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SAPC INFORMATION NOTICE 24-06

September 20, 2024

TO: All Youth Substance Use Disorder Service Providers

FROM: Gary Tsai, M.D., Bureau Director 
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau

SUBJECT: BRIDGE FAMILY SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PROGRAM

This is to notify you that the Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau (DPH-SAPC) will be launching the “Building Relationships, Inspiring Development, Growing Engagement (BRIDGE)” Family Supportive Services Program. The BRIDGE program is aimed to enhance providers’ capacity to deliver supportive services for parents, caregivers, and families of youth under 18 years of age who are receiving substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services, inclusive of youth with complex needs, juvenile justice-involved youth, and those released from detention or secured facilities. The BRIDGE program is a collaboration between DPH-SAPC and the Probation Department, funded by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Family involvement in SUD treatment services provides youth with the greatest chance for long-term recovery from the harmful effects of substance use and/or misuse. While early intervention and treatment services benefits for youth were expanded under the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS), services to support caregivers and families, such as one-on-one consultation, parenting support groups, family orientation, and workshops to provide parents and caregivers with the tools and resources to support youth as they are receiving SUD services, are not always available.

To support the growth and focus of services to parents and caregivers, DPH-SAPC will fund a BRIDGE Family Support Specialist (BFSS) staff item, intended to enhance family supportive services of youth in SUD treatment. The BFSS will coordinate and facilitate

supportive services for parents and caregivers that may include one-on-one consultation to help navigate the treatment process, educational sessions, family support groups, and positive family development programs aimed at supporting youth receiving SUD treatment services.

The BFSS may be filled by a Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts (LPHA), License-Eligible LPHA, Certified Peer Support Specialist, a Registered SUD counselor, or a Certified SUD counselor with at least one year of experience providing and/or coordinating family supportive services to youth and/or families. The reimbursement rate for the BFSS position is uniformly set at \$81.07 regardless of practitioner level and credentials.

PROJECT TERM

The BRIDGE Program term is October 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. Subsequent annual renewals will be contingent upon the availability of funds and the program's success in achieving its goals and objectives.

PERSONS TO BE SERVED

The BRIDGE Program aims to assist parents and caregivers of youth receiving SUD treatment at DPH-SAPC contracted youth SUD provider locations.

SPECIFIC SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

The BFSS will collaborate with the SUD treatment team to develop, implement, coordinate, and integrate family supportive services provided to parents and caregivers of youth who are seeking or receiving SUD services as follows:

- **Early Family Engagement:** A range of intentional interventions offered to families and caregivers before the admission of youth into SUD services. These services include meaningful engagement and collaboration with the youth's parent(s)/guardian(s) and when accompanied by the parent/guardian and youth, initial collaboration with other non-family members (e.g., social workers, probation officers, health and mental health counselors, other providers) who are responsible for the care and wellbeing of system-involved youth to ensure successful transitions to SUD treatment services. Early Family Engagement services are intended to enhance engagement with families and caregivers beyond the initial referral or contact to include substantive services such as one-on-one consultation to help caregivers understand and navigate the treatment process, brief intervention and education sessions, coordination of family orientation events to familiarize families with the unique programming and activities available at each agency.
- **Family Education:** Supports the delivery of educational sessions or workshops such as the Early Intervention Caregiver Guide (a supplement for caregivers to the Healthy YOUth Early Intervention curriculum), opioid overdose prevention and naloxone administration training, and other related workshops that equip families and caregivers with tools and strategies to address substance use as a family unit. The goal of the psychoeducational sessions is to enable families to effectively guide and support their youth in accessing and completing treatment with confidence and resilience.

- **Community Outreach and Engagement:** Supports community outreach and engagement efforts designed to raise awareness among families and caregivers about available early intervention and SUD treatment services. This involves conducting informational workshops, and presentations, and facilitating trainings in diverse community settings such as schools, group homes, temporary shelters, community clinics, and other public settings.
- **Family and Caregiver Support Groups:** Facilitates family and caregiver support groups, offering a supportive environment for families grappling with the effects of their loved one's substance use. These support groups enable connections among parents and caregivers with similar lived experiences to offer mutual support, foster learning, and address the challenges of supporting a loved one through the SUD recovery process. Within this safe space, individuals can openly discuss challenges like isolation, shame, stigma, and confusion, while gaining strategies to cope with SUD as a chronic, recurring condition where some young people may not be seeking long-term abstinence.
- **Leadership and Mentoring Program:** Provides structured mentorship and access to diverse opportunities, the program seeks to empower families to develop strong community ties and thrive within their communities. Programming efforts are dedicated to promoting family resiliency and youth development through sustained mentorship that connects families and youth to community supportive services and opportunities such as internships, artistic endeavors, employment options, scholarships, specialized educational programs, and other enrichment activities.
- **Positive Family Development Program:** Supports the hosting or facilitating of strengths-based, person-centered programs to address the needs of individuals by involving their families/caregivers in the recovery process, fostering healing and growth for everyone involved. Programming may include parenting workshops, family-focused abstinence-based social events, academic support, therapeutic activities (e.g., art therapy, yoga, journal writing, and mindfulness programs), diversionary recreation (e.g., sports, games, and supervised outings), and other pro-social activities. The goal of the activities is to encourage the normalization of family time and the prioritization of positive interactions, reinforcing the importance of healthy relationships within the family dynamic.
- **Programming Resources & Supplies:** To support the BRIDGE Program operation, providers may be reimbursed up to \$10,000 during the funding period for programming supplies, and expenditures such as educational materials, transportation, programming equipment (e.g., computers/laptops, books, and reference materials, consumables), and supplies (e.g., art and craft supplies, recreational equipment, board/card games, science technology engineering and mathematic kits and activities, music and performing arts supplies, gardening, cooking, and baking supplies) as well as food, beverages, and non-monetary incentives that directly benefit program participants. All requests for reimbursement for programming resources and supplies are subject to review and approval by DPH-SAPC.

ELIGIBILITY/CONTRACT PROCESS

The BRIDGE Program is open to DPH-SAPC contracted SUD youth treatment providers. To participate in the program, providers must submit a participation attestation form confirming their commitment. The submission deadline for the BRIDGE Program Attestation form (Attachment I) is **no later than September 30, 2024**.

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

The provider is responsible for maintaining a record of services provided as part of the BRIDGE Program, including all relevant data elements entered in the electronic health record system, Sage, for each youth, as applicable. Providers are also required to track the data elements including but not limited to demographics, screenings, referrals, attendance at education sessions, and engagement in program activities for caregivers or parents participating in the BRIDGE program. Further guidance and training on documentation requirements will be provided by DPH-SAPC.

REIMBURSEMENT

Providers may bill for up to 40 hours of services each week for delivering services related to the BRIDGE Program as described above at a staff hour rate of \$81.07/hour for each participating site based on funding allocation approved by DPH-SAPC. Providers must submit the BFSS Invoice (Attachment II) by the 10th of each month to receive reimbursement for costs incurred the prior month.

The invoice must include a narrative justification of activities conducted to support the costs utilizing the "BRIDGE Program Monthly Activity Report" (Attachment III).

Please send invoices and supporting documentation via **secure email** to DPH-SAPC-YSU@ph.lacounty.gov.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For any questions regarding this notice, contact the DPH-SAPC Youth and Family Services Unit, at DPH-SAPC-YSU@ph.lacounty.gov.

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Attachments

c: Michelle Gibson
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