

**OLDER ADULT SUMMIT MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION  
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN  
RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES**

**I. COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY - Implement community education strategies to increase public awareness regarding older adult mental health needs and concerns.**

**Strategies:**

- ❖ Provide multilingual education on aging and mental health on local radio and with faith communities
- ❖ Publicize the affordability of receiving county funded mental health services
- ❖ Work with seniors centers to strengthen relationships between seniors and other generations
- ❖ Promote multigenerational community service programs to strengthen relationships between seniors and other generations
- ❖ Deliver joint outreach activities about mental health services for seniors with local art groups
- ❖ Implement regional one-stop centers for seniors which maximize the synergy of integrating public agencies and community services, include existing senior centers

**II. ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT - Implement outreach, engagement and access strategies to improve the connection of older adults to mental health-related services and supports.**

**Strategies:**

- ❖ Strengthen suicide prevention
- ❖ Improve mental health outreach that connect seniors to mental health services
- ❖ Expand the new multicultural center by including services for seniors
- ❖ Address navigation problems to include effective referrals, coordination and follow up among multiple agencies
- ❖ Increase access points
- ❖ Revise access criteria for persons over 60 years
- ❖ Serve seniors suffering serious distress from senior issues such as the loss of loved ones, medical problems, and social isolation
- ❖ Accept referrals at the Call Center and other mental health programs from family members and care givers
- ❖ Address the transportation for seniors served by mental health
- ❖ Design a transportation plan to access to mental health services and other community activities
- ❖ Make transportation services available to senior clients or provide services in their home
- ❖ Collaborate with all senior centers to make mental health services available
- ❖ Work with community cultural centers to provide education about health and mental health services
- ❖ Develop a network of programs that serve senior to prepare a resource directory
- ❖ Test the feasibility of an 800# mental health support line for seniors

**III. SERVICE INTEGRATION AND QUALITY - Implement service delivery strategies that improve mental health outcomes through effective integration with critical health and social services.**

**Strategies:**

- ❖ Increase early intervention services
- ❖ Implement better strategies to address social isolation.
- ❖ Increase treatment mental health services for specifically designed and delivered for seniors
- ❖ Improve psychiatric practices to better differentiate between dementia and depression
- ❖ Improve psychiatric practices to better consider medication side effect unique to seniors
- ❖ Stipulate services are to be provided in the home whenever a client is unable to leave their home
- ❖ Establish a culturally competent case conference to strengthen staff competencies in serving seniors

- ❖ Monitor and improve the participation of clients over 60 years of age by ethnicity
- ❖ Search for best practice models for older adults
- ❖ Expand phone consultation services for medical doctors who serve seniors.
- ❖ Establish multidisciplinary care teams for seniors with complex needs
- ❖ Identify more culturally based practices
- ❖ Define “Elder Driven Services” criteria and ask all mental health providers who serve seniors to implement
- ❖ Implement more effective and accessible mental health services for seniors with a long term mental illness and with senior related distress

**IV. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Implement training strategies to improve the capacity of health, mental health and social service providers to address the holistic social, cultural, emotional, physical and spiritual needs of seniors.**

**Strategies:**

- ❖ Train senior advocates among mental health staff, including clients and family member staff
- ❖ Provide mandated training on physical health issues of seniors for of psychiatrist and clinical staff
- ❖ Train medical staff of county clinics to support the mental health needs of their senior clients
- ❖ Provide educational materials on senior mental health medical providers in Santa Clara County
- ❖ Provide training on assisting seniors who face financial barriers to services
- ❖ Seminars for persons that work with senior on how to identify and respond to mental health problems

**V. FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND PEER SUPPORT – Implement strategies that empower and enhance natural support systems to care and provide for elderly loved ones.**

**Strategies:**

- ❖ Establish support groups for caregivers of seniors with mental illness in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Cantonese and Mandarin
- ❖ Implement a “family inclusion” practice for supporting caregivers of senior clients
- ❖ Prepare materials for seniors and families on confidentiality laws and on how obtain release of information as desired by the client
- ❖ Develop a dynamic peer mentor program for seniors
- ❖ Outreach to support families using the multilingual media

**VI. POLICY DEVELOPMENT - Champion and implement policies that improve benefits and resources that impact the well-being of older adults.**

**Strategies:**

- ❖ Implement treatment protocols that addresses the dimensions of dementia and its relationship to mental illness
- ❖ Participate in the Senior Agenda
- ❖ Advocate for policies in the Santa Clara County Health and Hospital System that incorporate mental health into health promotion
- ❖ Advocate for full implementation of Parity Law for mental health service access for seniors
- ❖ Advocate Medi-cal/Medicare reform to promote mental health service quality for seniors
- ❖ Implement a stronger vision of health promotion for mental health consumers of all ages
- ❖ Evaluate utilization of mental health services by age, ethnicity and diagnosis to determine if seniors get equitable access to services
- ❖ Ensure that mental health funding for senior services the adherence to the Olmstead Decision.