

Process and Evaluation Workgroup

Meeting Minutes

July 3, 2024

In attendance:

- **Rodney Brooks**, Alameda County Public Defenders
- **Denise Richardson**, Open Gate
- **Mildred McKinney**, Open Gate
- **Denise Moody**, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
- **Mike Davis**, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
- **Rick Wood**, Rubicon Programs
- **Dr. Maisha Scott**, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
- **Jason Sjoberg**, Office of the Alameda County District Attorney
- **Karen Chin**, Urban Strategies Council
- **Janene Grigsby**, The Alameda County Probation Department
- **Charlie Eddy**, Urban Strategies Council
- **Darryl Stewart**, Office of Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley
- **Jamie Almanza**, Bay Area Community Services (BACS)
- **Shanice Kelley**, Bay Area Community Services (BACS)
- **George Matthews**, Genesis Worship Center
- **Darryl Stewart**, Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley's Office

The meeting opened with an outline of the Process and Evaluation Workgroup's responsibilities and an introduction of the topic to be discussed; the current feedback loop provided by Probation's contracted programs, and the feedback the Probation Department receives to support AB 109 clients. Next, the meeting attendees introduced themselves.

A summary of the conversation regarding the feedback from clients is below.

Bay Area Community Services (BACS) Presentation and Discussion:

- Bay Area Community Services provides case management services for AB 109 clients and family members who have been system impacted.

- Clients can remain in the program for one to two years and receive assistance with drug treatment, medication management, employment, housing and addressing other barriers to re-entering the community. Tele psych services are also available for clients.
- The organization has an outcomes management system and policy and procedures to collect client feedback.
- Information/feedback from clients and family members is collected in May and November.
- Staff distributes surveys to clients who can submit their responses anonymously. The surveys use the Likert scale where the choice of responses is numerical, lowest being the least favorable and the highest number is the most favorable.
- The data is inputted into a spreadsheet and is analyzed by the BACS Quality Improvement Committee. Scores are compared to the previous year and to similar programs statewide. BACS has baseline scores and benchmarks for improvements. When necessary, the team will engage in a quality improvement process.
- The results are shared with funders, including Behavioral Healthcare (who holds their AB 109 contract.) Results are shared on the BACS website and social media platforms.
- Certain programs have Advisory Councils embedded in them.
- **Question:** Does the feedback include collaboration with other parts of the AB 109 service delivery system?
- **Answer:** Last year, we did an informal focus group (with other organizations) – there was little response. The organization engages clients in listening sessions and receives feedback from Managers.
- **Question:** Can you elaborate on what information you submit to the state?
- **Answer:** The California healthcare system owns the survey and keeps the survey responses from local providers. The results are also sent from BACS to Behavioral Healthcare and the appropriate Probation Division Director.

Open Gate Presentation and Discussion

- Open Gate is a jail to college pipeline providing educational services for AB 109 clients.
- The program connects with students while in Santa Rita Jail and upon release enrolls them in college.
- Open Gate staff created the Restorative Integrated Self-Education (RISE) program at Chabot College.
- Open Gate currently employs six “O.G.s” (middle-aged men who have been released after long prison terms) who mentor the students referred by Probation.
- The students and mentors engage in monthly discussion sessions.
- Every semester an oral evaluation is conducted between the student and the O.G. Mentor.
- The organization is looking to develop a more formalized evaluation process as the probation contract continues.
- The program uses recidivism as one measure of success, their current recidivism rate is 3%.
- Open Gate and BACS staff agreed to talk about how their respective programs can learn from each other.

- **Question:** Does open Gate work with female students?
- **Answer:** Women are about 3% of the Santa Rita Jail population yet are 20% of the Open Gate students.
- **Question:** Are you having success in working with younger students?
- **Answer:** While older students are often easier to work with, the program has success with younger students.
- **Question:** Are you looking to connect with services inside the jail or the educational programs for collaborative partners?
- **Answer:** We are having more people come out of jail without a high school diploma or G.E.D. Since COVID, no students have come out with a diploma or a G.E.D. Students enrolled in college can't get financial aid without a G.E.D., which is a barrier for our clients. Financial Aid is 7K that can be used to remove any barriers to being a student. Open Gate has not been able to engage Five Keys (the educational provider) on this issue.

Probation's Presentation and Discussion

- Probation has a four step process for program development
 - Learn: Understand the issues, hear from the end users.
 - Create an idea: This is where performance measures are first introduced.
 - Refine/Approve: Develop a budget, create a Logic Model.
 - Secure a vendor and kick off the program: Identify a provider and formally begin the initiative. (This is where procurement takes place, which can take 12-24 months.)
- Many existing programs have not undergone this new development process.
- Probation has many processes for receiving feedback.
- There are two units responsible for managing AB 109 programs, The Re-Entry Adult and Pre-Trial Court Services Division and the Probation Administration Unit.
- The Probation Department continuously reaches out to clients and families, community members, providers and government partners for feedback.
- Feedback loops include: direct client feedback, surveys, getting information from previous clients, listening sessions, data collection, receiving information from providers, citizens' complaints, receiving information from Probation Officers, and responses from families.
- Sometimes the best information comes from unsolicited conversations at an unexpected time and place.
- Clients experiencing a feeling of demoralization in a previous program led to a change in contract language which now includes cultural values; and guiding principles including gender responsivity and cultural competence.
- Feedback from clients contributed to the change in the upcoming protocol of increasing collaboration between providers and Probation, designed to eliminate the need for clients to repeat the same information which can often be re-traumatizing.
- **Question:** How is "living wage" defined in your contracts and Requests for Proposals (RFPs)?

- **Answer:** There is a link to a living wage calculator in the RFP, specific to each county and has different wages if the recipient is single, or someone with children.
- **Question:** How can community members provide input to what is included in the RFPs?
- **Answer:** The Programs and Services Workgroup. However, creating a program element in a community meeting has challenges, since it may provide an advantage for the person with the initial idea or people in their orbit. Therefore, actual specifications are not discussed.
- **Question:** Is it possible to anonymously post salaries for positions within the various AB 109 contracts?
- **Answer:** That information is public since it must be approved by the Board, Probation staff will look into posting it publicly in other locations as well.
- **Question:** How will the quality control information received in the future be utilized?
- **Answer:** The goal is for providers to know programs need to be client centered. The input from clients needs to be assessed and implemented. The process is not designed to be punitive. If providers are not in compliance with their contracts, corrective actions including corrective action plans might be implemented.
- **Question:** Who are the current education providers and what are the proposed changes to the approach moving forward?
- **Answer:** The department is considering making the contracts more student focused so they can fund a students' educational choice, i.e. pursuing a G.E.D. or attending a construction class. Different from our current contracts which support an educational program or institution by providing slots for students.
- The RFPs that are coming forward with the new contract language/approach are:
 - Family Unification
 - Education
 - The Coordinated Re-Entry Program
 - Capacity Building

The new language is not "cookie cutter" and will not be the same in all upcoming contracts.

Closing Discussion

- The group agreed to develop a "living document" summarizing what providers and Probation have said about their processes for accepting and incorporating feedback.

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 PM.