

**Prevention and Early Intervention
Planning Council Meeting
January 22, 2009**

On January 22nd the PEI Planning Council met to discuss how to incorporate new funding made available for the 2008/09 and the 2009/10 fiscal year. Specifically the meeting was convened to discuss how to allocate:

- \$283,100 (additional FY 2008/09 PEI Planning Estimate) DMH 08-27
- \$263,800 (additional FY 2009/10 PEI Planning Estimate) DMH 08-36
- \$426,300 (supplemental FY 2009/10 Planning Estimate) DMH 08-36

At this meeting the Planning Council also approved the Department's request for Statewide Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building funds.

Twenty community members including the previously established Planning Council members (or their designate), the MHSA team, and two community members attended the meeting. The meeting was convened and facilitated by Kayce Rane of Resource Development Associates.

Planning Council members unanimously agreed to use the additional funding to expand or enhance the projects and programs outlined in the Prevention and Early Intervention Plan approved by the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission in November 2008. Additionally the Planning Council agreed that the additional funding should also be used to provide for ongoing program administration and operating costs for the Mental Health Department including, where feasible, the development of operating/administrative reserves to ensure ongoing sustainability of projects despite anticipated MHSA budget cuts in the 2010/11 and 2011/2012 FYs.

The following narrative summarizes the meeting discussion:

1. Immediately enhance funding for two programs:

- **Middle School Mentoring**
- **PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives for Seniors (60+))**

In developing the budgets for the middle school mentoring and PEARLS programs available funding was thinly stretched to develop the two programs. In the original PEI budget, program allocations cover salary costs and no funding is available for transportation, supplies, administration, or other operating costs. The Planning Council unanimously approved a budget enhancement for these two projects in order to better meet the full operating program requirements.

Additional funding recommended:

Middle School Mentoring	\$35,000
PEARLS	\$35,557

2. Immediately provide counseling on the Westside for at risk children and youth:

- **Westside School-based Mental Health Clinician**

During the September 2nd Public Hearing of the Mental Health Board eight representatives from Los Banos and other “Westside” communities gave public testimony that the PEI plan did not reach deep enough into the Westside. Specifically Westside representatives expressed concern that the 34 mile distance between Los Banos and Merced made travel between the two communities prohibitively difficult and reinforced the importance of having a dedicated single point of contact mental health person working with community schools.

During the January 22nd Planning Council this concern emerged as a high priority for the Planning Council. Planning Council participants unanimously agreed to the importance of having a dedicated mental health clinician working with Westside schools. In particular Planning Council members reiterated the concerns expressed at the Mental Health Board meeting and reinforced the importance of the relationships and trust that is built by having a dedicated committed Westside staff member.

The Mental Health Clinician will work in tandem with other school-based prevention efforts established through the PEI Plan such as Second Steps, the Middle School Mentoring Project, and Transition to Independence to identify children and youth, under age 22 and enrolled in school, who need short term mental health counseling (12-16 sessions) in order to help them:

- (1) develop the skills and supports they need to move forward; or
- (2) appropriately transition to extended mental health care services.

This program will be categorized under Project 2: Skill Building in Children, with a unanimous decree by the Planning Council that services under this program not be limited to children 0-13, but rather are available to all children and youth in the school system. This additional program is supported by all the public input gathered and referenced in the PEI Plan and strengthens the overall system of care on the Westside of the County.

Funding recommended:

Westside Mental Health Clinician	\$121,000
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3: Expand funding available to Primary Care Clinics in 2009/10:

- **Integrated Mental Health in Primary Care Settings**

Additional public comment heard during the Mental Health Board meeting emphasized the importance of clinics to integrate mental health care within the primary care settings. During the January 22nd Planning Council meeting, participants expressed strong agreement with this need.

Planning participants agreed that additional funding should be made available to the project during the 2009/10 fiscal year allocations to reflect the additional planning estimates. In particular participants talked about the great need in remotely served communities of Gustine, Dos Palos, Livingston, and Delhi and talked about the importance of making more direct services available in these communities. Meeting participants emphasized that this additional funding was intended to expand direct services, recognizing that MediCal billing and other reimbursements should sustain ongoing program operations.

Funding recommended:

Integrated Mental Health in Primary Care Settings	\$128,663
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4. Set-aside funding for administration, indirect, and operating costs

• **Administration**

Approximately 90% of the original PEI budget allocation was dedicated for community programs and activities. Of the remaining 10% allocated for administration, funding was allocated for PEI support staff, including an analyst for the required evaluation and ongoing planning and community engagement costs. Less than \$10,000 was allocated for all direct and indirect administrative costs.

Planning Council members unanimously agreed that after allowing for the increases in funding recommended above, remaining ongoing funding should be allocated to the Department of Mental Health for necessary administrative costs. An allowable portion of this funding will be set aside in an operating reserve against anticipated future budget shortfalls to ensure ongoing PEI project sustainability.

Funding recommended:

Administration	\$226,680
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5. Preserve all remaining funds

• **Future distribution by the Planning Council**

Given anticipated budget shortfalls Planning Council members were reluctant at this time to decide how to spend the \$426,300 allocated for the 2009/10 FY:

Debate on ways to spend the funding included the following suggestions:

- Administrative costs
- Passenger van for the Middle School Mentoring project
- Vehicle to aid the Westside clinician in traveling between local schools
- Additional vehicles in fleet to support other projects

- Start-up materials, including furniture, computers, curriculum, books, and other materials
- Technology needs, including computers, LCD screens, printers, software, cabling, projectors, digital cameras, and other multimedia and technology related equipment and supplies
- Events, including food, advertising, facility space, travel costs, and entertainment for social gatherings and parties for target populations
- Additional trainings and conferences and any travel related costs
- Stipends and reimbursements for substitutes for staff to attend trainings
- 3 year short-term projects
- Mini-grants
- Evaluation / outcomes

One hundred percent of this available funding was recommended to be held for future consideration by the Planning Council. In particular the Planning Council noted the importance of the following preconditions prior to making informed decisions:

1. Anticipated PEI projects need to begin so more is understood about the actual program needs and costs.
2. Planning Council members also wanted more time to learn about anticipated State and County budget cuts. As one member stated, “we made assumptions about what we could leverage that now, or in the near future, may not be true.”

Planning Council members expressed in interest in reconvening at the start of the 2009/10 FY (July 2009) to review program implementation and budget realities prior to making allocations for this funding. Planning Council members unanimously agreed that full funding be requested from the State for administrative purposes. It was agreed these funds be held until that time to ensure funding allocations support ongoing sustainability of PEI activities.

Funding recommended:

Administration	\$426,300
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