The California Community Colleges Student Mental Health Program (CCC SMHP)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Update 4: March 11, 2013

1. What is the “California Community Colleges Student Mental Health Program” (CCC SMHP)?

The CCC SMHP is a statewide effort focusing on prevention and early intervention strategies which address the mental health needs of California community college students and advance the collaboration between community colleges and community based agencies, in particular, county mental health. The CCC SMHP is funded by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63). It is one of several Prevention and Early Intervention Initiatives implemented by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), an organization of California counties working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

The CCC SMHP is a partnership between the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) and the Foundation for Community Colleges (FCCC). In April 2011, the CCCCCO and the FCCC submitted an application for funding to CalMHSA. CalMHSA’s Board of Directors approved the proposal for funding in June 2011. The FCCC is the fiscal agent for the project and the Chancellor’s Office (CO) is responsible for program implementation.

The CCC SMHP is based on the three strategic directions that were identified as part of the original Student Mental Health Initiative proposal that was approved by the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) in 2007. These are: 1) faculty and staff training, 2) peer-to-peer support, and 3) suicide prevention. In addition, the CCC SMHP will include an evaluation component to address the grant requirements, as well as unmet needs, related to California community college student mental health data and research.

2. What are the amount, source and duration of funding for the CCC SMHP?

The CCC SMHP was initially funded through a grant in the amount of approximately $6.9 million for three years, beginning August 1, 2011 and continuing through June 30, 2014. The fund source derives from resources provided through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA - Proposition 63, 2004) and administered by the California Mental Health Service Authority (CalMHSA).

In March 2012, the Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) approved CalMHSA’s first amendment to the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Implementation Work Plan to augment the CCC SMHP contract with an additional $2.1 million to increase the number of campus-based grants awarded to colleges, as well as increasing the technical assistance services for all colleges, whether or not they received a grant.

In October 2012, CalMHSA provided an opportunity for existing projects to apply for additional funding to address unserved and underserved populations. The CCC SMHP was awarded funding to support the

1 FAQs are updated as new information becomes available.
2 For more information about CalMHSA, please visit www.calmhsa.org
Transition Aged Foster Youth Project (TAFY) and the development of additional modules for its suicide prevention gatekeeper training that will address LGBTQ and student veteran populations.

The term of the grant was not altered with either of the two amendments.

Support for this program is from MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) statewide project funds, therefore, activities, strategies and services must reflect the principles and guidelines that accompany this funding source. It should further be noted that these funds are one-time funding and are intended to be used for infrastructure and capacity building, not for direct services.

Similar initiatives and funding levels are also being provided to the California State University CSU), the University of California and K-12 education under separate CalMHSA grants.

3. What is CalMHSA?

CalMHSA is an independent administrative and fiscal government agency focused on the efficient delivery of California mental health projects. It was established by California counties in June 2009 as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA). CalMHSA’s member counties work together to develop, fund and implement mental health services, projects and educational programs; and implement these services at state, regional and local levels. CalMHSA is headed by a separate Board of Member Counties and an Executive Committee comprised of officers and Statewide Regional Representatives. It employs the administrative firm of George Hills Company, Inc., operates within statutes governing JPA entities, and complies with the Brown Act open meeting requirements. For more information on CalMHSA, please go to www.calmhsa.org

4. How is the CCC SMHP benefiting the community college system?

The CCC SMHP offers a variety of resources and services to the California community college system including the following:

a. Campus Based Grants (CBG)

Through a Request for Applications (RFA) process, the CCC SMHP provides grant funding for mental health prevention and early intervention activities directly on campuses or consortia of campuses. With the initial grant award and the recent augmentation, a total of 23 grants have been provided serving 30 California community colleges throughout the state. Funding levels range from $88,000 to the maximum award of $250,000, the level of funding predicated upon the amount requested by the applicant college. While most of the grants are for single campuses, there are three consortia receiving funding: Fresno-Reedley Consortia (2 campuses), Orange Consortia (2 campuses), and LA Harbor Consortia (6 campuses).

Funding is being used to provide faculty and staff training, peer-to-peer resources and suicide prevention resources. California community colleges may elect to apply for a CCC SMHP grant as an individual campus or as part of a consortium of colleges. The RFA that was used to solicit college grant applications may be viewed and downloaded by going to www.cccco.edu/mentalhealth.
b. **Statewide Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) and Suicide Prevention Training.**

**TTA Services:** Through a contract with the Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS), a multi-year Student Mental Health TTA Project is offering resources to all 112 California community colleges in support of their student mental health prevention and early intervention needs. Specifically, CARS provides: support the implementation of campus grants funded through the CBG component; college-based and regional trainings on priority student mental health topics, including the needs of student veterans; assistance to colleges in implementing systems that support collaboration and coordination with community partners including county mental health; and development of resources and tools that can be used throughout the state in support of student mental health, including online resources.

**Suicide Prevention:** Campuses are also able to utilize the “At-Risk” suicide prevention gatekeeper training for faculty and staff, developed by Kognito Interactive. This program uses customizable avatar based online suicide prevention training and roleplaying simulations to train gatekeepers on how to identify signs of psychological distress, how to approach and talk with an at-risk individual and how to make a successful referral. As needed and upon request, in person training of trainers (TOT) is being made available to supplement online training. Every interested California community college campus will be provided a tailored rollout strategy, a customized interactive training, and referral resources specific to their campus and community. As mentioned above, this component was recently augmented to include trainings that will address the mental health needs and issues related to LGBTQ and student veteran populations.

*All California community colleges, whether they receive a campus based grant or not, will be eligible to receive training and technical assistance services and the At-Risk training at no cost through these grant resources. More information about how to access these training resources, including participating in or viewing archived webinars, can be found on the internet at [www.CCCstudentmentalhealth.org](http://www.CCCstudentmentalhealth.org).*

c. **Transition-Aged Foster Youth (TAFY) Project.**

As mentioned above, the CCC SMHP recently received funding from CalMHSA to expand its existing project to implement a new program component called the TAFY Project. This project will expand the capacity of two existing California community college-based foster youth training programs by providing a new supplemental curriculum to help address the needs of transition age former foster youth (TAFY) students. Following the development and implementation of the supplemental TAFY curriculum and accompanying trainers guide, these materials will be made available to all entities serving the TAFY population throughout the state including higher education partners within the SMHP initiative, and the county mental health and PEI partners.

d. **Program Evaluation**

The CCC SMHP has contracted with the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) to serve as the external evaluator to develop a data and evaluation framework, and assist in data collection, quality management, and accountability efforts. PIRE will work in cooperation with CARS, Kognito Interactive and the 23 college grantees to assess the practical effectiveness of all of the elements of the CCC SMHP
initiative. PIRE will also collaborate with RAND, the organization that is conducting the overall evaluation of the PEI Statewide Projects funded through CalMHSA.

More information about PIRE can be found at http://www.pire.org/

e. Other program elements

Embedded in the above components are activities by the CCC SMHP to collaborate with stakeholder groups, and the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems on select projects relevant to advancing student mental health prevention and early intervention strategies. Maintaining a focus on student veterans is an important element of program implementation.

The CCC SMHP also works cooperatively with the Chancellor’s Office Advisory Group on Student Mental Health (COAGSMH) to seek advice and recommendations on the project and its implementation. The COAGSMHG is comprised of representatives from the CCC system as well as organizations and individuals involved in student mental health services and issues. The COAGSMH is an integral part of the project as members represent the many diverse stakeholders of the California community colleges.

5. What is the timeline for implementation of the CCC SHMP components?

Critical dates, trainings, website links and associated information can be found on the Chancellor’s Office website as they become available: www.cccco.edu/mentalhealth or www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org

6. How can I learn more about the California Mental Health Services Act and related subjects?

Please refer to the following websites:
www.dmh.ca.gov/Prop_63
http://www.calmhsa.org/
www.cccco.edu/mentalhealth
www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org

7. Project contacts:

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