

BHEC Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2021

Facilitated by: Bijan Amirshahi, Ethnic Services Manager

In Attendance: Renteria, Teresa; Nguyen, Kelvin; McCleese, Belinda; Thornton, April; Banicki, Wendy; Rao, Bhuvana; Soto Welty, Iliana; Helmy, Deana; Arnot, Michael; Whetsell, Brittany; Ngo, Hannah; Wright, Ernesta; Eftekharzadeh, Sohail

I. Welcome and Introductions –

- Ethnic Services Manager, Bijan Amirshahi opened the meeting with an introduction to the steering committee meeting and a quick overview of the topics being discussed today.

II. Voting of Community Co Chair

- Members collectively decided to discuss the community co-chair topic first.
- Iliana Soto Welty asked why there were less community members than County members at the steering committee. Bijan answered the group was formed by the BHEC members who were interested.
- It was mentioned that Dr. Maryam Sayyedi was interested in joining the committee. Bijan reported that he had communicated with her and that he was aware of her interest however because she had not applied before the deadline, she was not included in the list of SC members.
- Michael Arnot mentioned that LA County had two community co-chairs and members of committee were mostly from the community. He said it is important for us to keep it a family/client driven committee. He also suggested that the community members select the community co-chair.
- Bijan stated that he wants to make sure that this is a partnership and that we work on the basis of consensus. We are one group working together.
- Wendy expressed that if we are starting on the foundation of equity, she sees no issue with adding another community member at this time. Dr. Rao also echoed this thought and added that she believes it should be done before voting, in case she would like to run for community co-chair position.
- April Thornton shared that she feels we should wait for Duan Tran, the community member absent in today's meeting, before we vote, due to the strong support of SC members to have equal representation.
- Sohail Eftekharzadeh asked if one organization could have more than one member in the Steering Committee. Bijan answered that the group came together based on interest. From here on the Steering Committee will vote on who they would like to be a part of the committee and who they believe is a good fit.
- Teresa Renteria stated that she thinks that it is very important for us all to get very familiar with the governing structure. It is a starting point and we can as a group help it evolve further if necessary. She continued to say that it is important for us to keep the membership

application process. Kelvin Nguyen said he agrees with keeping this process as well.

III. Committee Goals

- Committee agreed to meet on the second Thursday of the month 1:00-3:00 pm. Also came to consensus to invite Dr. Sayyedi and to have her go through the application process.
- Bijan stated that he would like to discuss today where we want to go with the committee and the workgroups. He said he would like us to be able to offer hope and help with BHS services to the underserved and underserved populations.
- April Thornton shared that she would also like the community to be able to express what services are lacking in the community and what the need is and then see the County doing something to fill those needs.
- Michael Arnot expressed taking where we are now and elevating the discussion and to prepare the organizations to see anti-racism as an active pursuit. He said he would like us to create a roadmap that BHS programs can use to reach that goal.
- Ernesta Wright asked what the data tells about what the community needs and what the community knows or does not know about Mental Health Services in Orange County. Bijan shared we have lots of available data we just need to be specific to exactly the data we need.
- Bhuvana Rao stated that the MHSA office is actively collecting data that could be useful to us. She also stated she feels that we need to do more than training, in order to tackle the inequity issues in the county. She said she think it will be an arduous task going through the list of issues the community is facing, but with discussion and current resources, we can address some of the issues.
- Iliana Soto Welty shared that the equity map could be useful. Let's look at the data and create extra support to reach community.
- Michael Arnot stated that we need to look at how we can make connections with what is happening in other programs/ Agencies so we can make more impact.
- Belinda McCleese stated that she likes the involvement of the community and hearing directly from the community's perspective, and feels that, that is a great place to start.
- Bijan said maybe a few of us could discuss exactly what type of data we want, and then we can work with our colleagues to collect the available data.
- Michael Arnot stated that he felt that it is important to take all of our individual goals for the committee to create a common goal. He suggested to possibly creating a one pager to share our discussions with this group and the larger group. He said that he feels that the governing structure is a good start, and that we should then take it to the next step, and to be more specific about the next steps.
- Kelvin Nguyen shared that the community should provide the advisory role in this committee to mobilize the community voice.
- Teresa Renteria proposed starting with discussion on why people are not accessing the BHS services: stigma, cultural issues, no knowledge of service, etc.

- Ernesta shared in the chat actionable items: BHEC Staff get data from the zip codes for next meeting. 2. What resources or services are needed for these areas 3. Invite community partners that provide community services 4. Meet to strategize how to implement and help households.
- Action items: One pager goal statement/common agenda, collect data from select zip codes, send the 2020 CC Plan Update to everyone, and to invite Dr. Sayyedi to next meeting.