



Community Planning Process

INNOVATION PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE

FY 2020-2021



Department of
Behavioral Health

Introduction

This is the annual update for Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health’s (DBH) Innovation (INN) Plan Community Planning Process (CPP). Fresno County has completed two years of work under the current INN-CPP Plan and will be entering the third of a five-year plan. The previous year’s work was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. In that time DBH had worked on developing locally approved project plans and efforts and sought to implement these projects in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-2021.

This Innovation plan consists of a spectrum of initiatives that are intended to focus on Fresno County’s underserved, un-served, and inappropriately served communities, including our Black Indigenous and Persons of Color (BIPOC) communities. The spirit of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) compels us to transform the mental health system, close the gap in services, reduce disparities, and improve outcomes. To this end, DBH’s INN CPPs seek to improve engagement to those marginalized communities that experience greater health disparities to better understand their needs, and to have them help drive ideas and strategies for addressing those needs in a culturally responsive manner.

This annual update will touch on two projects that were implemented in the past year, and two which have progressed through planning stages. The update will then present a robust and ambitious plan for engaging and learning from our community through research, forums, education, and training to help inform our communities and the system of care of the needs and opportunities to improve health equity in Fresno County. While Fresno County intends to implement these community planning opportunities in the coming year, we acknowledge that the process to implement agreements with our local communities does take time and may prevent all of these strategies from being completed in the coming year (FY 2021-2022). However, as this will be the third year of a five-year plan, identifying projects and funding allocation will allow for those not completed in FY 2021-2022 to be continued, or start, in the following two years.

Projects in FY 2020-2021

In progress - Be Well: The third-party exploration of a Transition Aged Youth (TAY)-lead project development “Be Well” using Human Centered Design began in the previous fiscal year, and carried into FY 2020-21; however, project implementation was severely hamstrung by COVID-19. While the contractors (Social Policy Institute of San Diego State University) were able to facilitate project activities virtually, early participation by TAY was limited. This lack of participation affected the number of TAY that received training and support to develop possible INN plan proposals. Despite these challenges, the Be Well project moved forward in FY 2020-2021, and completed its intended youth planning work. The Social Policy Institute of San Diego State University will now synthesize a final project report on the youth-identified, youth-focused, and youth-developed ideas for a potential Innovation plan.

In progress - Mental Wealth Series: The West Fresno Christian Coalition, in partnership with the Armstrong Center for Hope, was interested to piloting a six-part psycho-educational series to targets African American parents, professionals and community providers. These educational events would provide mental health and wellness information in a culturally acceptable community setting. In this case, the providers chose to offer sessions in a school/campus setting. DBH invested in this project at the cost of \$2,800. As part of its support for this local community pilot, DBH, in collaboration with the West Fresno Christian Coalition, will facilitate a participant questionnaire that will help the Department understand if such an engagement model is effective, which components are effective, and any impact on effectiveness related to the setting and presenter affiliations. This project started in the late spring of FY 2020-2021 and will continue into FY 2021-2022. DBH hopes this community pilot and its collection of information and insights from the participants can help inform possible options for community engagement, inclusion of faith communities in reaching local African Americans, and any considerations regarding the setting of informational services. This monthly group is scheduled to conclude in the late fall. Much of the progress of the project has been contingent on COVID-19 safety protocols; while the project has successfully hosted virtual sessions, one intent of the project was to examine the effect of setting on efficacy of psycho-educational sessions.

Upcoming project – African American Faith Community-based Participatory Action Research: In FY 2020-2021, the DBH Public Behavioral Health team had researched an African American Faith Community Participatory Action Research model with the intention of developing a foundation for understanding behavioral health and increasing behavioral health literacy. DBH approached specific community organizations and leaders who may be able to facilitate this work based on similar work they completed for other County Departments. In addition, DBH staff reached out to Dr. Jenelle Pitt Parker, the associate dean of Fresno State University’s Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Program. The program has expressed interest in providing community research opportunities for graduate students focusing on health equity and health disparities.

A formal proposal was developed in the last year and was approved by DBH; however, COVID-19 precautions dictated the postponement of implementation. The program relies heavily on in-person sessions to increase engagement and accessibility for community members. Furthermore, Fresno State University was restricted to virtual classes for much of the year, which would limit the ability of students to participate fully in meetings and evaluation. In the interim, the Department is working through the process for contracting with both entities so that the work can begin in FY 2021-2022. Upon execution of agreements, the Department projects that the project could be conducted and completed in about six months.

Project in Development – Understanding the needs and challenges of LGBTQ+ BIPOC in Fresno County The last project that Fresno County has been working on the past year has been understanding the needs and/or challenges for LGBTQ+ BIPOC populations. Oftentimes, services, training, and resources for LGBTQ populations are generalized, with limited options specifically

designed for BIPOC LGBTQ+. In addition to those limits, Fresno County has a dearth of services and organizations for LGBTQ+ individuals, and none that are specific to BIPOC LGBTQ individuals. This community resource gap may contribute to the disparity, by the self-reports, from some African American LGBTQ+ community members who limit their visibility in their own community due to lack of affirming options in their community and discrimination that they do and/or fear they would face if they are “out”.

Fresno County is working to identify providers who report specialty knowledge in serving LGBTQ+ individuals, and to determine how providers were trained to serve these populations. From there, DBH will lead an effort to identify, based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) data, how many of those in care who identify as LGBTQ+ individuals also identify as BIPOC. From there, a custom training will be developed that meets the specific needs for providers in Fresno County who have limited LGBTQ+-specific resources. This process will train case managers, peer support staff, and clinicians to better serve and support LGBTQ+ individuals in their care. After the training is developed, the Department will work to understand if more and specialized training can address the need for better provision of care, or if the County should pursue a strategy of providing specific programming for LGBTQ+ and LGBTQ+ BIPOC individuals. If the County pursues this strategy, further program planning will occur to identify the potential number of individuals to be served, as well as challenges in providing this care.

Projects for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

In FY 2021-2022, Fresno County DBH will continue to pursue the projects described above, while simultaneously advancing several other initiatives that will engage members of our community in planning for Innovation projects.

- **FCHIP/ACEs Connection** - The goal of this initiative is to secure access to current, local, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)s-related surveys, data and information which can inform needs, program designs, and services. The Fresno County Health Improvement Project’s (FCHIP) Trauma and Resilience Network is a cross-sector gathering of organizations that utilize and input related data into this community tool which can be a platform for vital planning data.
- **Indigenous Population Training and Needs Assessment** – This initiative will generate a needs assessment and subsequent training for the Fresno County system of care working with or serving Indigenous populations. Due to barriers and challenges (including language, mental health literacy, and stigma), there is a need to train providers to better respond to the needs of this specific community. To accomplish this goal, it is important that Fresno County hears directly from the community about its experience with the behavioral health system and how to increase accessibility to care for this community. Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indigena Oaxaqueno is the sole organization in the Central Valley that serves and supports the local Indigenous community and would be the key partner for training and conducting the local needs assessments.

- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Cultural Transformation Model (ICCTM)- ICCTM** is a Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) pilot based on a successful Solano County Innovation Plan. The pilot will include training for the Department, followed by the formation of workgroups with specific communities which may yield some ideas in the future Innovation project. Supported by the MHSOAC, this project seeks to both improve county community engagement by working with communities to help identify ways to improve services. Fresno County anticipates participating in one to two community workgroups during the course of this project. It is the intention of the Department to use some of these INN CPP funds from this plan to support those workgroups (costs for food, surveys, participant incentives, etc.). If the workgroups yield a viable idea for future Innovation Plan, the MHSOAC will provide paid consultant to develop that plan.
- **Justice Innovation Project** - Last year, the Department examined options for an Innovation project focused on the justice-involved population; however, no projects were implemented through these efforts. The Department would like to utilize this opportunity to better understand specific needs of and appropriate approaches to reach our local justice-involved populations. A concept paper will be issued for a Justice-Involved Population Research Project which will inform data-driven improvements to current service models. It is the goal of DBH to have a Justice Innovation project approved by the MHSOAC by the end of FY 2021-22. Some INN CPP funds may be used in some of the community planning for development of that plan.
- **Focus Group on Immigrant/Refugee Needs** – In this initiative, the Department will seek to partner with the community organization; Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM) who serves immigrant and refugee populations in Fresno County to better understand this population’s needs and challenges related to accessing and receiving care. Such an effort will fund a formal focus group (or series of focus groups) and a needs assessment to help identify service and care needs, as well as culturally responsive services and supports to meet those needs. FIRM has experience serving Fresno’s new immigrant and refugee populations, and who has established community ties with those populations.
- **Local Impact of Hate-** As reports of levels of trauma, anxiety, fear, and suicidal ideation increase in the Asian Pacific Islander (API) and Muslim communities, the Department seeks to assess the impact of acts of hate, harassment, xenophobia, and hate crimes on individuals and their mental health. These community engagement activities will be designed to discover whether there are opportunities to support individuals from a behavioral health approach, and/or whether there is a need for specific, tailored approaches to support wellness efforts. Potential partners in these efforts include organizations such as The Fresno Center and local academic institutions that have been working to educate and inform the API community on impact of hate on their overall well-being. The Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno (ICCF) is a local non-profit that supports and

advocates for the area’s local Muslim community, and has been involved in past mental health promotion efforts such as providing trainers for portions of the Crisis Intervention Training and hosting informational events about mental health and substance use.

- **Market Research** - It has been close to two years since Fresno County’s last market research groups, which provided great insights into ways to engage and communicate with various communities and populations. The changes wrought on our system of care by COVID-19, including site closures and the move to telecare, necessitate new research to ascertain the impact of these changes, and any necessary updates to the Department’s engagement methods and strategies. The Department has an existing agreement with JP Marketing who has facilitated previous market research as well as other communication support for the department. In this cycle, the focus will be placed on youth. We will examine various youth populations. This insight can support strategies around several local and statewide efforts.
- **Youth/Peer Needs Assessment**-While the department used the Be Well project to seek input from youth on youth-focused innovation services or projects, the input has been from a small group of youth. The Be Well project did not specifically target youth from special populations, such as rural youth, youth with English as a second language, etc. Furthermore, the small sample size of Be Well participants requires the Department to seek further input from youth community members in order to establish a better understanding of overall youth needs and desires. To this end, the Department may choose to conduct a general youth needs assessment prior to the development of a youth Innovation plan. The Department may also choose to conduct a needs assessment with other populations such as peers and families of those with lived experience using local organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)-Fresno or other local appropriate groups for a peer/family needs assessment and to generate Innovation ideas.

Next Steps

In the coming year, Fresno County will seek to execute the agreements for the BIPOC LGBTQ+ project, Community Participatory Action Research project, while continuing to develop the Justice Innovation Program project. The ICCTM project will start in FY 2021-2022. These projects will require coordination and support from across the Department, which necessitates multi-fiscal year timelines.

In addition to these scheduled projects, it is the Department’s goal to lift up the smaller projects in this coming year; the next step in this process is to secure agreements with the relevant community organizations. These projects, when implemented, will be lead and facilitated mostly by the providers contracted to provide services. Once implemented, these projects will not greatly impact the Department’s capacity and allow for the projects to progress.

Finally, the DBH team will work with the community to examine and explore options to

implement the youth-driven INN Plan. The Department aims to use input from the Be Well project to begin work on a youth Innovation plan before the completion of the current MHSA Three-Year Plan.

This is an ambitious plan; if some projects are not completed or implemented in the coming fiscal year, they may still be implemented in the two remaining years of this INN CPP plan.

Challenges/COVID

The emergence of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic occurred at same time as several projects under this Innovation plan were scheduled to begin development and implementation.

Many of the activities for the INN CPP required community participation and engagement which were curtailed due to safety concerns related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Challenges such as closures of community locations, limited in-person activity, the shift to virtual meetings, and changes in schedules due to on-line schooling limited the Departments ability to implement some of the projects. Projects that were underway shifted to virtual meetings when possible, but “zoom fatigue” became a concern as the number of virtual meetings mounted. Additionally, many purchasing efforts were postponed due to the County’s shift to essential functions.

As the state of California “re-opens” following the initial stages of the pandemic, the Department is hopeful that opportunities for more in-person community events will allow for more robust community engagement and allow for the implementation projects which were delayed due to COVID-19 safety concerns. Fresno County will continue to conduct large parts of the work on this project virtually and use in-person meetings when appropriate and/or for early engagement.

Budget

Of the \$750,000 allocated to this Innovation Project, a total of \$161,227 has been expended to date. In the past year (FY 2020-2021), the Department spent a total of \$2,800 dollars.

The current INN Plan has \$584,973 remaining.

Project Name	Project Cost	Total \$587,773
Mental Wealth	(\$2,800)	
		\$584,973

The Department included estimated budgets for projects which have not yet launched in its last Annual Update for this plan. Below is an updated projected budget for the various community initiatives that are proposed for the coming year.

FY 2021-2022 Projected Budgets

Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health
Annual Update – Innovation Plan: Community Planning Process

Project Name	Projected Budget	Total Budget
ACEs Connection	\$5,000	
African American Community Participatory Action Research	\$100,000	
AfAm C-PAR Phase 2	\$100,000	
BIPOC-LGBTQ Project	\$30,000	
Indigenous Needs Assessment	\$20,000	
ICCTM Support	\$10,000	
Justice Involved Research	\$20,000	
Market Research	\$40,000	
Immigrant/Refugee Needs Assessment	\$20,000	
Impact of Hate	\$20,000	
Peer Development Assessment	\$20,000	
	\$584,973	\$584,973

FY 2021-22 projected costs \$385,000.

There will be \$202,773 dollars remaining on the plan if the full \$385,000 of the FY 2021-2022 allocation is expended in the coming year.

Budget Narrative

- ACEs Connection- A \$5,000 investment in a subscription to ACEs Connection, a digital platform that allows for collaboration of organizations, systems, and community to work on identifying ACEs efforts, data, and shared learning. The sponsorship allows the FCHIP (of which the Department is a member) to conduct focused work on understanding and prevention trauma.
- African American Community PAR – The Department will commit an initial investment of \$100,000 to initiate work on this Participatory Action Research project.
 - An additional \$100,000 may then be allocated for a follow-up needs assessment by a taskforce comprised of trained community members and leaders which will focus on needs and strategies for reducing behavioral health disparities through planning, training, or projects.
- BIPOC-LGBTQ- The Department will allocate up to \$30,000 for this project. This will cover the cost of the needs assessment, customization of a training for local BIPOC LGBTQ+ communities, direct training and leasing of the training for two years.
- Indigenous Needs Assessment- Up to \$20,000 shall be allocated for work with CBDIO for development of training for the Fresno County System of Care, as well as facilitation of community focus and feedback sessions.
- ICCTM- As the pilot (training and consultation) are provided at no cost, the Department seeks to set aside up to \$10,000 to be used to support its work with community

workgroups. The funds shall be used to conduct/complete surveys, provide food for events, incentives for participants to demonstrate the value for their time and input, cost for venues, etc.

- Justice Involved Research-The Department shall set aside \$20,000 for any community engagement, planning and/or stakeholder efforts in the development of a planned Justice focused innovation plan.
- Focus group/Market Research- Up to \$40,000 shall be allocated for work with professional market researchers to understand needed improvements to communication and engagement needs of our diverse community based on impacts of COVID-19.
- Immigrant and Refugee Needs Assessment- Up to \$20,000 is being allocated to work with Fresno County's immigrant/Refugee communities to identify needs for services, barriers to services/care, and possible culturally responsive services to address those needs.
- Impact of Hate-\$20,000 may be committed to one or more organizations to help increase engagement with the targeted communities in the interest of understanding if and how hate is impacting the wellness of the community members. If so, what may be some strategies to improve or support their wellness?
- Youth/PEER Development- The department would like to invest up to \$20,000 in local advocate organizations to work with families and peers to help identify barriers to peer involvement, as a number of the County's current Innovation plans include paid roles for peers and future services with peer certification will afford more peer opportunities. Peer involvement has been limited to date, and by working with peers and families, we hope to understand the challenges of peer involvement in paid roles in our system of care and/or how to better reach peers for such opportunities. Or depending on the results of the Be Well project, Department may seek further input from youth community members in order to establish a better understanding of youth needs and desires to support viable youth lead/focused Innovation opportunities. To this end, the Department may choose to conduct a general youth needs assessment prior to the development of a youth Innovation plan.