

County of San Diego, Health and Human Services

TRAUMA-INFORMED SYSTEMS POLICY STATEMENT

The Vision: Improve the health and wellness of our community by providing innovative and integrated policies, practices, services and systems so San Diegans can engage and enjoy lives that are Healthy, Safe and Thriving.

The Purpose: San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is dedicated to being a trauma-informed system. Being trauma-informed is a component of cultural competency; an approach to engage all people we serve, all staff and those we encounter whilst conducting business.

HHSA holds a universal awareness that individuals and organizations may have experienced and been affected by trauma and/or complex stress. HHSA understands that a range of concurrent, sequential, and mutually reinforcing changes are required in culture, policy, practice, and environment. HHSA believes relationships are a vehicle for healing and strives to adhere to the principles of trauma-informed systems of care, which includes: Safety; Trustworthiness; Choice; Collaboration; Empowerment; Transdisciplinary Training, Education and Coaching/Supervision; and Peer/Family Support Partnerships.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT VISION:

1. Shared Philosophy and Leadership Commitment
2. Universal Awareness
3. Step-Wise, Cross-System Training
4. Interconnect Recommendations to Existing County Initiatives
5. Prioritize Self-Care and Wellness for Staff and Providers
6. Shared Resources, Materials and Database
7. Integrated Trauma-Informed Systems to include (Practices, Policies, Place, Contract Language, Supplemental Materials, and Utilization of Electronic Records and Databases)
8. Meaningful and Consistent Evaluation and Consultation
9. Consumer/Clients are Partners in Care

The Recommendations ~ In Brief

1. Shared Philosophy and Leadership Commitment

- a. Shared Policy Statement Developed, Practiced and Disseminate widely.
- b. HHS Programs, Providers and Community Partners commitment to providing resources (including inviting staff members to coordinate the implementation recommendations and sustainability).

2. Universal Awareness

- a. Universal awareness begins to institutionalize trauma and complex stress awareness and impact throughout the Agency, Providers and Partners.
- b. All clients who enter the systems and all staff who work in the systems should be engaged within the universal awareness. Individuals who have been impacted by trauma and/or complex stress will have impacts and interpretations integrated into their plan for wellness.

3. Step-Wise, Cross-System Training

- a. Trauma-Informed systems become a part of all trainings.
- b. A training “buddy system” will be developed.
- c. Training will be delivered via LMS, The Knowledge Center, Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA) and/or Behavioral Health Education and Training Academy (BHETA).

4. Interconnect Recommendations to Existing County Initiatives

- a. Clear linkages to current initiatives within Agency, Providers and Partners are integrated.
- b. Within the County, specific Initiatives align best with the recommendations: Live Well San Diego; Knowledge Integration Project; CADRE; Trauma-Informed Workgroup; Trauma-Informed Guide Team; Mental Health Learning Collaborative; and Cultural Competency Action Plan.

5. Prioritize Self-care and Wellness for Staff and Providers

- a. Self-care is prioritized by the Agency, Provider Agencies and Partners.
- b. All staff receive support to enhance wellness strategies. Prevent, ameliorate, and address complex stress/trauma; and strategies are in place, practiced and reinforced.

6. Shared Resources, Materials and Database

- a. Resources revolve around being responsive and meaningful to the needs of the systems, providers, clients and others identified. Resources are accessed and utilized.
- b. Electronic records are shared, serving the client and providers with effective and efficient means to better understand and provide needed information and linkages toward their wellness.

7. Integrated Trauma Informed Systems (Practices, Policies, Place, Contract Language, Supplemental Materials, and Utilization of Electronic Records and Databases)

- a. Review and revise policies, practices, language, job descriptions, wellness plans and standards to support trauma-informed systems.
- b. Ensure environments are safe, non-threatening and engaging, following best practices.

8. Meaningful and Consistent Evaluation and Consultation

- a. Establish a culture of continued data exploration of the effectiveness and efficacy of Trauma-Informed systems.
- b. Consistent reporting to feed data (e.g., quarterly progress reports on implementation).
- c. Establish measurable outcomes and link all evaluation with Quality Improvement Units.

9. Consumer/Clients are Partners in Care

- a. Clients are the experts of themselves. Accordingly, they play an active role in every aspect of involvement of systems and their wellness.
- b. Clients feel safe, welcomed, valued and empowered. Their choice and control are standard practice.
- c. Opportunities for employment are available (e.g., Family/Peer Support Partners, whose role is valued with promotional advancements). Clients provide critical perspectives on all trainings, language, policies, procedures and environment.