

To: Sylvia Pauling

From: C.A.U.S.E. East Los Angeles Collaborative Project

Date: March 9, 2023

Re: Focus Memorandum – Grant No. (13325377)

In response to the increase need for referral and resource delivery to domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual assault survivors with mental health disabilities in East Los Angeles, we have formed the Collaboration for Access and Understanding for Survivors East L.A. (C.A.U.S.E.). Thanks to the generous support from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Disability Grant Program in 2021, we are able to bring four organizations dedicated to providing culturally-responsive services to survivors with mental health and other disabilities. The CAUSE Collaborative partners are the Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice, Mental Health Advocacy Services, East Los Angeles Women’s Center, and Via Community Health Center (Via Care). The multidisciplinary collaboration will work towards the enhancement of services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault with mental health and other disabilities.

Vision Statement

Survivors with mental health disabilities in East Los Angeles will have access to a seamless continuum of services and care that are trauma-informed, culturally-responsive, and client-centered. Our collaboration will strategically remove barriers to these services, eliminate the risk for re-traumatization and specifically incorporate access to health services, mental health services, legal services, and advocacy that supportively impact their healing and recovery from trauma.

Mission Statement

To achieve our vision, our network of agencies will:

- **COLLABORATE:** Collaborate across the spectrum of service providers to deliver trauma-informed, culturally-responsive, client-centered services for survivors with mental health disabilities.
- **IMPROVE:** Improve navigation of services to promote healing and recovery from trauma in efforts to address systemic barriers within our community.
- **TRAIN:** Ensure on-going training and resources to support organizational staff in order to foster trust and care of our community
- **TRANSFORM:** Transform the safety and accessibility of our organization through policy changes that reflect our values.
- **EMPOWER:** Engage survivors to promote empowerment and self-agency.

Collaboration Partners

Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice: LACLJ's mission is to secure justice for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and empower them to create their own futures. LACLJ was founded in 1973, as part of the then growing immigrant and workers' rights movement, to provide culturally-responsive legal services to the low-income Latine and largely immigrant populations of East L.A. Over time, LACLJ has focused its mission to assist people facing the intersection of some of the most entrenched challenges in our society: low-income, immigrant, women, who are survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. While services are now available to survivors throughout the County, LACLJ is still located in and remains close to its roots in the East L.A. community. LACLJ provides free legal representation to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as victims of human trafficking in legal matters such as restraining orders, custody, immigration relief and victim advocacy in the criminal system. Integrated with these legal services, LACLJ also provides supportive services through its Community Advocacy (CA) Program such as accompaniment, emotional support, navigation, and direct referrals to other service providers.

Mental Health Advocacy Services: MHAS has been a leader in the disability rights movement and specifically in the fight for equal rights for people with mental health disabilities for forty-three years. Through a combination of direct services, impact litigation, policy advocacy, education, and technical assistance, MHAS advocates for the civil rights, full inclusion, and equality of adults and children with mental health disabilities. As a result of its staff's deep-seated knowledge and experience across a broad range of mental health legal issues, MHAS has secured a unique position and ability not only to serve clients whom others cannot (or will not) serve but also to be a highly sought-after technical assistance provider; MHAS annually trains hundreds of attorneys, mental health professionals, consumer and family member groups, and other advocates in mental health law and rights.

East Los Angeles Women's Center: The East Los Angeles Rape and Battering Hotline officially opened its telephone lines to serve the community of the greater East Los Angeles area in 1976. It became the first Spanish language, 24-hour crisis hotline for survivors of sexual assault in Southern California. ELAWC offers crisis intervention and mental health services, clinical and therapeutic parenting programs to women with children affected by sexual assault and domestic violence. ELAWC also offers the following services: housing, certified volunteer training, sexual assault hospital accompaniment & advocacy, Promotora interpersonal violence training, and hotline services. In addition, ELAWC is the Rape Crisis Center for this community.

Via Community Health Center: Via Care Community Health Center (Via Care) was founded in 2010 to address increasing lack of access to healthcare for low-income residents of East Los Angeles. Originally a small facility with one medical provider serving 2,600 patients, in the past four years Via Care has grown into a full-service 501c3 Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) safety-net health care provider serving patients of all ages by offering culturally and linguistically appropriate medical, dental, behavioral health, and supportive services. Through its network of eleven clinics, Via Care offers primary health care services regardless of

insurance, immigration status or an individual's ability to pay, and is well-known in the community for opening its doors to the most vulnerable low-income residents in the service area, particularly undocumented immigrants. In 2020, Via Care provided 51,416 medical, dental and behavioral health visits to 11,800 low-income adults and children. Via Care offers an integrated mental health program for uninsured and underinsured low-income adults that combines individual treatment, psycho-educational support groups, self-management, and care management in a primary care setting.

Disability Grant Progress

The CAUSE Project Collaboration Charter has been completed and was submitted to OVW for review on March 9, 2023. We began meeting virtually as a collaborative on September 12, 2022, and we meet weekly for one hour. Our project director meets bi-monthly with our TA provider at Activating Change, we attend all TA events, and OVW trainings. We are preparing for the next phase of assessment pending OVW approval of our charter. In the meantime, we continue to build our partnership by cross-training each other.

Our Focus Population

The project proposal called for partner agencies to focus on domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking survivors with mental health disabilities in East Los Angeles. Disabilities include individuals with intellectual, developmental, physical, and mental health disabilities in East Los Angeles, a predominately Latine community with a high population of underserved survivors.

Capacity to Create Change

All four partner agencies have shown the ability to fulfill the goals of this partnership and create change within their organizations. Decision makers in each organization remain involved through key team members from each organization. Each organization is excited to make lasting changes together, in a trauma-informed and culturally-responsive service mechanism that ensures equality and equity to all.