuals who have lived through similar challenges provide support, encouragement, and understanding to others currently facing those challenges. The role of the Peer has been defined as offering and receiving help based on shared understanding, respect and mutual empowerment between people in similar situations.
 - Peer support workers engage in a wide range of activities, including advocacy, linkage to resources, sharing of experience, community and relationship building, group facilitation, skill building, mentoring, goal setting, and more. They may also plan and develop groups, services or activities, supervise other peer workers, provide training, gather information on resources, administer programs or agencies, educate the public and policymakers, and work to raise awareness
 - There are currently 33 Behavioral Health Peer Specialists, 7 Senior Behavioral Health Peer Specialists and 3 Behavioral Health Peer Specialist Program Managers.
 - Sacramento County has 307 Certified Medi-Cal Peer Specialists (CMPSS), and 138 employers have

completed Peer related trainings.

- CMPSS provide recovery-oriented, culturally appropriate services that promote engagement, socialization, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, natural supports and are trauma aware. Certification is designed for individuals who are 18 years of age or older, who self-identify as having lived experience with the process of recovery from mental illness, substance use disorder, or both, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent or family member of the consumer.
 - CMPSS are trained in 17 core competencies and are embedded throughout the Behavioral Health Services Continuum of Care.
- Presenter #2: Marche Williams, Hope Cooperative- New Direction FSP
 - New Direction is a Full-Service Partnership (FSP) that provides medication, housing and peer support, case management and therapeutic services to Sacramento residents over the age of 18 who struggle with mental health disorders.
 - Peers employ and endorse self-care and wellness techniques. These can include, but are not limited to, sleep hygiene, proper diet, spirituality, socialization, and hygiene. Physical health is also part of a well-rounded recovery path.
 - Peer support is an evidence-based practice and has found that Peer support helps improve relationships with providers, decreases substance use and depression and reduces hospital readmissions and days in the hospital.
 - Presenter #3: Jilleen Adema, Turning Point Community Programs CORE
 - The CORE program is made up of three main components, Specialty Mental Health Outpatient Clinic, Community Wellness Center and Outreach and Engagement team.
 - The majority of the Peer Support Services are provided at the Community Wellness Center (CWC).
 - Turning Point has three locations, Natomas, North Highlands and Elk Grove.
 - At the CWC, there are skills and social groups, 1:1 individual support and mentoring, resource connections and linkage to mental health services.
 - There are 3-4 Peer Mentors at each CWC location, with a total of 10 Peer Mentors, 1 Peer Supervisor and 1 Peer Director. Of these 12 employees, 7 are certified and 5 are currently working on their certification.
 - The CWC's have the capacity to serve 600 individuals each and currently, 400-500 individuals are served at each wellness center. The attendance varies and fluctuates based on need and the CWC is a drop in center with individuals coming in a couple times a month.
 - In the Outpatient program, Turning Point has partnered with NAMI to expand the Peer Specialist role.

Committee Member Questions/ Comments:

- Chair Wentzel:
 - Q: Do you know the number of Peer Specialists that are not certified in Sacramento County?
 - A: Not at this time; Sacramento County Quality Management has started collecting that information which can be provided at a later date.
 - Q: For New Direction FSP, do you know the total case load?
 - A: 345
 - Q: How does New Directions FSP decide which cases Peers work with?
 - A: It is based on referrals. Case managers will determine what the need of the client is, their goals and their treatment plan. This helps determine which client receives a Peer
 - Q: At New Directions, is the statistic that says that hospital readmissions have been reduced by 42% a statistic from researching findings or from within the FSP?
 - A: Both. This is something we have to report to Sacramento County.
 - Q: Are Peer Support positions full-time or part-time?
 - A: Full-time.
 - Q: At New Directions, are Peers expected to transport clients?
 - A: Peers are not expected to transport clients but if the need arises, Peers can support in this area.
 - Q: At New Directions, if cars are needed, how are peers supported in this area? If they don't have a car, are there any programs to help afford one?
 - A: Unsure of any special programs to help afford a car. Peers are required to have a driver's license and car insurance to drive clients. New Directions also have company vans that staff can use to transport clients. Throughout the county in general, there are numerous Peer positions that do not require a car,

driver's license, car insurance or to provide client transportation. There is a program called [Plan to Achieve Self-Support \(PASS\)](#) that helps individuals meet individual and employment goals and will help pay for a 4 year college degree, trade school or meaningful employment. If transportation is needed to achieve this goal, the program can pay for this.

- Q: What is done to recruit Peer Specialists?
- A: At Turning Point, job announcements are posted on all major job boards (Indeed and LinkedIn), career fairs, partnerships with local colleges and other local events.
- Q: How are Peer positions funded?
- A: The Peers through the CWC are 100% funded the MHSA. There is additional funding through Mental Health Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (Mental Health MAA). For Outpatient programs, if Peers are certified, then programs can bill Medi-Cal and MHSA funding.

- Member Bemis:

- Q: Does CalMHSA have a job portal for peers to seek employment?
- A: yes, it can be found on the California Peer Certification website.
- Q: At New Direction FSP, do lower functioning or higher functioning clients get paired up with a Peer?
- A: It depends on the need.
- Q: What do Peers at New Directions do with clients?
- A: There are groups that clients can participate in, such as, cooking groups and pickleball and many other activities that will help clients socialize and improve daily skills.
- Q: Does Turning Point use Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialist (MHRS) services?
- A: Yes
- Q: Does Turning Point assist Peers with becoming an MHRS?
- A: Yes, there are growth opportunities available for Peers at Turning Point
- Q: At Turning Point, what is the turnover rate for Peer Support Specialists?
- A: Since partnering with Consumer's self-help, the turnover rate is low.
- Q: Are Peers allowed time off for the CEU's?
- A: Peer Managers offer continuing education hours; 20 hours for every 2 years.

- Member Walsh:

- Q: Are Peers that do provide client transportation reimbursed for milage?
- A: yes

- Member Avey:

- Q: Is Turning Point drug and alcohol Medi-Cal certified for the drug and alcohol services that are offered?
- A: Our AOD counselors are CDAC certified but Turning Point is not a drug and alcohol Medi-Cal program. Alcohol and drug counseling services are offered, not treatment services.

Public Questions/ Comments:

- Hafsa Hamdani, Member of the public
 - Sacramento County hospitals should have peers because when Hafsa was hospitalized, the staff wasn't understanding of patients' needs so peers would be helpful in this setting.

IV. Discussion about future presentations

- Chair Wentzel began a discussion on selecting a topic for May's meeting.
- Chair Wentzel mentioned that the previous Adult System of Care committee members compiled a report that showed employment in the FSP system. It was suggested to follow up with FSP's to see where they are with the recommendations from that report.
- County staff informed the committee members that through BH-Connect, the county has implemented Individual Placement and Support (IPS) which is a model that focuses on employment for people with a serious mental illness into the FSP program. County staff recommended connecting with BHS staff to present on IPS for the May meeting.
- Chair Wentzel stated that another resource could be to seek out information from the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) on their work with helping those with a mental illness obtain employment.
- Member Bemis stated that a presentation from DOR would be a good presentation for the May meeting.

- Member Avey also confirmed that a presentation on employment would be a great focus for the May meeting.
- It was agreed to make Employment a priority topic for May.

V. Adjournment

- Next Meeting will be April 7, 2025, from 6:00pm- 7:30pm
- Chair Wenzel adjourned the meeting at 7:34pm