

Step 1: Assess the strengths and organizational capacity of the service system to address the specific populations.

The sole primary health provider is the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) which is located on Saipan. CHCC comprises three divisions that include the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (Hospital), the Division of Public Health, and the Community Guidance Center (Behavioral Health Division). Rota and Tinian each have their respective Health Centers which comprises primary care, public health care, and behavioral health care. Due to limited emergency and inpatient care services on Rota and Tinian, referrals are often made to the island of Saipan to the “main” facility. The distance among the islands requires inter-island travel either by plane or ship. The shipping costs of goods, equipment, etc. to the islands of Tinian and Rota drive the cost of living extremely high where the cost of gasoline per gallon is over \$6 dollars, well over the \$4 to \$5/gallon average on Saipan. Communities on each island are similar in some respects but vastly different in composition and in cultural attitudes, norms, and practices. This necessitates services to be specially tailored per island community.

Established in 1996, the Community Guidance Center (CGC) continues to be the primary Behavioral Health provider and the sole recipient of Community Mental Health Services Block Grant and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funding. CGC’s vision is that all CNMI residents fully integrate behavioral health and wellness into safe, resilient, drug-free homes and communities; its mission is to partner with individuals, families, and communities towards a life of hope, healing, and health through prevention of substance abuse and the promotion of wellness and recovery. As the primary Behavioral Health provider, CGC coordinates and provides comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services designed to treat and support individuals and families in need of mental health and/or substance abuse treatment and recovery care on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian.

Divisions under the CHCC such as the Public Health (DPH) Division and the Community Guidance Center continue to provide and manage all health services at the hospital including the health centers/ clinics in the neighboring CNMI islands of Rota and Tinian. The Division of Public Health and the Community Guidance Center are headed by its respective directors who report directly to the Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation. The CEO reports all activities under CHCC to the CHCC Board of Directors and the CNMI Governor.

The Community Guidance Center continues to be the primary provider of comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services for all individuals residing in the CNMI. CGC incorporates all out-patient mental health services and administers all Federal health programs in the CNMI related to mental health and substance abuse, as well as all other publicly funded mental health services. All services and programs administered by the CGC are supervised by substance abuse and mental health program managers under the management of the CGC Director. The CHCC and CGC organizational charts are attached for further review.

Through collaboration and establishing interdependent relationships with other system providers, the CGC is committed to providing high quality mental health and substance abuse treatment and other therapeutic services to the multi-diverse population of the CNMI, as well as support services to families and friends, community outreach, prevention and education services, and referral assistance to other community resources. This comprehensive service system of the CNMI provides an array of treatment and support services for adults with serious mental illnesses (SMI) and children/adolescents with serious emotional disturbances (SED). Despite austerity measures, the priority of the CGC has been to provide access to clinically appropriate and effective mental health care and treatment for individuals residing in the CNMI who have SMI/SED and who have limited economic and social resources. It has been the vision of the CGC to ensure that every individual who has made the CNMI their home may be able to live and interact with

each other in a community that is not only nurturing to its members' spiritual growth, psychological balance, emotional stability, and physical well-being, but at the same time fosters the development and maintenance of a cooperative and harmonious society.

The State plan and annual budget revolve around the principle that individuals would all receive the best quality of care possible and be provided with services in the most clinically appropriate and least restrictive surroundings. The CGC administers services addressing mental health and substance abuse problems and consists of programs that include Behavioral Health Services, Addictions Services, Community Mental Health Services, and Prevention Services. Services provided at the CGC include individual, group, and family therapy; education; assessment; crisis response to community needs (i.e. following suicides or traumatic events); psychiatric, psychological, counseling services; and substance abuse prevention and treatment.

The Transitional Living Center (TLC), which is also part of the CGC, provides services to adults with SMI which include: community outreach, medication clinics, transitional living programs, respite programs, and a day program for both out-patients and in-patients with SMI. The TLC also provides psychiatric outpatient services such as psychiatric evaluation, pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy, case management, day treatment, assertive community outreach, education for consumers and families about mental illness, and symptom management. These services are administered by the Community Mental Health Services Team (CMHST), which is primarily housed at the TLC. In addition, the CMHST provides linkages between and referrals for primary health services, mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment, educational services, job training, vocational rehabilitation support, housing assistance, Nutrition Assistance Program, and services such as Medicaid and Social Security Disability.

Moreover, the TLC has specific groups focusing on leisure activities, training in skills of Activities of Daily Living (ADL), socializing outings, drug abuse awareness and prevention, anonymous-group-model recovery teaching, educational holiday celebrations, and medication management groups. Furthermore, the CMHST provides monthly outreach services to the consumers on the neighboring islands of Tinian and Rota. The status of consumers (adults with SMI and children/adolescents with SED) are communicated through the Health Centers on Tinian and Rota and the CMHST based on Saipan. Each trip to these islands is designed for a full workday, which serves approximately 10 consumers.

CGC was awarded a Systems of Care Planning grant in October 2014 and Systems of Care Implementation Grant in October 2015 to develop and implement an efficient, consumer-friendly system of care that promotes integrated health, social, and support services for children and youth with Serious Emotional Disturbances and their families/caregivers. The program focus population are children/youth from age birth to 21 who are experiencing or at-risk of developing severe emotional disturbances. The CNMI SOC goals include the following: 1) Implementation of efficient and standardized policy, regulatory, and partnership improvements that are understood by all youth and family serving groups; 2) Development of a System of Care that allows for continuity of services throughout the continuum of need (inclusive of: at-risk, crisis, recovery, and maintenance of recovery); 3) Consistent generation of funding sufficient to maintain adequate services throughout the continuum of need (inclusive of: at-risk, crisis, recovery, and maintenance of recovery); 4) Provision of training, technical assistance, and coaching to strengthen SOC understanding and delivery; 5) Generation of community-wide support for the mental health service delivery system. The CNMI SOC project and its goals are grounded on core SOC principles and values in a partnership of care for all CNMI children and youth, age birth to 21, with serious emotional disturbances and their families. The SOC model is multi-dimensional and an interdisciplinary linking of services of care with families as partners in a child and youth focused, family driven, community based, and culturally competent service delivery system.

Psychiatric inpatient services are provided at the psychiatric ward located at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC), which is the main and only hospital located in Saipan, providing services to people in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and some other islands in the Micronesian Archipelago. The psychiatric unit has an eight-bed, locked unit for individuals 18 years or older and provides in-patient services for adults with SMI directed towards diagnosis, stabilization, respite care, as well as educational services about mental health for consumers and their families during in-patient stays. Through the use of the available staff and physician(s) on call, the Emergency Departments at the respective health centers on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota provide 24-hour crisis services to persons with SMI or other acute mental health needs.

The nursing staff of the psychiatric unit at the CHCC are available for additional consultation around the clock. Currently, psychiatric inpatient care for children/adolescents with SED is provided on a very limited basis at the medical hospital; separated from the adult inpatient unit without the benefit of a secured, locked facility and trained mental health nurses and/or assistants.

Guided by its vision, the CGC finds that the networking of community services is a pivotal part of the mental health service system. The CGC collaborates with other State agencies and organizations to ensure a network of community services designed to assist individuals with mental illness. The CGC collaborates with the following State agencies and organizations:

- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
- Workforce Investment Agency (WIA)
- Department of Labor (DOL)
- Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)
- Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA)
- Superior Court System (SCS)
- CHCC Division of Public Health Services (DPH)
- Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC)
- Tinian and Rota Health Centers
- Public School System (PSS)
- Northern Marianas College (NMC)
- Division of Youth Services (DYS)
- Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI)
- Center for Independent Center (CIC)

- Medicaid Office
- Karidat
- Ayuda Network
- Islas Aramas Peer (IAPeer)

It is through these collaboration efforts with the agencies and organizations mentioned, the community mental health services program under the CGC, provides linkages between and referrals for clients/consumers seeking primary health services, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, educational services, job training, employment services, and housing assistance services.

System of Strategic Partnerships

CGC aims to support and enhance a comprehensive, coordinated, and holistic approach to addressing the mental health, substance abuse, and primary healthcare needs of the consumers. CGC also aims to develop partnerships to extend the limited resources of the mental health system and promote integrated treatment and the coordination of substance abuse and mental health interventions by combining them into a coherent, seamless service system. Furthermore, CGC collaborates with other key State agencies and organizations in establishing a network essential to the delivery of mental health services in the CNMI.

No single agency has been identified as the lead agency for case management and coordination of services. The Child and Family Services Committee, has worked closely with the Division of Youth Services (DYS), the Community Guidance Center (CGC), a community based psychologist, and others continue to plan yearly conferences focused on improving the case management skills of service providers. The unit primarily responsible for mental health services to children and adolescents is CGC. Services are integrated at CGC during weekly meetings with providers from each discipline to discuss new cases and coordination of services. In addition, a CGC intake coordinator and an intake social worker manage referrals and follow up with community and interagency contacts.

In compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), the Public School System's Special Education Department (SPED) is responsible for ensuring that eligible students receive services as recommended on their Individual

Educational Plans. Often this includes psychological services. It has been determined to be most effective and efficient to have not only a memorandum of understanding between agencies but also contractual arrangements for service provision. This arrangement ensures services not only for Special Education students with severe emotional disturbance but also provides support for personnel who provide preventive services to Special Education students.

The Pacific Basin Interagency Leadership Council Conference incorporates service providers from the Pacific Region working in agencies that assist individuals with disabilities. One of the purposes of this conference is to promote interagency communication and cooperation. Participants include representatives from the Division of Youth Services, the CGC, the Public School System SPED Program, Early Childhood Intervention Program, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Public Health, Northern Marianas College-University Affiliated Programs, the Developmental Disabilities Council, the CNMI Legislature, Pacific Regional Educational Laboratory, and the Children Developmental Assistance Center.

In Fiscal Year 2003, both public and private agencies collaborated to create the CNMI Interagency Juvenile Justice Task Force seeking to enhance interagency cooperation in dealing with juvenile concerns. The task

force goal was to develop a comprehensive strategy specifically aimed at preventing juveniles from entering the justice system and establishing ways to rehabilitate youth offenders to ultimately reduce the rates of juvenile delinquency and recidivism. An MOU was entered into with various agencies including the Division of Youth Services, Community Guidance Center, CNMI Youth Alliance, Public School System, Department of Public Safety, Criminal Justice Planning Agency, Attorney General's Office, Public Defender's Office, Office of Youth Affairs, and a community representative. The task force claimed that individuals under the age of 18 commit 55-60% of all crimes in the CNMI and that the number, severity, and recidivism of juvenile crimes were increasing so a joint effort to curb this issue was developed. The MOU prioritized the following program objectives: study the juvenile delinquency problem in the CNMI, enhance pre and post-trial programs, advocate for the Juvenile Justice Act, develop and enhance public education and awareness on juvenile delinquency issues, and increase inter-agency communication.

Coordination of comprehensive services is managed individually, by the clinicians. Meeting together to discuss issues related to coordination will help to identify common problems and successful strategies. Interagency meetings (CGC, DYS, Family Court, and PSS) can be scheduled to follow-up on identified issues so that a collaborated effort can help resolve these issues.

Further evaluation and delineation of services and population (e.g. minors diagnosed with SED also receiving SPED services) under the contract is needed. In addition, these meetings can also be used to discuss problems and solutions to referral and coordination of services.

Many referrals each year involve juvenile cases. Mental health services are provided by both CGC and DYS. Coordination of service delivery, assistance in case management, and consultation to the court is routinely managed by both service agencies. In addition, the Family Court requires timely information in order to expedite decisions and legal actions that can assist in the delivery of treatment and managing minors with Conduct Disorder and behavioral difficulties. The supplemental grant through VOCA/DOJ supports two (2) FTES to prioritize counseling services for victims of crime services and participation in domestic and family violence advocacy and prevention activities.

Currently, there are no exchange of information between agencies, and a lack of data base monitoring on the number of adolescents transitioning to adult services. Given that DYS services are discontinued after minors turn 18, a significant support service is lost to numerous individuals. Therefore, a gap exists for services for the youth, turned adult is a serious situation that requires a plan of action. A plan is needed so that the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the CGC can implement some type of transitional care so that individuals/ young adults who require such services will not fall through the cracks.

The Prevention Unit of CGC provides essential services throughout all three islands of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These services, which address issues such as underage drinking, drinking and driving, tobacco prevention, marijuana and prescription drug use and abuse, are universal and made available to Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and are not exclusive to a particular population and/or groups. Special population groups include youth, parents, students, veterans, LGBT, all ethnicities, religion, and individuals with disabilities. There is also the capacity to serve individuals in the majority language groups that exist in the CNMI.

A crucial component in providing prevention services throughout the community is the strong networking and collaboration of key partners which include government and non- profit agencies, coalitions, and sub grant recipients. The prevention unit continuously develops its unique ways of operating and managing services that are mirrored by the communities it reflects. Prevention staff includes individuals who are either bilingual or trilingual and who are aware of and sensitive to shared traditions of the incredibly diverse cultural groups in the CNMI community. Their efforts ensure that all community populations are considered

when addressing cultural competency concepts and while delivering community outreach, training and technical assistance, and project/program goals and objectives.

The following are strategic services that the CGC addresses and provides that require collaborative coordinated efforts:

Health Services – The CGC provides linkages and referral services to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) for all medical related care; private health clinics such as the Mariana Eye Institute, Marianas Visiting Nurses, Northern Marianas College (NMC) CREES program and CHCC dietician for nutrition.

Mental Health Services – The CGC provides community mental health services contingent to available resources, and addiction services which include assessment/testing; individual, couples, and family counseling; individual and group addiction counseling; community mental health services; anger management; case management; consultation; and prevention and outreach.

Rehabilitation Services – The CGC provides rehabilitation services which include: individual and family counseling, group therapy, educational classes and activities, and referrals to specific treatment groups such as anger management or character building which incorporates substance abuse topics.

Employment Services – The CGC provides linkages and referral services to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), the Workforce Investment Agency (WIA), the Department of Labor, as well as volunteer positions within government agencies in the community. CGC also provides services for individuals who are referred from the Office of Personnel Management.

Housing Services – The CGC provides linkages and referral services to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) which provides HUD housing vouchers. In addition, the CGC Transitional Living Center (TLC) is a rehabilitation program for adults living with SMI

Educational Services – The CGC provides linkages and referral services to the Public School System (PSS), the Northern Marianas College (NMC), and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), to include possible referrals to the Northern Marianas Trades Institute.

Substance use intervention services – The CGC provides substance use disorder treatment services which include counseling services; individual, group, and family therapy; support groups; educational classes and activities; and referrals to specific treatment groups, such as anger management and/or character building. With the availability of federally funded resources and provided technical assistance, the CGC Recovery Clinic is able to provide CBT for Chronic Pain which provides education and intervention services to help individuals learn coping skills and CBT education towards their management of Chronic Pain and pursuit of a better quality of life.

Medical Services – The CGC provides linkages and referral services to the Commonwealth Health Center (CHC), under the CHCC for medical services which is a unified medical center that has modern medical equipment for inpatient and outpatient services, emergency care, diagnostic services, and a wide range of public health services. There are 74 acute care beds available for medical, surgical, obstetrical, and pediatric patients and 8 beds for psychiatric inpatients; and serves as the primary referral facility for the Tinian and Rota Health Centers. The CGC also provides referral services to private health clinics.

Dental Services – The CGC provides linkages and referral services to the CHCC for dental services which include hygiene, corrections, fillings, prosthetics, and extractions.

Support Services – The CGC provides educational trainings and presentations, as well as linkages and referral services to family/consumer organizations/peer support such as Islas Aramas Peer (IAPeer), advocacy organizations such as the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) which implements the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) program, as well as the Developmental Disabilities Council.

Services provided by local school systems under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Services – The Public School System provides psychological testing by its educational psychologist; counseling services from school counselors; collaboration with teachers, the special education department, and behavioral psychologist to develop behavioral plans; as well as referrals to CGC and private practitioners for counseling and other mental health services.

Case Management Services – Contingent to agency capacity, CGC provides case management services which include assistance with Medicaid and disability benefits applications, as well as securing and maintaining housing, assertive community outreach, day-to-day follow-up and contact with consumers to enhance and prolong tenure, and assisting consumers in keeping appointments and attending other community-based activities and services.

Services for Persons with Co-occurring Disorders – The CGC provides services such as evaluations, educational activities, individual and family counseling, group therapy, support groups, as well as referrals to specific treatment groups such as anger management and/or character building. Referrals to substance abuse services at the CGC are made for SED children/adolescents who are served by the outpatient program, the Public School System (PSS), and/or the Division of Youth Services (DYS), as well as those who are self-referred.

Maternal and Child Health Program

Specialized Services for Pregnant Women and Women with Dependent Children –Prenatal care service is provided at the Women's Clinic located at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, and Rota and Tinian Health Centers. It is also provided at the Adolescent Health Clinic located at Marianas High School. In addition, Medicaid enrollees can access prenatal care services at 4 Medicaid participating private health clinics. The first visit involves prenatal first visit intake/interview by nurse, physical exam (pap test), blood work, counseling, including HIV testing. The revisit exams include monitoring baby's growth and development and the mother's condition, and continue counseling and education.

Case management is provided to pregnant women with pre-existing conditions such as hypertension, heart condition, diabetes and other medical issues. Follow-up is provided during postpartum care. The new Affordable Care Act Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (HVP) provide home visiting service and coordination of services to families living in at-risk communities. Thus, the program will serve some higher risk, more vulnerable families, such as those where a parent has depression, a substance abuse problem, is at risk for abuse and neglect, and/or is experiencing family violence, either singly or in combination. The program also links with its partners such as CGC for early intervention and referral into professional services such as substance abuse treatment or mental health service. The HVP works with its partners to give attention to the implementation of strategies that will address the needs of higher risk families. The HVP also has an MOU with partners such as the Women's Clinic, Family Planning Program, Domestic Violence Coalitions, and other related stakeholders to update and shorten the medical history form to make it more user friendly when asking questions about alcohol, drug use (including cigarettes) and screening risks for domestic violence.

Victims Services - The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) program, a supplemental grant through the CJPA, recipient of Department of Justice, is responsible for providing to the islands of Saipan, Rota and Tinian

direct counseling and case management services to victims of crime, direct consultation, counseling assistance, outreach, psycho-education, including necessary presentations and training to all related social services agencies.

VOCA Therapists participate with related Family Violence Task Force, Domestic Violence Coalitions, and other victims' services partnerships.

Other Activities – The CGC provides mental health services in the most community- based, accessible (to the child and family) settings such as schools, detention units, homes, shelters, and at the CGC offices on Navy Hill.

Needs: State's Service System Revision

The State seeks to improve on its need to revise its State Plan and Services Mission to adopt FY2019-2023 SAMHSA's Five Strategic Initiatives to improve the delivery and financing of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services to advance and protect the Nation's health. These initiatives will focus SAMHSA's work on improving lives and capitalizing on emerging opportunities. As each initiative is developed and integrated throughout SAMHSA activities, information will be disseminated to the State, stakeholder groups, national organizations, and policy makers. With this guidance, the State will develop plans and application(s) with a focus on SAMHSA's Strategic Plan Initiatives. The areas and goals that comprise the strategic initiatives include:

Combating the Opioid Crisis through the Expansion of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support Services.

Addressing Serious Mental Illness and Serious Emotional Disturbances.

Advancing Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support Services for Substance Use.

Improving Data Collection, Analysis, Dissemination, and Program and Policy Evaluation.

Strengthening Health Practitioner Training and Education.