



Charter

Preamble

The California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative (CMHSI) is authorized by the Board of Directors of the California Institute of Mental Health (CiMH) in mutual agreement with the CMHSI Steering Committee to operate as a special project under its Center for Multicultural Development to find effective, collaborative means of leading the mental health community in California to inquire about, embrace, and support the spiritual lives of the people it serves or desires to serve.

Brief History

The California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative (CMHSI) was launched in late 2006 by a grassroots movement of consumers, family members, spiritual leaders and service providers from multicultural communities. The Initiative was officially launched statewide in June 2008 through voluntary financial contributions from 51 county mental/behavioral health authorities in California. Currently, CiMH's Center for Multicultural Development provides the fiscal and administrative support for the Initiative. To learn more go to www.mhspirit.org.

Mental Health and Spirituality

Studies have shown that spirituality and religion can be important components of mental health wellness and recovery. But they are too often overlooked, minimized, and many times labeled as pathology, leaving consumers and families with little hope for themselves and their futures. We acknowledge that there are numerous barriers, including political, legal, and cultural, between the public mental health system and spirituality/religion which needs to be addressed thoughtfully, systematically, and with great care.

Spirituality and faith communities are necessary elements in recovery for many persons who receive or are in need of mental health services.

- Spirituality is an essential part of how people find purpose and meaning for their lives and relate to the world around them.
- Many persons from diverse, multicultural communities utilize spiritual and/or faith-based organizations as a source of social support and hope in their healing process.
- Spirituality can be a powerful tool to inspire hope, create motivation, promote healing and unity

- Some people experience altered states of being with a spiritual component that can support the journey of recovery. For some, this can be a life-changing event.

Mission

To transform the public mental health system and communities in California to inquire about, embrace, and support the spiritual interests, practices and beliefs of individuals and families.

Goals

The goals of the Initiative are:

1. To increase awareness of spirituality as a potential resource in mental health wellness, recovery, and multicultural competence.
2. To advance the capacity of mental health service providers in California to help prevent mental health issues and to support individuals and families in recovery by including spirituality as an aspect of cultural competency and natural community supports.
3. To encourage collaboration among faith-based organizations, mental health service providers, consumers, and families in combating stigma and reducing disparities in access to services for diverse populations.
4. To provide technical assistance to mental health service providers on how to utilize spirituality as a resource for prevention, early intervention and recovery, while preserving consumer/family choice and respecting the separation of church and state.
5. To ensure consumer and family inclusion in the development and implementation of all aspects of the California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative.

Structure

The California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative (CMHSI) shall be a stakeholder driven project managed by the California Institute of Mental Health (CiMH). Stakeholder involvement and input will be primarily derived through regular meetings of local and statewide networks. The CMHSI Steering Committee, with assistance from CiMH staff, shall receive, analyze, prioritize, enhance and integrate the input for action by CiMH and the members of the CMHSI Steering Committee. The CiMH Board of Directors and the CMHSI Steering Committee shall be mutually responsible for project oversight and determining its nature and duration as a CiMH project.

(Insert graphic org chart)

CMHSI Steering Committee

The primary decision-making and coordinating body for the Initiative shall be ***the California Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative Steering Committee (CMHSI)*** composed of diverse stakeholder representatives who have a strong interest in furthering the Mission of CMHSI.

1. Steering Committee's Responsibilities

- a. CMHSI Steering Committee advises the CiMH Board of Directors, CiMH Executive leadership and staff regarding strategic direction, priorities and ongoing activities of the CMHSI.
- b. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - Annual review and evaluation of the CMHSI Work Plan and accomplishments.
 - Participate in ongoing strategic planning to support the CMHSI.
 - Assist in defining and developing CMHSI products and services.
 - Assist in developing the annual work plan.
 - Support and participate in the CMHSI County Liaison committee meetings and communicate with the committee via email in case of absence.
 - Promote and support the activities of the CMHSI with other national, state and local organizations.
- c. The CMHSI Steering Committee is comprised of members and officers. This committee will meet monthly by phone and semi-annually in person. There may be ad hoc committee meetings to determine agendas, and other business of the Steering Committee.

2. Steering Committee Membership

- a. The CA Mental Health and Spirituality Initiative (CMHSI) Steering Committee shall be composed of up to 17 members.
- b. Membership shall include the following categorical representation at a minimum: (an individual may represent more than one category)
 - Persons with Lived Experience, i.e., consumer, parent, family member. (50%)
 - Representatives from mental health service organizations. (25%)
 1. Non-governmental
 2. County: including one county mental health director and one county ethnic services manager.
 3. CiMH Board Member
 4. State DMH Representative
 - Persons with strong spiritual background, including lay leaders, chaplains, spiritual leaders/elders, pastors, and congregation leaders. (25%)

*NOTE: CiMH CMHSI staff serve on the Steering Committee as non-voting members.
Members may appoint a proxy to appear in their absence and must notify the co-chair in advance.
- c. Members are nominated through a statewide outreach effort with a formal application process. Members will be selected by the CMHSI selection committee. Members should represent diverse racial, ethnic, geographic, spiritual, religious and cultural communities.

- Members should demonstrate:
 1. Strong communication links with diverse communities and stakeholders.
 2. Ability to work effectively with others with different backgrounds and perspectives.
 3. A commitment to the successful operation of the CMHSI.
- d. Members shall serve a term of 2 years and are eligible for re-appointment to consecutive terms.

3. Steering Committee Officers

- a. **Officers:** The Officers of the Committee include two Co-Chairpersons. At least one of them should have lived experience.
- b. **Officer Responsibilities:**
 - **Co-Chairs share responsibility for the following:**
 1. Facilitate the CMHSI Committee meetings.
 2. Develop the meeting agenda.
 3. Convene special meetings when necessary.
 4. Consult with the CiMH leadership between Committee meetings.

4. Terms Of Service:

The officers are asked to serve a two-year term and are eligible to serve subsequent terms.

5. Election:

Nominations and election process shall be facilitated by the full committee, with the exception of the person nominated for office

5. Voting/Quorum

A simple majority rule applies..

6. Guests

Guests are welcome to attend the meetings with the following conditions:

- a. Guests will not be compensated for travel or accommodations.
- b. Guests will not have any voting privileges.

7. Excessive Absences

- a. The CMHSI Steering Committee expects its members to attend in person/via phone and to be present for the entire meeting.
- b. If a CMHSI Steering Committee member cannot attend the CMHSI Steering Committee meeting, he/she should notify the CMHSI committee via email as soon as possible. Members may appoint a proxy to appear in their absence and must notify the co-chair in advance. A co-chair shall address any member who has three absences in a year.

Special Committees

As needed, subcommittees will be formed to address specific issues or committee needs. CMHSI Steering Committee members can recommend the formation of special task forces or subcommittees subject to the approval of the CMHSI Steering Committee.