



OVERVIEW OF PROPOSITION 63 THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) FACT SHEET

Mental Health Services Before Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)

California voters passed Proposition 63, also known as the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), in November 2004 to expand and improve public mental health services and establish the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) to provide oversight, accountability and leadership on issues related to public mental health.

At that time, California's public mental health funding was insufficient to meet the demand for services. County authorities estimated serving about half the population that needed public mental health care. The majority of mental health funding went to treatment for individuals with the most severe and persistent mental illness, state hospitals and the criminal justice system. For this reason, California's mental health delivery system was frequently portrayed as a "fail first" model. Instead of providing services, the "safety net" of an under-funded system had become the criminal justice system, the courts, and emergency rooms.

In its March 2003 Report, the California Mental Health Planning Council¹ estimated between 500,000 and 1.7 million Californians needed mental health services but failed to receive care. In addition, cultural, racial and ethnic populations have been disproportionately affected because they use fewer mental health services.

Children under 18, for whom early diagnosis and treatment are critical, have been especially underserved. It is estimated that 75 to 80 percent of all children requiring mental health services were not receiving them.

MHSA Today

Since California taxpayers approved a 1% tax on incomes above \$1 million dollars to fund Proposition 63, more than \$8 billion has been raised. Approximately 1500 programs have been developed throughout the state and thousands of people have been served. Through stakeholder input, mental health programs and supports are tailored to meet the individual needs of the diverse clientele. As a result, the community is experiencing the benefits of expanded and improved programs to assist consumers in becoming active members of society. Counties are now receiving funding in an attempt to provide "whatever it takes" treatment for people with serious mental illness.

Prop 63 services maintain a commitment to service, support and assistance. Because of Prop 63, California is moving its public mental health system to a "help first" system by providing enhanced funding for effective treatment for people with serious mental illness, new Prevention and Early Intervention services and the unique Innovation component.

Client outreach support services and family involvement are improving, including programs to enhance access and reduce disparities to unserved and underserved individuals throughout California.

¹ California Mental Health Master Plan, A Vision for California, March 2003 (Chapter 3)