

MHSA Advisory Committee Member Planning Input  
Maya Gladstern  
July 25, 2016

Ms. Gladstern was interviewed with a focus on identifying strategies and key connections, which might be used to increase consumer voice, in the upcoming Mental Health Services Act 3 Year Community Planning Process. Ms. Gladstern provided an historical context for the consumer movement in Marin County. There has been a longstanding consumer movement, in Marin, which has achieved significant accomplishments, including the establishment of the Enterprise Resource Center, and the Marin Advocates for Mental Health, housing project among others. However, changes in leadership and lack of staff support and infrastructure, have hampered a more robust development of client based consumer advocacy.

Ms. Gladstern supported the suggestion that The Enterprise Resource Center, would be a key location to collaborate with to conduct focus groups. She also suggested, Buckelew Programs, St. Vincent de Paul, Community Action Marin and Ritter House would be important groups to work with to reach out to consumers to ensure that their voice is included. She also highlighted the need for more consumer education and training to equip consumers, with the necessary tools and knowledge to more effectively advocate for themselves.

Ms. Gladstern shared SAMHSA's Evidence Based Toolkit for Consumer Operated Services as a model for taking important next steps in supporting consumer culture in Marin County.

Other community and system challenges identified, which negatively impact the lives of consumers in Marin, include; the lack of Section 8 and other affordable housing options, the lack of available psychiatry time for medication and other supports.