



ALCOHOL, DRUG & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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Dear Provider and other Stakeholders,

I wanted to make everyone aware of some significant changes to the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funded *CHOICES* program. *CHOICES* has been a large scale County pilot program that has been in existence for five years. *CHOICES* aimed to bring MHSA resources and values into existing mental health service teams for adults. The program has focused on small cohorts of mental health consumers who are followed closely for three years and infused with support in an effort to link them with community resources and enable them to become less reliant on the public behavioral health system. After careful consideration, we have decided to end the *CHOICES* pilot program and to roll forward some of the valuable lessons of this program into our larger system of care. Some of those lessons are:

- Continued incorporation of individuals with lived experience into the service teams and ACT/FSP teams, and across other areas of our system of care
- Continued partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Alameda to manage MHSA housing subsidy dollars and make Section 8 available for our adult mental health consumers
- Continued efforts to bring housing navigation expertise across adult case management programs
- Focused and targeted Individual Placement and Support (IPS) employment services across adult case management teams
- Continued change of values from a deficit based approach in client care to a system of care that is strength based, outcomes driven, and focused on the whole person
- Continued focus on supporting individuals in their recovery process and working toward decreasing their need for high intensity services over time

With the above said, it is also important to note that part of *CHOICES* program was the *Learning Center* operated by Recovery Innovations at 1200 Embarcadero Cove. The *Learning Center* will also cease operating and will be closing by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015. Recovery Innovations has done a very nice job operating the *Learning Center* and understands the closing of the Center is a reflection of the *CHOICES* pilot program ending. I want to thank Recovery Innovations and their staff for operating the *Learning Center* and helping to guide a small group of consumers through their recovery.

Some important pieces to stress as part of the closing:

- All current *Choices* participants will continue to receive support from their case management teams when the program ends
- All *Choices* participants receiving a CHOICES housing subsidy on or before March 31, 2015 will continue to receive their subsidy and housing specialist support through November 2016, the original end date of the subsidy
- The Adult System of Care will continue to focus on innovation and system enhancement through all its programming
- The Wellness Centers will play an important role in bringing forward the lessons from the *CHOICES* program and as the place Adult system will focus on system change

We will answer questions and discuss further the ending of the *CHOICES* program and the closing of the Learning Center at our February 20<sup>th</sup> Adult Provider meeting at 2000 Embarcadero Cove in the Gail Steele room from 10am to 12pm. In addition, Michael Lisman, the Adult Community Support Centers Director, will oversee the ending of the *CHOICES* program and the closing of the Center and will serve as the contact person for any questions going forward.

Sincerely

James Wagner LMFT  
Adult System of Care Director for Alameda Behavioral Health Care Services