



INNOVATION MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA)



INFORMATION SHEET

What is Innovation?

Innovation is one of five components of Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) passed by California voters in 2004. It provides funds and evaluates new approaches in mental health. An Innovation project contributes to learning about and addressing unmet need rather than having a primary focus on providing services.

It's an opportunity to "try out" new approaches that can inform current and future practices/approaches in communities. Like all MHSA components, Innovation projects must be guided by MHSA values:

- Community collaboration - Initiates, supports and expands collaboration and linkages, especially connections with systems, organizations, and practitioners not traditionally defined as mental health
- Cultural competence - Demonstrates cultural competency and capacity to reduce disparities in mental health services and outcomes
- Client/family driven mental health system - Includes ongoing involvement of clients and family members, including but not limited to roles in implementation, staffing, evaluation and dissemination
- Wellness, recovery, and resiliency focus - Prevent mental health problems, increase resilience and/or promote health recovery
- Integrated service experiences for clients and family - Encourages and provides for access to a full range of services provided by multiple agencies, programs and funding sources for clients and family members

Innovation Results:

An innovative project may affect virtually any aspect of mental health practices or assess a new or changed application of a promising approach to solving persistent, seemingly intractable mental health challenges (Section 9, Part 3.2, 5830c). In other words, Innovation projects are developed to target a mental health adaptive dilemma, or a challenge that cannot be resolved through habitual or known responses. The result we hope to achieve is the **development of new best practices in mental health** by

- Increasing interagency & community collaboration for mental health services or supports
- Increasing quality of mental health services
- Increasing access to underserved populations
- Increasing access to mental health services

Innovation Strategies:

Innovation projects may employ one of the following strategies to contribute to learning.

- Introduces new mental health practices/approaches that have never been done before
- Makes a change to an existing mental health practice/approach, including adaptation for a new setting or community
- Introduces a new application to the mental health system of a promising community-driven practice/approach or a practice/approach that has been successful in non-mental health contexts or settings.
- Innovation projects may impact individuals, families, neighborhoods and communities.
- Introduces a new application to the mental health system of a promising community-driven practice/approach or a practice/approach that has been successful in non-mental health contexts or settings.

Mental Health Adaptive Dilemma:

On July 18, 2014, community stakeholders approved a priorities funding plan for the Innovation component. The plan prioritized the following Mental Health Adaptive Dilemmas:

- 1.) Improving parental competency and social support for fathers
- 2.) Improving the well-being of children, transitional Aged Youth (TAY), and Transitional Age Young Adults (TAYA)
- 3.) Treatment options for people struggling with both substance abuse and mental illness

Other mental health adaptive dilemmas were also recognized as persistent mental health challenges deserving attention and learning:

- 4.) Connecting people receiving services to community based support
- 5.) Honoring and identifying more holistic approaches to well-being
- 6.) Connecting and linking underserved and diverse communities with resources