

**SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE
DRAFT GOALS/PRIORITIES/PROBLEM STATEMENTS**

After reviewing qualitative and quantitative data sources on the contributing factors, consumption patterns and consequences related to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, stakeholders identified a series of priorities for consideration for the Substance Use Services Strategic Plan Update (FY 2015/16 – 2017/18). The following represents the priorities and problem statements identified at the December community meeting, as well as input gathered from evaluation data and from other staff and community stakeholders through focus groups and key informant interviews.

Setting the Stage: Prevalence of Substance Use and Related Issues

- Youth are using alcohol and other drugs too early, too often and too much
- Marin youth, adults and older adults are engaging in poly-substance use, which is leading to significant and unintended consequences
- There is a disproportionately high prevalence of alcohol use and poly-pharmacy among older adults
- The number of substances traditionally considered as those of first use or early onset—alcohol, tobacco and marijuana—have expanded to include e-cigarettes and prescription drugs
- Risk factors such as chronic sadness, suicide, and stress appear to be high among young people in Marin County – particularly among youth in “non-traditional” school settings
- Individuals seeking services in the substance use system of care are increasingly complex and oftentimes present with mental health and physical health issues, as well as are homeless or precariously housed.

Priority Area 1: Impact Norms and Perceptions

Create a culture in Marin County where substance misuse and abuse across all ages is unacceptable and substance use disorders are viewed as a health condition rather than a behavioral problem.

Corresponding Problem Statements/Focus Areas

- Alcohol and other drug misuse and abuse, including marijuana and prescription drugs, appear to be perceived as normal behavior across all age groups
- Alcohol, prescription medications and marijuana are reported to be easily accessible and readily available, and they are more accessible in social settings
- There is limited recognition and acknowledgement among many parents, families, school personnel and other caregivers of the scope of and consequences related to substance abuse among youth
- While national, state and local efforts—including the Affordable Care Act, Parity Legislation, Public Safety Realignment and Proposition 47—have been made to decriminalize substance use disorders, stigma continues to persist at the system, community and individual levels

Draft Strategic Plan Goals

- The Marin community can recognize and acknowledge the scope of and consequences related to substance use across all age groups
- The Marin community moves from a culture of stigma to a culture of understanding that substance use disorders are a health condition

Strategies

To Be Developed

Priority Area 2: Improve System Capacity and Infrastructure

Ensure that individuals, organizations and communities within the system of care have the capacity and infrastructure to effectively prevent, reduce and treat issues related to alcohol, tobacco and other drug misuse and abuse.

Corresponding Problem Statements/Focus Areas

- Enhance Provider network capacity as follows:
 - a. Number of providers – There is insufficient client choice for treatment services
 - b. Location of substance use services – Services are largely in San Rafael
 - c. Populations served – There are limited intervention and treatment services for adolescents and older adults; Services shall be culturally responsive and align with the demographics and characteristics of the populations being engaged
 - d. Variety of prevention, intervention and treatment approaches - Recognizing individual needs and varying stages of readiness, the system of care should include multiple service approaches
 - e. Co-occurring /complexity capability – All intervention, treatment and recovery support services should have the capacity and infrastructure to provide or highly coordinate services for individuals with mental health, physical health and/or other related issues
 - f. Medi-Cal – There are too few agencies certified to provide Drug/Medi-Cal reimbursable services; There is a need to increase contractor and County capacity and infrastructure to provide, document, claim for and effectively monitor implementation of Drug/Medi-Cal services
- Given the evolving changes in how substance use disorders are being viewed and addressed—coupled with the research on dependence and addiction—strategies need to be developed to intervene earlier and to effectively attract, engage and treat individuals and families at risk of or with substance use issues
- There is limited public awareness of initiatives aimed at identifying and effectively addressing problematic use of alcohol and other drugs
- There are many local collaborative and grassroots organizations addressing underage alcohol and drug use in Marin County; however, focus group and interview data indicate a need for increased capacity to recruit and maintain community volunteers representing diverse sectors.

Draft Strategic Plan Goals

- The capacity of the provider network meets the needs of the population
- The Marin community is aware of and knows how to effectively identify, intervene and access resources to address problematic use of alcohol and other drugs

Strategies

To Be Developed

Priority Area 3: Implement a Continuum of Effective Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategies and Services

Implement a continuum of culturally responsive evidence-based alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery support services that are aligned with the needs and issues of Marin County and its communities.

Corresponding Problem Statements/Focus Areas

- Building on the successes achieved in integrating and coordinating substance use and mental health services, continue efforts that effectively address co-occurring substance use and mental health issues among youth, adults and older adults engaged in the MHSUS system of care
- Services shall use evidence-based/community-defined best practices and shall effectively address the complex and diverse needs and characteristics of the service population.
- Continue and/or expand current services and strategies that have shown to be effective in impacting substance use and related problems
- Many current approaches to address substance use are not effectively reducing substance use and related problems, particularly among young people in non-traditional school settings

Draft Strategic Plan Goals

- Services and strategies are multi-pronged and include evidence-based/community-defined best practices
- Programs and services regularly and effectively use evaluation to assess effectiveness and to inform continuous quality improvement efforts

Strategies

To Be Developed