

**California Hospital Association Center for Behavioral Health
Mental Health Planning Council Presentation
October 17, 2008**

Potential Solutions/Recommendations

1. Conduct assessments, both statewide and by county, of current behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse) services currently available in the community. Objective: To determine the unmet need and begin planning for improvements to the infrastructure, e.g., telepsychiatry, crisis stabilization, crisis residential.
2. Evaluate the administrative requirements on providers that do not impact the outcome of patient care, yet impact the cost of providing care. Objective: To reduce unnecessary burdens placed on providers, e.g., standard electronic claims forms; revising the LPS Act; standard statewide contracts for providers and practitioners; use of evidence-based practice models; update Titles 9, 22 & 24; enhance the Medi-Cal authorization process.
3. Acknowledge the value and need for acute inpatient behavioral health care. Embrace all hospitals (general acute care and psych/CD) as a necessary component of the community delivery system. Include hospitals in all planning activities at the county level. Objectives: Stigma reduction, increased partnership for educational training opportunities, improved utilization of resources, encourage better integration of physical and mental health, enhancing care and improving efficiencies, e.g., reduction of restraint/seclusions, decrease in involuntary holds, decrease in use of Administrative Day stays, decrease in inappropriate use of Emergency Departments, increase opportunities for innovative solutions.
4. Evaluate the current funding practices with a focus on merging funding streams for mental and physical health. Improvement in reimbursement and financial incentives must occur if we are to ensure that adequate resources are available for those in need of acute hospital services. The need for inpatient care depends heavily on the quality of outpatient treatment. The volume of individuals with mental illness who are homeless and/or currently in jails and prisons is a reflection of the inadequacy of our current system. Objective: Improved access to the right care at the right time in the right setting.