

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Comprehensive Mental Health Needs Assessment for Nueces County – Monthly Progress Report, March 2020

In September 2019, Nueces County and the Nueces County Hospital District (NCHD) engaged the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) to conduct a comprehensive mental health needs assessment to inform the county's efforts to improve services for its residents.

We (MMHPI) are pleased to provide a monthly progress report on the status of our assessment and the work we accomplished in March 2020.

Milestones for the Month – March 2020

- During March, our team members collaborated to develop the initial draft needs assessment report, which will be submitted in April 2020. This report synthesizes seven months of research, interviews, and data analysis. Over the past several months, team members traveled to Nueces County dozens of times to meet with stakeholders and project partners in person. We also conducted interviews by phone and used follow-up communications to develop an understanding of the current mental health system and identify recommendations to make improvements. To date, our teams have interviewed nearly 170 people representing multiple organizations in Nueces County, including two law enforcement focus groups that were conducted in March.
- Because of the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, we have made policy changes regarding staff and contractor travel. Our current guidance complies with the federal guidelines on social distancing. As such, we have stopped all work-related travel and in-person meetings until further notice. This policy change will not, however, impact our ability to complete our work since we were able to complete the majority of our in-person field work prior to the current restrictions.

Adult, Criminal Justice, and Veterans

- Members of our Adult Team facilitated a meeting between the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) School of Medicine and the Nueces Center for Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities (NCMHID) to discuss the Community Psychiatry Workforce Expansion project under Senate Bill 11. Under the Community Psychiatry Workforce Expansion project, UTRGV School of Medicine will be able to provide NCMHID with one full-time psychiatrist, who will serve as the academic medical director at NCMHID, and two new resident rotation positions at the facility. These new psychiatry staff will be able to provide treatment for both children and adults. This program will provide NCMHID with additional psychiatric services at no cost.

- During March, members of our Criminal Justice and Veterans Teams co-facilitated two focus groups with officers from the Corpus Christi Police Department and deputies from the Nueces County Sheriff's Office. Findings from these focus groups will be included in our final report.

Child, Youth, and Family

- The Child, Youth, and Family Team wrapped up interviews with local stakeholders; interviewed staff from the Children's Advocacy Center of the Coastal Bend and the Honorable Timothy McCoy, County Court at Law 5; and partnered with the Adult team to interview staff with Bayview Behavioral Hospital.

Deliverables for Month

- We submitted our *Monthly Status Report for February 2020* to Nueces County Judge Barbara Canales and Dr. Jonny Hipp, NCHD administrator and chief executive officer.

Upcoming Deliverables

- April 2020: We will submit a draft report of our comprehensive community mental health needs assessment.
- June 2020: We will submit a final report of our comprehensive community mental health needs assessment.
- June to September 2020: We will provide consultation to review report recommendations and how to implement them.