

Process and Evaluation Workgroup

Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2024

In attendance:

- **Rodney Brooks**, Alameda County Public Defenders
- **Gina Temporal**, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Denise Moody**, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
- **Jason Sjoberg**, Office of the Alameda County District Attorney
- **Karen Chin**, Urban Strategies Council
- **Shawn Rowland**, Our Road Prison Project
- **Mas Morimoto**, Office of the Alameda County District Attorney
- **Rezsine Gonzalez**, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Charlie Eddy**, Urban Strategies Council
- **Annette Briscoe**, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Dr. Maisha Scott**, Building Opportunities for Self Sufficiency
- **Corrine Lee**, Alameda County Probation Department

The meeting started with an explanation of the purpose of the workgroup. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves. The primary subject discussed at the meeting was an evaluation of what the group has learned so far about how organizations submit client feedback to Probation about how services are provided.

The group reviewed the August meeting minutes. Suggested changes to the minutes were recommended to more accurately reflect the number of beds probation reserves for clients at the Bay Area Community Services (BACS) facilities and the response to a separate question. The minutes were approved with the recommended changes.

Attendees were given time to review a chart summarizing how the different community-based organizations provide feedback to probation to initiate the discussion about what has been learned to date. Prior to reviewing the chart, the group was given three “thought questions” to assist in facilitating the discussion about services provided by the Probation Department:

What positive information is currently being captured?

What additional information should we try to obtain?

What should we do next, based on what we have learned?

A summary of the discussion is below:

- Some organizations do surveys, and some do focus groups, no one reported doing both. Surveys and focus groups often have specific purposes and solicit different types of information.
- We don't have a lot of information on the quality of the surveys or an understanding of how they are administered.
- There is no uniform or baseline questions are asked of everyone – would that be helpful?
- A hybrid would be ideal, perhaps some baseline questions and some specialized questions for each organization.
- It would be great to train people with lived experience to deliver surveys and collect feedback.
- It might be helpful to connect experienced evaluators with newly trained researchers.
- The question was raised whether people were familiar with participatory research.
- Some people said yes. As explained, data collection and training are provided to trusted community messengers who then work with experienced researchers and collect information from the larger community. Since the collectors of the information are known entities, they often receive more insightful information. The experienced researchers assist the trusted community members in converting the collected information into data points for public presentations.
- The trusted individuals can review the research questions and confirm they accurately translate to the larger community. In addition, they are able to provide context when appropriate. The professional researchers confirm the data was collected accurately and the delivery of the questions was neutral and not persuasive.
- It was suggested that the colleges and universities in the area might be able to support this effort. In addition, many of the current Probation contracts require people to hire formally incarcerated individuals as staff.
- It was asked that people read about the Safe Return Team and/or other participatory research projects before attending the next meeting.
- The Urban Strategies Council used Participatory Research to collect information prior to creating Oakland's Department of Violence Prevention.
- Development of a strong research team would reduce the pressure on our current service providers.
- A question was raised if client success stories are being communicated with probation.
- Probation requests qualitative information including success stories from service providers which are included in the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) final report and in grant proposals.
- The next question raised was, is there an opportunity for service providers to share information.

- Probation holds monthly meetings with contracted service providers where they are able to share information.
- It would be great if contractors had the ability to share how they would have designed the contract differently, while the contract is in effect. Currently that happens at the conclusion of their work, which helps the Probation Department implement changes in future contracts.
- Can the Process and Evaluation Workgroup create a strategy for providers to voice their concerns and make changes during the contract – perhaps similar to a meet and confer process.
- Finally, it was agreed to have a representative from the Probation Department attend a future meeting and talk about the CCP and CCP EC reorganization.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM