

West Marin MHSA/Substance Use Community Meeting: Community Input Summary

5-7pm on June 18, 2019
West Marin Health and Human Services Building
Point Reyes Station

Large Group Discussion Question 1: What do you see as needs/gaps in services for the Medi-Cal/low-income uninsured populations with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) or Substance Use Disorders (SUD) in West Marin?

- Takes too long for Mobile Crisis to come in a crisis situation, if they come at all
 - Many folks are unaware of this resource or don't call because there is an assumption they would not come out to West Marin
- Many folks are homebound and isolated so can't access services
- Lots of stigma
- Lack of support system
- Lack of guidance around resources for people in the community
- Law enforcement often responds inappropriately to people with SMI—need more training
- Lack of substance use services for Transitional Age Youth (TAY) [typically defined as 16-25 year olds]
- Some TAY have made homelessness a “life-style choice” which can have negative impacts on other youth coming of age
- Barriers to housing (unaffordability)
- Lack of transportation options (and bus service is too infrequent)
- Lack of access to services or to people make referrals for more intensive SUS or MH services
- Too few Spanish speaking providers
- Lack of knowledge about insurance or services that are available even if you don't have insurance

Large Group Question 2: What are the most important problems for Prevention and Early Intervention funding to address in West Marin?

- *Promotoras* funding
- Reduce barriers to afterschool and summer programs—they all cost money and need transportation
- Increase school supports
 - students don't always feel valued, supported, or challenged
 - need curriculum around Substance Use taught in the schools
 - Education system becomes too punitive rather than educations/supportive
 - Peer mentoring training/support
- There is a lack of post-partum support especially for isolated Latinas
- Lack of recreational opportunities (and recreational facilities) for youth/TAY/families
- Lack of advocates for youth/TAY/families

Break Out Group 1: Suggestions for how to improve Treatment and Recovery Services for the Medi-Cal and Low Income Uninsured population in West Marin:

- Increase staffing:
 - More Psychiatry time in Point Reyes Station and Bolinas
 - Expert at evaluation
 - Approachable/skilled at rapport building/willing to come outside the building to talk with the person
 - Public Health Nurses (bring back)
 - “they are a key to almost everything you do”—linkers
 - “people identify public health nurses as being there for them”
 - Full-time Substance Use Counselor
 - split between the schools and a clinic setting
 - Increase CPS and APS staffing at the West Marin site
 - Housing Counselor/local case manager for the homeless population
 - Psychotherapy services in Spanish for the SMI population in West Marin
 - BHRS Interns in West Marin (bring back)
 - Provided crisis evaluation and support on site
 - “it helped a lot”
 - “people really liked them”
 - “got people used to talking with someone”
- Eliminate barriers:
 - Make the Access line/assessment process easier (transportation, time, availability, etc.)
 - Have an Access clinician who comes to West Marin to do assessments
 - Make information about how to refer someone for services available at schools, clinics, private practices
- Wellness and Recovery Focus:
 - Support Groups:
 - More support groups in West Marin (depression, aging, family caregiver, chronic pain, end of life, etc)
 - More groups for substance use in West Marin
 - Increase Peer Services:
 - A Recovery Coach based in West Marin
 - Dedicate a peer Care Team full-time to West Marin
 - Make the West Marin HHS site available as a drop-in center to meet with Peer mentors
 - Wellness Space
 - Open the “Community Room” at the West Marin HHS site certain evenings each week to focus on wellness for TAY or people of all ages, including:
 - Substance use education
 - Therapeutic games or board game nights
 - Cooking/healthy eating

- Resources
- Community building
- Meditation/Star-gazing
- “in addition to building community, giving people a space to ask questions, and teaching people about resources, doing this will help make people more comfortable using the space and coming in for other services”
- Alternative/Cultural Healing Practices:
 - Chi Gung/Tai Chi/Meditation
 - Work with the Sweat Lodge in Bolinas
 - “being in the salt water is therapeutic”
 - Activities that keep you moving
 - Multi-generational activities
- Support for mothers and pregnant women
 - Provide specialized mental health and substance use services geared toward pregnant women
 - Using the schools as an avenue for addressing the needs of moms who need more mental health support—and be sure to provide transportation services (similar to a past Catholic Charities program)
- An assessment of the population of need
- Benzodiazepines:
 - Providers need to be trained on how to help someone get off benzodiazepines
 - “it is really hard for people to kick those on their own”
 - there is no psychiatry back-fill support
 - More Detox beds
- RxSafe has really improved things

Break Out Group 2: Latinx population focus

- Services should be provided in different places in West Marin and these services should be free or at low cost for low income families
- Many Latinos do not access resources due to:
 - fear of being deported
 - lack of education about what Medi-Cal is
 - lack of information in Spanish about mental health and the different services provided in the county
 - stigma
 - a lack of motivation for youth to participate in different activities
 - too many questions asked during the intake process
 - services need to be more accessible to those that do not have insurance and make this clear in flyers and promotional information

- School age children and parents
 - All programs should be free
 - Need for more counseling services in schools for youth and parents
 - Need more after school activities where kids can learn and do different physical activities,
 - Need more activities during the summer, such as summer camp
 - Need more groups for adolescents (run by professionals and peers):
 - to help, guide, and teach them about making wise decisions and the impacts of bullying
 - a group specifically for adolescent girls about how to support each other
 - there used to be a program where people would go to different houses and would read to the kids in English and Spanish and expressed this program was very appreciated by the community but recently the program changed and now they only bring the kids books rather than read with them
- Parenting classes and support groups for parents in Spanish
- Having spaces and activities for people to get together as many families are isolated
 - Due to the isolation some families experience, recommended more resources to transport mothers and youth to the different resources/activities
- *Promotoras* should have more funding, resources, and more trainings about how to help people in need

Break Out Group 3: Prevention & Early Intervention

- Additional funding for *Promotoras*
- Services for school-aged kids:
 - More and better trained school-based counselors
 - Group and individual services
 - School climate supports
 - Need to understand the community better and/or be from community
 - Need to focus on retaining qualified clinicians and staff
 - Building staff capacity/school climate
 - Students need more trusted adults in general that they can go to for support
 - Services to address bullying
 - Professional development to help staff deal with bullying in classrooms and understand issues of diversity
 - Need training for parents and youth as well
 - Need consistent ways to report bullying
 - Parent modeling- programs to support parents support their kids
 - Phone support for latch key kids, online resources
 - Afterschool programming that is free and accessible
 - More services for Tomales High/Tomales Elementary (*added from Treatment group*)
- Transition Age Youth
 - Workforce development for TAY

- Teen lifeguarding jobs/water safety—bring Red Cross here to do an open water training for lifeguards. Builds protective factors
 - Work with Marin County Parks and Open Spaces and the Fire Department
- Housing needs across the board
- Utilize PEI funds for substance use so that it doesn't all need to come from SUS
- Build recreation and wellness spaces-Hubs, drop-in centers/physical spaces
- Bring agencies from all over Marin to WM to provide services/resources
- General suggestions
 - Broad range of prevention services
 - Evening hours
 - Need sustainable programming not contingent upon funds that sunset or are not guaranteed to be renewed
 - More spaces with caring adults- paired with mental health expert to support
 - Tomales collaboration with Sonoma County, Petaluma
 - Need better transportation and childcare for parents so that they can participate in wellness programming and events at school
 - 4 Distinct WM areas need to be supported in an equitable way- all ages in all areas of West Marin
- Funding to continue effective programs such as “Cafecitos”, “Community Matters”
- Adults/older adults:
 - Stigma reduction
 - Need to address isolation, loneliness for seniors in particular
 - A physical space/mixed-aged wellness centers with activities and opportunities to engage with others
 - Program to foster youth/adult (aging) mentorship/relationship building
 - Intergenerational partnering
 - Should be project based such as oral history project, technology
 - Focus on recreation and enrichment-pairing of adult and youth
 - Affordable/no cost, accessible
 - Childcare- build intergenerational relationships