

SAMPLE PROPOSAL - LATINO SERVICE PROVIDER SONOMA COUNTY - MHSA PEI APPLICATION

1. Project Summary

The Latino Service Providers Sonoma County (LSP-SC), founded in 1989 by Latino leaders in education, government, and social service sectors, is currently comprised of 450 members from neighborhood groups, schools, public and private health, social service, immigration and naturalization agencies, mental health organizations, criminal justice systems, city and county government, and the business community. The LSP-SC mission is to serve and strengthen Hispanic families and children by building healthy communities and reducing disparities within Sonoma County. It promotes a variety of mechanisms for networking, collaboration, and information exchange enabling all these groups to work together systemically to leverage resources, influence public policy and service delivery, and promote professional development.

Proposed Project Goals include:

1. Build capacity for mental health prevention and early intervention services at sites where people go for other routine activities;
2. Ensure earlier access to mental health services, to lower the incidence of mental illness and suicide, to enhance wellness and resilience, and to reduce stigma and discrimination;
3. Implement PEI strategies to engage persons prior to the development of serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbances; and
4. Increase the strength and capacity of LSP-SC to be a viable and sustainable organization that provides a unique service and support to the Latino Community in Sonoma County.

The LSP-SC will undertake the following strategies/activities:

- Expand the LSP-SC membership to additional community members, service professionals and mental health professionals by conducting outreach, public education and enhancing communication pathways such as the LSP-SC website;
- Conduct public education campaigns on mental health issues in the Latino community to include participation in community and cultural events/fairs, engagement and use of print and electronic media, education of community gatekeepers in schools and health clinics, and distribution of educational materials;
- Convene monthly meetings and distribute a weekly electronic newsletter for service providers to exchange information and resources, develop linkages, and address the higher issues of reducing disparities for the Latino community;
- Promote training and professional development opportunities for Latino social service providers to become more knowledgeable about mental health issues and resources and for the mental health services providers to become more knowledgeable and culturally competent in serving the Latino community; and
- Influence and improve accessibility and utility of mental health and other public services for Latinos, such as the county 211 system.

By providing the activities listed above, target outcomes include:

- Increase LSP-SC membership by 10% in first year of grant;
- Improve the LSP-SC website with bi-lingual capacity, when appropriate, and mental health information;
- Increase the knowledge of LSP-SC membership regarding mental health resources;
- Increase the knowledge and ability of mental health service providers to engage and serve the Latino Community;
- Increase the capacity of LSP-SC to provide support to a growing membership;
- Increase the health, mental health and well-being of Latino families and children; and
- Increase the Latino community's awareness of mental health issues and resources.

2. Program description

A) Key strategies and major activities

Within the goals required by the MHSA PEI, the Latino Service Providers Sonoma County (LSP-SC) will undertake the following key strategies and activities to build a stronger system of care and reduce disparities for the Latino community:

GOAL 1: Build capacity for mental health prevention and early intervention services at sites where people go for other routine activities.

- a. Engage service providers and community members to learn about the benefits of LSP-SC membership
 - Provide LSP-SC membership information and enroll a minimum of 45 service providers and trusted community gatekeepers.
 - Engage school-based English Language Learner (ELL) Advisory Committees, Certified Application Assistors (Healthy Kids – children’s health insurance) at the Community Health Clinics, and community-based Promotores (health educators) at St. Joseph’s, Northern California Center on Wellness and Santa Rosa Junior College to learn of LSP membership, website and electronic newsletter and share with their clients/community members.
 - Enhance electronic newsletter and website with mental health information, opportunities for family recreation, assistance with economic and educational needs, and other information that will support and strengthen families and youth.

GOAL 2: Ensure earlier access to mental health services, to lower the incidence of mental illness and suicide, to enhance wellness and resilience, and to reduce stigma and discrimination in Sonoma County.

- a. Enhance Provider knowledge of mental health resources
 - Conduct monthly LSP-SC meetings, where a mental health provider will host 3 of the 11 meetings to share information about services and resources.
 - Identify and post mental health training opportunities for LSP-SC members in electronic newsletter.
 - Establish stronger partnership with NAMI, Mental Health Coalition, and CMHS in outreach and education in Latino Community.
- b. Conduct public education campaign on mental health information and resources to the Latino Community
 - Enhance website with mental health information and resources, posted both in English and Spanish when appropriate.
 - Engage the print and electronic media to publicize events and information of interest to the Latino Community.
 - Post articles, resources and links on website and in electronic newsletter that relate to building and maintaining resiliency in families.
- b. Improve the cultural relevance and accessibility of other systems and programs for Latinos/Latinas
 - Continue dialogue with County 211 system and seek improvements for better access for the Spanish speaking population
 - Promote the LSP-SC as an expert resource to mental health service providers who would

- like to improve working with the Latino Community.
- Refine and re-distribute document “How to Engage the Latino Community” to LSP-SC membership, County Commissions and Advisory Boards and post on website.

GOAL 3: Implement PEI strategies to engage persons prior to the development of serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbances.

- a. Develop collaborative relationships with mental health and criminal justice service providers
 - Support the MHSA diversity coordinator to increase the availability and quality of information and technical assistance on cultural competency issues relative to the Latino Community.
 - Promote LSP-SC speaker panel as cultural experts for working with the Latino Community to local police departments, the Sheriff’s Department, and Probation.

GOAL 4: Increase the strength and capacity of LSP-SC to be a viable and sustainable organization that provides a unique service and support to the Latino Community in Sonoma County.

- a. Formalize organizational structure for LSP-SC
 - Convene key members to form an Advisory Board for LSP-SC.
 - Conduct a strategic planning process with Advisory Board.
 - Investigate the feasibility of establishing non-profit status vs. existing within an established non-profit organization.
 - Establish effective and sustainable system for electronic newsletter and website maintenance.
- a. Obtain community input on the value and direction of LSP-SC as an organization
 - Conduct surveys of membership and consumers

The cornerstone of LSP-SC is the strength of its membership. With 450 diverse members, LSP-SC represents housing, employment, education, healthcare, criminal justice, business, neighborhood and community groups. Each member brings their area of expertise and resources that provide support for families. Building upon the resiliency of families and reducing the risk of mental illness is a focus of all activities. Below are illustrative examples of the value LSP-SC has for the Latino Community:

Convene and facilitate Monthly Meetings of LSP-SC members:

Monthly meetings are hosted by various LSP-SC members throughout Sonoma County providing an opportunity for members to learn about different programs, services and resources resulting in a strong base of information regarding educational programs, health and prevention programs, child care, housing and financial information, volunteer opportunities, adult and youth employment, community organizing and much more. Agencies, organizations, and individuals also create collaborations and network with each other to create stronger programs and system delivery.

Email distribution system

A system of email distribution facilitates the building of strong families and communities by providing information on events, activities and resources in a timely manner. Members send in their announcements to info@latinoserviceproviders.org and collective announcements are sent out one to three times a week depending on member submissions. Members are encouraged to submit their announcements and flyers in English and Spanish. Examples of these announcements are: seeking Latino board/committee members, educational programs, gang prevention seminars, community events, fundraisers, health and prevention programs for children, child care, housing and financial information, volunteer opportunities, and adult and youth employment.

Website

The LSP-SC website serves as an important hub for outreach, information, and resources that strengthen Latino families, children, and youth in Sonoma County. The targeted community can access important announcements, educational information, programs, events, and links to other services and resources. They also have access to archived announcements and information. It is a place to share a message via an editorial, and to find future LSP-SC meeting dates.

B) Rationale for choosing these strategies/activities.

Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group in Sonoma County and disparities in health and mental health care are growing at critical rates. The Latino Coalition for a Healthy California cites the following disparities for Latinos in California:

- Although Latinos represent 32% of the state's population, they account for 54% of the uninsured. More than one in four Latinos ages 0-64 in California are uninsured, 28% of Latinos compared to 9% of whites.
- The uninsured rate for Latino children between the ages of 0 to 17 is 38%. Latino adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 have the highest uninsured frequency of all groups, 22.5% compared with 4.4% for Whites.
- Only 1 in 11 Latinos with mental health disorders contact mental health specialists for treatment.
- Latino youth engage in higher levels of activities that put them at risk for mental health issues, such as substance abuse or delinquency.

To reduce these disparities, the specific focus of Latino Service Providers – Sonoma County (LSP-SC) utilizes a networking model among community providers to exchange information about activities and resources that will promote economic stability, educational success, access to healthcare, housing, and legal services for families. Events and activities for families, youth and young adults are promoted, with opportunities ranging from free cultural events, family literacy events, scholarships for soccer leagues, and healthcare screenings. LSP-SC has been actively providing services to Latino service provider agencies and the community at large for over 20 years in a volunteer capacity. These agencies service children 0-5; at-risk youth – including youth facing the risk of gang influence as well as other vulnerable population groups. The California Mental Health Services, PEI guidance supports this approach as listed in their evidence-based programs. These programs promote the following:

- Increase awareness of mental health stressors and protective factors, reducing substance abuse and delinquent behavior
- Increase family management skills, including anger management skills, refusal and problem solving skills, ability to teach these skills to their children, and the ability to assist their children with academic success
- Work to create positive school and community environments
- Refer/link family members to needed services in support of their children and youth
- Foster tolerance and understanding of diversity
- Identify problems early and intervene quickly

With 450 members and a majority of them being service providers, the number of individuals and families that can be touched with information could be up to 100 times that, reaching up to 45,000 individuals/families. In addition, outreach to trusted community gatekeepers and service providers shall be encouraged to join LSP-SC. Groups such as the English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) based in schools already engage the Spanish-speaking Latino parents, and the Promotores of St. Joseph's Healthcare System, Northern California Center for Well-Being, and the Santa Rosa Junior College who are recruited from the community and are trained as health educators are well connected to other Latinos.

These key individuals and groups will be invited to join LSP-SC and provide the basis for additional community recruitment, act as mechanisms to broadcast and share information to the broader Latino community, and provide feedback to LSP-SC on the types of information that is relevant for families today.

Leveraging past success, LSP-SC has seen an increase in resources, information sharing, volunteerism, partnerships, collaboration, and awareness to individuals, providers, schools, and government to communicate needs and dissemination of program information in a timely and efficient manner. This results in providing real-time resources directly to targeted clients. LSP-SC, as a membership organization, fulfills the characteristics of organizations serving children and youth in stressed families as identified by PEI Stakeholders at the state level:

- a. Neighborhood/community organizations interact with families on a regular basis through both a formal relationship and informal contact.
- b. Staff and volunteers are culturally competent or share the cultural background and language of the participating families to address their diverse needs of participating families.
- c. The organization's mission is not primarily mental health. The organization serves multiple interests and needs of neighborhood/community families.
- d. The organization has a long-standing and continuous presence in the neighborhood/community and is trusted and well-respected among families.
- e. Families participate in designing, implementing and evaluating programs and activities. The organization provides programs and supports that engage children, youth and adults and builds family relationships.
- f. Families participating in the organization have an identity and relationship with the staff and volunteers.
- g. The organization has formal partnerships with community agencies and organizations to provide other services and supports as needed (such as basic needs, substance abuse treatment, employment assistance) for participating families.
- h. The organization can document improved conditions and goal achievement for children, youth and families resulting from its programs.
- i. The organization evidences capacity for fiscal accountability for public funds.

C) Specific focus and scope of project

Sonoma County is home to approximately 484,470 residents with a projected increase of 57 percent by 2050. The ethnic makeup of the county is expected to change dramatically as well. Currently, Sonoma County's Latino population is approximately 22%, which is about 107,910 people (Sonoma County Economic Development Board, 2008 Hispanic Trends). It is projected that **50 percent of the population in Sonoma County will be Hispanic by 2050**. Age demographics will also change significantly by 2050: Sonoma County will have greater numbers of younger (ages 9 and under) and older (ages 80 and above) residents. In general, there is a growing amount of young Hispanics requiring accommodations by the school system and an increasing number of Caucasian seniors driving the demand for health care and services as Sonoma County's population ages.

Many of the county's Latino community lives in the low-income areas of Sonoma County, including Roseland, Apple Valley, South Park, Agua Caliente, Cloverdale, and South County. In addition to economic challenges, Latino's in Sonoma County experience disparities in access to mental and physical health care, experience high rates of domestic violence, homelessness, and other barriers such as language, transportation, discrimination, stigma, and lack of trust for the system.

There are several different sub-groups within this population, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation Latinos, seasonal immigrants, and new immigrants. Some Latinos are bilingual and others are monolingual. In this

proposal, Latinos refer to many cultures such as: Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central and South American, and other Spanish cultures, and the term Hispanic will be interchangeable with Latino.

The targeted geographic range for LSP community outreach, engagement and education included all of Sonoma County, however schools, health clinics and community groups that are focused on neighborhoods with high Latino residency will be priorities for engagement. By the end of the first year, LSP-SC membership will increase by 10%. In addition, LSP-SC estimates 150 hits per month on the updated website.

D) Specific changes to be achieved in the target population and/or service systems

With a focus on reducing disparities on access to mental health information and services, our target outcomes in the first year of funding will measure perceptions and increase in knowledge as reported by LSP-SC membership, mental health providers, and community members. LSP-SC will conduct surveys, primarily through the internet, utilizing an application such as Survey Monkey or Constant Contact. Our specific outcomes include:

- Improved knowledge of LSP-SC membership on mental health information and resources in the community;
- Improved knowledge of mental health service providers on the Latino culture and how to engage the Latino community; and
- Improved knowledge of the Latino Community on community resources that support families, reduce stress, and enhance family functioning.

These surveys will be administered to three primary groups: Latino service providers, mental health service providers and Latino community members. Each group will be surveyed at least once during the grant year and may be complimented by a focus group of LSP-SC members.

3. Organizational Qualifications and Key Personnel

The Latino Service Providers Sonoma County (LSP-SC) are a group of individuals and agencies with a primary interest in serving and strengthening Hispanic families and building healthy communities in Sonoma County. Based upon a membership of service providers and community members, LSP-SC promotes local programs and inter-communication to leverage resources and build strong and resourceful families and communities. This program is run by Latinos for Latinos. The membership convenes monthly for the purpose of mutual professional enhancement and growth, to become informed, network, develop linkages, create resources and address the higher issues of social change. In addition, LSP-SC speaks to the issues impacting the Latino in Sonoma County by advocating for culturally and language appropriate services.

The Latino Service Providers Sonoma County is not currently a 501(c)3 organization. For the past twenty years, a core group of volunteers has managed the organization. Although successful, LSP-SC is seeking funding to sustain the valuable coordination and facilitation of community resources and to provide support to increase the capacity of the organization. For this grant proposal, West County Community Services (WCCS) will act as the fiscal agent and provide financial and legal management and oversight. To this end, a Memorandum of Understanding between LSP-SC and WCCS has recently been established. (See Appendix A).

A) Organization's governance and Board of Directors membership.

As the fiscal agent for LSP-SC, WCCS' mission is to ensure that individuals, families and communities are strengthened and supported through access to critical social programs. For nearly 35 years, WCCS has served as the sole multi-service nonprofit agency in rural Western Sonoma County that provides employment and training, recreational activities, counseling and intensive case management services to youth and seniors in our community. WCCS understands and designs services to address the unique needs of at-risk and low-income youth, families, adults and seniors for diverse populations, offering bi-lingual and bi-cultural services and accommodations for people with disabilities.

West County Community Services is governed by an eight-member board of directors and managed by an experienced Executive Director. The Board of Directors is comprised of community members, business and non-profit professionals. (See Appendix B). The Executive Director oversees all program and financial operations for the agency and has six (6) direct reports: five (5) program directors and one (1) finance officer. WCCS uses fund accounting in accordance with GAAP (generally accepted accounting principles). The Financial Officer provides financial information to the Board of Directors, Executive Director and Program Managers on a monthly basis to ensure sound financial management of the agency. WCCS has an annual audit by an outside CPA firm as well as an A-133 Audit to comply with receipt of federal funds. (See Appendix C).

The Latino Service Providers Sonoma County will recruit, form and convene an Advisory Board specific to LSP-SC composed of staff and community leaders representative of our diverse population. There will be no more than fifteen (15) members that will meet quarterly for the purposes of providing guidance to the implementation of this proposal and strategic direction for the future organizational structure of LSP-SC as an organization.

B) Organizational capacity to implement and carry out programmatic and fiscal strategies

The Latino Service Providers Sonoma County (LSP-SC) was founded in 1989 by leaders in the education, government, and social service sector and has twenty (20) years of program service in Sonoma County. The Director is a co-founder of LSP-SC and has been managing this program for seventeen (17) years. Over this time, the organization has grown to include 450 members, including service providers, elected officials, business people and community members. This proposal builds upon the foundation of members' contributions to the monthly meetings and submitting content for the electronic newsletter. By providing financial support for staffing and minimal operation costs, personnel can provide additional time and attention necessary to manage the growing membership and further engage the Latino community directly.

The fiscal contact for this proposal is Dave Koressel, Finance Officer at WCCS. Distinct monthly financial reports are prepared for each funding source, program and entire agency. These reports include budget, current period, year-to-date and budget balance information. Reports are reviewed, discussed and changes are made to spending as necessary based upon a monthly meeting with the agency Executive Director, Finance Officer and appropriate Program Director. As mentioned earlier, all accounting practices are conducted in accordance with GAAP.

C) Roles, job titles, and qualifications of key personnel involved in this project

LSP-SC Program Director: Ms. Wanda Tapia will act as the LSP-SC Program Director. Ms. Tapia will be responsible for the programmatic implementation of this proposal, oversee program development and administration, manage budget expenditures and modifications (in coordination with WCCS Fiscal Director), ensure programmatic reporting compliance, website design and enhancement; email distribution design, and management of sub-contractors and their deliverables. Ms. Tapia's has proven expertise in developing local community-based campaigns and has worked on a number of innovative community-based projects that have positively impacted underserved, low-income populations. As a Manager for UC Davis Extension, she coordinated, planned and implemented community projects, and

supervised the fulfillment of grant requirements in administrative, fiscal and program areas. In addition, Ms. Tapia has prepared all required program and financial reports. She is an experienced project evaluator and has strong experience in human resource management supervising up to ten (10) employees at one time. (See Appendix D).

Community Engagement Specialist: Based upon grant funding, this position will be fulfilled by an individual who will perform routine general office functions: manage all incoming and outgoing communication through phone, mail and email, research and gather information for electronic newsletter and website, prepare reports, and maintain inventory. In addition, the Program Assistant will manage the membership database, streamline and manage the electronic newsletter distribution process, assist in the development, distribution and analysis of the member surveys, handle logistics and staff LSP-SC booth at community events, attend LSP-SC meetings as needed and other staff functions.

Webmaster: Ms. Christine Vasquez will be a contractor to update and redesign website, including research and set up of easy, intuitive and engaging interface, populate website with current announcements and update as needed and work with the Program Director to keep the site current and relevant. Ms. Vasquez has 2 years of experience in website design, management and development.

IT Support Technician: Mr. Gabe Wallace, as the IT Support Technician will troubleshoot problems, advise on electronic solutions, assist with software installation and updates. Mr. Wallace has been working with the LSP-SC for two years. He has provided a wide range of services related to computer and multimedia equipment and data networks, including general consultation, strategic system planning, system integration, equipment repair, system assembly, software installation and software configuration.

WCCS Executive Director: Katrina Thurman, Executive Director of WCCS, has over a decade of overseeing the successful delivery of human service programs using state, local and federal funding streams with contracts ranging in size from \$5,000 to over \$2.5M. (See Appendix E).

WCCS Financial Director: David Koressel, Chief Financial Officer at WCCS, has over 30 years in the accounting field and an extensive background in nonprofit financial management. He is responsible for providing accurate and concise financial data to the board and management. Duties include accounting and budgeting, as well as supervision and monitoring of a full-time bookkeeper who handles payroll, A/P and A/R. WCCS provides services under 40+ contracts and grants with local, state and federal government agencies and are comprised of cost reimbursement, pay for performance and fee-for-service contracts.

D) Company profile including size, location, financial status, most recent tax filing information; and any relevant financial audits.

West County Community Services (WCCS), located in Sebastopol, California, has been incorporated as a 501(c) 3 for 35 years. With a current agency budget of approximately \$2.38M, WCCS operates over 40 contracts and programs and has 45 employees budgeted for the 09-10 fiscal year. The last audit was for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, completed December 19, 2008. (See Appendix C).

5. Other key Challenges/Opportunities

A) Experience providing mental health services

As a membership organization, LSP-SC does not conduct one-on-one mental health treatment or direct services, however LSP-SC has established a strong and continuously growing network of community members and service providers who share a mutual interest in reducing disparities for individuals and families in the Latino community. The collective membership provides services that strengthen the

Latino community, in many areas that promote health, education and community participation. LSP-SC provides the resources, leadership, and opportunities necessary for individuals to make positive choices in their lives. The information on events, activities and community resources made available through the monthly meetings, electronic newsletter and website all have relevance to mental health wellness. Strengthening the stream of information with a mental health prevention focus provides an opportunity to serve the Latino community in a very meaningful way.

Because LSP-SC was founded by members of the Latino community, the very issues experienced by families today, were experienced by LSP-SC members not so long ago. The director and founding member of the LSP-SC is well known through out Sonoma County and has expertise in reaching low-income clientele and developing broad coalitions. In addition, she brings a personal perspective as the daughter of an agricultural seasonal immigrant, experiencing the stressors that accompany the dynamics of a low-income family. Having experienced domestic violence in the home, she later struggled as a single parent. She was fortunate to have a mentor who encouraged her to step out of the poverty cycle and helped her and her four children by connecting her with the necessary resources to cope with discipline issues, surviving on a limited budget, eating well, and maintaining a whole program of self-care.

Due to that experience and perspective, the Program Director has a deep understanding of the various factors and situations that contribute to depression, anxiety, stress, anger, and hopelessness, pre-cursors that can develop into serious and disabling mental health conditions. Thus, LSP-SC provides information and resources that strengthen resilience, help meet basic needs for families (financial, health, education, housing and legal services), and promote wellness and success for the Latino Community as a comprehensive mental health prevention approach.

B) Collaboration, coordination, and/or systems integration

Geographically, Sonoma County is a large and diverse area that incorporates urban/suburban cities with rural and remote communities. It is an agricultural area that attracts seasonal and migrant workers most commonly of Hispanic decent. Although many Latinos reside in neighborhoods within Santa Rosa, outlying cities like Cloverdale, Windsor, Healdsburg, Guerneville, Petaluma and Sonoma have a lion's share of underserved Latinos. Satellite agencies must provide services and resources on a limited budget and with little resources.

The combined factors of a large, geographically dispersed and underserved population seeking services from providers of limited resources, makes it very difficult for these agencies to provide quality services to the large numbers of Hispanics, especially in these difficult economic times. It is critical to have a mechanism to coordinate and collaborate; to provide services in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. The monthly LSP-SC meetings provide a venue for these agencies to congregate and share program resources, needs, and interests with other Latino service providers within the collaborative. This also provides a means to ask for volunteers. Monthly LSP-SC meetings provide a focus group type atmosphere for members as they seize the opportunity to host a meeting, providing the host an opportunity to highlight their programs in a 30-minute in-depth presentation allowing for more opportunity to integrate services and systems.

The website and electronic newsletter provides easy accessibility to information for some of these outlying agencies who cannot make a meeting due to geographic location. Electronic newsletters are easily accessed and forwarded to anyone with access to a computer with internet service. Simply by accessing the LSP-SC website, service providers and their clients can tap into the announcements of programs, educational workshops, scholarships, and family activities that are available. With PEI funding, the website will be enhanced with mental health information and resources and key information will also be available in Spanish to enable mono-lingual citizens and bilingual agency staff to download items that are provided in Spanish to their clientele.

C) Barriers to access

Sonoma County and the nation are experiencing an economic recession. Services and programs that were once available are being scaled down or closed. This poses a greater problem for the low-income and under-served populations. These population groups have already experienced unsafe neighborhoods, school system and educational program cuts, language and cultural barriers, health premiums they cannot afford, domestic abuse, and other societal factors leading to stressed families.

The underserved populations may not have ready access to transportation nor access to much needed program information. They may not have a computer in their home or they may not be computer literate. In addition, educational disadvantages often limit employment opportunities and coping skills are often challenged. However the most significant barrier may be the barrier of stigma and shame. In the Latino community, mental illness carries a heavy burden of social stigma. Latinos are wary of many government agencies. Many members of this community have been harassed or discriminated against. Thus, Latinos have a tendency to go to places or access services from places and people they trust. This trust is built over time and often referrals from a neighbor or another Latino provides a built in trust factor. All these factors lead to disparities in accessing mental health and other services.

It is therefore important to provide as many resources and access points for this community. A large portion of the LSP-SC members include program representatives, community health workers, health educators or “promotores”, and agencies that have built a reputation and trust with the Latino community. Additional members including Burbank Housing, Migrant Education, WIC, schools, and other sites that are routinely visited by Latinos. The strength of LSP-SC membership is the diversity of services with a common mission and desire to serve the Latino community and promote healthy individuals and families.

Barriers for the Latino community to access mental health services can be reduced through the focused and collective efforts of professional development. One strategy of this proposal is to increase the knowledge of the LSP-SC membership with regards to mental health issues, resources and services. The complimentary effort in professional development is to increase mental health service providers’ knowledge of the Latino cultural issues and engagement strategies. Another strategy to reduce barriers and disparities in mental health is to conduct a community education campaign. This will be accomplished by providing the membership organizations with relevant and timely mental health information via the electronic newsletter and website, being present and visible with mental health information and resources at community fairs, and encouraging the Latino media to feature announcements promoting mental health wellness and mental health resources.

D) Other challenges or opportunities

Currently, LSP-SC is administered solely by volunteers. This makes it difficult to provide the coordination and communication that keeps the members informed and active. Furthermore, LSP-SC would like to expand the scope of activities and increase the positive impact on the community by providing leadership opportunities for the younger Latinos in Sonoma County. Without the funds to support the ongoing work and increase capacity of the organization to serve the ever-growing membership, LSP-SC’s future is uncertain. With PEI funding, LSP-SC will not only increase the accessibility of mental health services to Latinos, but will also build capacity to expand and fully develop its potential throughout Sonoma County.

6. Cultural Competence

The Latino Service Providers Sonoma County was founded by a small group of Latino leaders who saw a need to fill a gap in services to the social sector of the community. Its humble beginnings consisted of eight (8) or so Latino leaders meeting on a regular basis. Initially linked to the same leaders, who went on

to develop the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, LSP-SC evolved to have it's own mission with the goal of strengthening personal well-being and self-esteem in the Latino community.

Evolving over the past twenty years, the LSP-SC network promotes resilience among its members by connecting them with the resources needed to bounce back from stressful and often traumatic life events into an atmosphere of supportive relationships. It coordinates existing resources and provides information on culturally appropriate programs that help strengthen problem solving and conflict resolution skills, such as the Padres Unidos sessions through the Community Action Partnership (held in Spanish) and the Mental Health Dialogues offered through the Sonoma County Mental Health Department. St. Josephs Health Care System's Promotores program, provide bilingual community health educators who provide cultural mediation between the culturally diverse communities and the health system, they regularly attend LSP-SC monthly meetings and share program announcements as appropriate.

Announcements of community training opportunities on life skills and coping strategies, such as from Memorial Hospice, Southwest Community Health Center and the Northern California Center for Well Being are just a few members who regularly share these opportunities and seek involvement from the Latino community.

LSP-SC members also have the opportunity to be involved in local cultural events, like the Cinco de Mayo and Cesar Chavez day, either as volunteers, agency representatives, or attendees. These events recognize and celebrate cultural differences and value diversity which enhance the quality of their lives. Furthermore, participating in community cultural events supports the community economically, socially and spiritually, builds LSP-SC visibility, and builds that relationship of trust – all important engagement strategies.

The LSP-SC is peer driven. The content of the monthly meetings, electronic newsletter and website are all contributed by the LSP-SC membership. In addition, members actively provide feedback to improve announcement delivery, website usage, and meeting format. Reasonable feedback has been incorporated and built upon throughout the life span of the LSP-SC Network.

Although the meetings, newsletter and website are all primarily in English, some meetings and posted information are in Spanish. All communication vehicles are openly designed to be able to interchange languages and develop a shared pool of mutual understanding and meaning.

Currently all staff are volunteers and are of Latino and Native American heritage. They are actively committed to the health of the Latino community and the community at large. In their jobs and in their community work, they interact effectively with people of different cultures and are aware of their cultural viewpoint and attitude towards cultural differences. They have developed the necessary skills and knowledge of different cultural practices, and have successfully implemented and practiced these cross-cultural skills. This is demonstrated in their understanding and their ability to communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures.

The LSP-SC multicultural meetings use cultural values and belief frameworks that empower communities to address issues in ways that are most appropriate for them. It is one of our goals to reduce the negative attitude that is associated with mental illness, oftentimes called stigma. We will do this by sharing the many culturally and linguistically appropriate programs with individuals and agencies, including offering three meetings a year hosted by mental health agencies. Stigma can have serious negative impacts on people, families and communities, and it can add to the burden of living with a mental illness. Thus, it is important to provide an environment that promotes connectedness and acceptance.

7. Data Collection

There are four types of data that will be collected to improve outcomes in reducing disparities for the Latino community in accessing mental health services: 1) membership data, 2) website analytics, 3) frequency and content of electronic newsletters, and 4) feedback from LSP-SC membership.

Membership data: Membership data is key to understanding the composition of LSP-SC and whether specific sub-groups of the Latino community are being informed and engaged. The membership database will be enhanced to contain comprehensive information on two main sub-groups: community members and service providers/professionals. Specific data fields and their application are articulated in the table below:

Type of data	Application
Location/address by zip code	Understanding and possible comparison of geographic breadth of services and geographic residence of community members
Languages spoken	Inventory of service providers who offer services in Spanish compared to the number of community members who are bi-lingual/monolingual
Type of services offered	Inventory of types and diversity of services to assure comprehensive coverage in content and outreach implications
Numbers of members	Establish baseline at start of grant to one year to measure if 10% increase was achieved.
Number of community members not associated with a service provider	Identify the number and residence of community members who are direct end-consumers of information. Direct communication to this population is differentiated from the communication to service providers.

Website analytics that tracks traffic and activity: A website analytics application will be utilized to analyze traffic patterns of visitors to the LSP-SC website. Analytics can provide information on the frequency of visits to a specific page, information on the “bounce” rate (return visitors), information on each visitor such as city where the visitor is from, how many pages viewed and for how many minutes. This type of information is useful to determine the value of website content, for example, whether pages with mental health information or pages in Spanish are being viewed. Reports can be generated and trends examined to provide valuable feedback on necessary modifications and improvements for the website.

Electronic Newsletter – frequency and content: The electronic newsletter is driven by the submissions of the membership. If content is date sensitive, the Program Director has and will continue to produce and distribute the newsletters in response to external deadlines. At a minimum, electronic newsletters will be published weekly. In addition, for the purposes of this grant, data will be kept on the types of information published and whether it is information related to mental health services or aligned with wellness and prevention.

LSP-SC membership feedback: Surveys will be administered to three segments within the LSP-SC membership. The three segments and the focus of the surveys are described below:

LSP-SC segment	Focus of survey
Community members	Increased awareness and knowledge of mental health issues and resources; Increased comfort level seeking mental health services
Latino Service Providers	Increased awareness and knowledge of mental health issues, and resources; Increased capacity to educate their clients about mental health wellness and community resources
Mental health service	Increased capacity and confidence to provide services to the Latino community

providers	
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Data collection and program evaluation will be the responsibility of the Program Director and will be reported to the LSP-SC Advisory Committee at their quarterly meetings and summarized in the program reports as required by MHSA and the PEI grant.