



# CULTURAL COMPETENCY UPDATE

...a newsletter to address cultural issues that enable us to effectively work in cross cultural situations.



## Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Assisted Outpatient Treatment Project

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### Inside this issue:

COD/FSP	1/2
Meeting Highlights	2

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The Treatment Advocacy Center published a recent survey reviewing Assisted Outpatient Treatment in California. According to the survey, “California is home to almost one million individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, as many as half of whom are untreated on any given day.” (Treatment Advocacy Center. “A Promising Start... Results from a California Survey Assessing the Use of Laura’s Law.” 06 Feb 2019. <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/a-promising-start>). These individuals often have frequent contact with emergency services and law enforcement. Through these contacts it became clear that these individuals do not appear to engage in traditional outpatient mental health treatment and fall through the cracks in the Mental Health Treatment System. California Assembly Bill 1421, signed in 2002 by then Governor Gray Davis, aims to address these issues.

In 2001, Laura Wilcox- a 19-year-old volunteer at a mental health clinic in Nevada County, was tragically killed by an individual with untreated severe mental illness. Following her death, advocates (led by her parents) championed Assembly Bill 1421 (AB 1421) which introduced and enacted “Laura’s Law” also known as Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT). AB 1421 offered counties the choice to implement the law and Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors chose to do so. In October of 2018 Assisted Outpatient Treatment in Stanislaus County opened for services.

AOT is a civil, court-ordered outpatient mental health program for individuals who fail to engage in traditional mental health outpatient treatment and may be too ill to recognize their own need for psychiatric care. With that in mind, AOT introduces a “Qualified Referring Party (QRP)” who can refer an individual for services without their consent. A QRP is defined as a roommate, family member, agency director, licensed therapist, and/or peace officer. To be eligible for services, an individual must be at least 18 years of age and reside or be homeless in Stanislaus County. An individual must have a severe and persistent mental illness, continue to refuse efforts to engage in services and be unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision.

The program follows an Assertive Community Treatment approach and encourages individuals to voluntarily participate in treatment through outreach and engagement efforts. If outreach and engagement efforts are unsuccessful in gaining voluntary participation with mental health outpatient services, the court can be petitioned to authorize a court order for individual outpatient treatment. Once treatment has been ordered the AOT team will support the individual in following the civil, court ordered treatment plan. Assisted Outpatient Treatment aspires to meet the needs of individuals in our community who have been unsuccessfully engaged in mental health services, in the past.

If you know someone who may benefit from this program, Qualified Referring Parties (QRP) can provide a referral via the WarmLine by calling (209) 558-4600 or visit Stanislaus County’s, Assisted Outpatient Treatment webpage at: <http://www.stancounty.com/bhrs/assisted-outpatient-treatment.shtml>

### Announcement:

#### MHSA Document

A draft of the MHSA Annual Update FY 2019-2020 is available for 30-day public review and comment March 27-April 25, 2019. To access the document, go to: [www.stanislausmhsa.com](http://www.stanislausmhsa.com)



## Highlights of March CCESJC Meeting

### Genesis Narcotic Treatment Program

Genesis is an opioid treatment program that offers both detoxification and maintenance medication assisted treatment. Current medication services include treatment with methadone and access to life saving naloxone. The function of methadone is to control withdrawal symptoms, manage cravings and block the euphoric effects of illicit opioids. Genesis services may be accessed via walk in or telephone request. Assessment, laboratory testing and physical exam are required prior to receiving services. An individual must be determined to have Opioid Use Disorder, Severe with Physiological Dependence on Opioids to qualify for treatment. Prior treatment history is required to participate in our maintenance program. Individuals receiving medication assisted treatment experience bias from law enforcement and the courts, medical professionals, family members, treatment programs and treatment professionals, other persons with substance use disorders and community members. This bias results in challenges for our population to integrate into the recovery community, resolve legal issues, navigate withdrawal and cravings during incarceration, engage in adequate medical services, access treatment for substance use disorders and obtain employment.

For more information, please call  
(209)-525-6146  
800 Scenic Drive, Modesto, CA 95350, Building 4  
Hours of operation are:  
6:30 AM - 3:00 PM, Monday - Thursday  
6:30 AM - 12:30 PM Friday

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter Sign Ups

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter Sign Up sheet for 2019 still has slots open. The newsletter is to address cultural issues that enable us to effectively work in cross cultural situations. The parameters for the newsletter are as follows: Prepare a half to a full-page article related to cultural competence. It could be about your program, a training you attended, a book, a person or other resource you would like to recommend, or information about a specific culture.

Suggested Themes: Recovery stories, culturally competent program activities, recommended books, take-aways from training attended. Consumer/family member contributions to the newsletter are welcome.

If you would like to sign up, please email Sarai Ramos at [sramos@stanbhrs.org](mailto:sramos@stanbhrs.org).

**If you have questions or suggestions regarding Cultural Competency, please e-mail:  
Jorge Fernandez, [jfernandez@gvhc.org](mailto:jfernandez@gvhc.org)**