



**California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)
988-Crisis Workgroup 4: Communications Meeting 1
Meeting Summary
May 23, 2024, | Virtual Meeting**

Meeting Materials and Recording are available on the [988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group website](#). Public Zoom chat from the meeting is included as an Appendix to this summary.

For additional information and resources, please see the following sites:

- [CalHHS Behavioral Health Crisis Care Continuum Plan \(CCC-P\)](#)
- [Presentation on the CCC-P](#) from February 16th, 2023 by Stephanie Welch, the Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health at CalHHS. (Note: Stephanie’s presentation begins at 54:03 and ends at 1:30:30. The Q&A extends until 1:46:30.)

Workgroup Members in Attendance:

- **Ashley Mills***, CDPH
- **Adrienne Shilton***, California Alliance of Child and Family Services
- **Angela Vasquez***, The Children’s Partnership
- **Ariella Cuellar***, California LGBTQ Health & Human Services Network
- **Christie Gonzalez***, WellSpace
- **David Grady***, State of California
- **Debra Roth***, Disability Rights
- **Jeanine Gaines***, The Social Changery
- **John Donoghue***, County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health Services
- **Julie Kornike***, Didi Hirsch
- **Kenna Chic***, Project Lighthouse
- **Lishaun Francis***, Children Now

- **Mayu Iwatani***, Orange County Dept of Education
- **Michael Tabak***, San Mateo Sheriff's Office
- **Stephen Sparling***, California Coalition for Youth

Project Staff in Attendance:

- **Ali Vangrow***, CalHHS
- **Anh Thu Bui***, CalHHS
- **Hailey Shapiro***, CalHHS
- **Betsy Uhrman***, Health Management Associates
- **Nicholas Williams***, Health Management Associates
- **Kris Greco-Thompson***, HMA Subcontractor

Workgroup Members Not in Attendance:

- **Chrissy Corbin**, CDPH
- **Elizabeth Basnett**, EMSA
- **Hernando Garzon**, EMSA
- **Ivan Bhardwaj**, DHCS
- **Jennifer Oliphant**, Two Feathers Native American Family Services
- **Jevon Wilkes**, California Coalition for Youth
- **Katherine Katcher**, Yurok Tribe
- **Kenyon Jordon**, Buckelew Programs
- **Kiran Savage-Sangwan**, CPEHN
- **Miguel Serricchio**, LSQ Funding Group
- **Miriam Goldblum**, Psychiatrist
- **Tara Gamboa-Eastman**, Steinberg Institute
- **Taun Hall**, The Miles Hall Foundation

*Attended virtually

Review of Agenda and Session Objectives

Betsy Uhrman, Associate Principal, Health Management Associates, began the workgroup meeting by explaining Zoom functionality, noting Workgroup 4 Meeting 1 objectives, and introducing the co-chairs. She then provided an overview on how to submit public comments and discussed the meeting code of conduct.

Review of Workgroup 4 Meeting 1

Betsy Uhrman noted that the workgroup discussions build upon input from the Policy Advisory Group meeting last December and from meetings of Workgroups 1-3 (winter 2024). Kris Greco-Thompson spoke to formative research regarding how we use communication to build trust with individuals and communities through customized, targeted strategies.

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Public Health Communication Strategies Presentation

Jessica Hwang, Public Awareness Section Chief, Substance and Addiction Prevention Branch, presented on public health communications strategy. She walked through CDPH's process of public messaging development and refinement and then showcased two statewide media campaigns: Overdose Prevention and Education Media Campaign, and Mind over Marijuana, which seeks to discourage teen cannabis use. Sarah Mann, Suicide Prevention Program Section Chief, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, gave a presentation on the "Never a Bother" youth suicide prevention media campaign, and identified key takeaways for 988 planning, including the importance of sharing real-life positive stories.

Discussion 1: Messaging: How can we reach populations that may be reluctant to call 988?

Workgroup members were asked to provide input on considerations to support public awareness and use of 988, broadly, as well as for specific populations. Kris Greco-Thompson provided definitions of key terms related to the discussion:

- Messages (What) – messaging and terms to communicate with clarity while establishing trust
- Forums (How/Where) – those platforms, publications, websites, physical locations and environments where messages can or should be made available
- Voices (Who/Messengers) – individuals who already serve as trusted resource or known personality who can speak/represent messaging across broad or specific populations

Workgroup members noted that messaging should:

- Be as transparent as possible about what to expect when calling 988
- Make clear the possibility of law enforcement involvement
 - There is significant concern among certain communities about potential law enforcement involvement
 - Laying out specific situations that would lead to law enforcement involvement in a 988 call could be helpful in alleviating caller hesitancy
- Make clear what third-party callers can expect
- Actively address/mitigate concerns around privacy and confidentiality
 - Someone who ran a chat line mentioned that people want to know what will happen to them if they use a chat line, including whether their information is being saved, what happens to any identifiable information shared, etc.
- Provide Clarity on how to support someone over 18 years of age
- Use words and images that help to normalize help-seeking behavior
- Underscore prevention messages (e.g., “You don’t have to be in active crisis to reach out to 988)
- Utilize testimonials, positive stories

Related to forums, workgroup members noted the value of:

- Engaging media, including language-specific media, as partners
- Leveraging places where people regularly frequent– notably schools, healthcare settings, Regional Centers, corner stores/fast food, etc.

On the topic of voices/spokespeople, workgroup members shared:

- Leverage trusted community messengers, including community-based organizations. This includes engaging CBOs to create and deliver messages (with dedicated funding to do so).
- Uplift the voice of lived experience (consistent with ethical storytelling policies)
- Don’t underestimate the power of word of mouth

Workgroup members provided specific suggestions related to communicating

with specific populations of focus (i.e., BIPOC, LGBTQ+, Youth, Older Adults, and Individuals with Developmental Disabilities). Even as they provided specific suggestions, they also shared that:

- No group is a monolith; people hold many identities
- Communication strategies need to account for pervasiveness of neurodiversity among potential callers
- Targeted messaging should account for language and cultural needs and norms of the different populations of focus; imagery and messaging should reflect the diversity of our communities
- One workgroup member noted that people who use drugs are another important population to consider for targeted messaging.

Discussion 2: How can we communicate the difference between 988 and 911?

Kris Greco-Thompson initiated Discussion 2, inviting input on how distinguish when to call 988 and when to call 911. Workgroup members shared:

- One workgroup member noted that caregivers have been told to call 911 if a person with a developmental disability is in crisis, resulting in unsuccessful interventions in some cases
- One member asked whether we're able to say that police won't show up if you call 988; absent that assurance, we shouldn't say it's a warmline if that's not the case
- One workgroup member shared that there may be benefits to putting distance between 988 and 911 in our communications to increase caller comfort
- A moderator noted that CalOES' Technical Advisory Board is working on questions related to interoperability between the two systems; comments from this workgroup will be shared in other settings

Public Comment Period

Betsy Uhrman shared instructions for how to make public comment and said that comments can also be submitted at any time via email at AB988Info@chhs.ca.gov.

There were no public comment sign-ups.

Meeting Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Betsy Uhrman mentioned that the next workgroup meeting will be held on Thursday, June 13, from 1 to 3pm.

APPENDIX I: PUBLIC ZOOM CHAT

14:01:56 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

Welcome and thanks for joining. We'll get started in just a few minutes.

14:03:51 From Devon Schechinger to Everyone:

Welcome everyone!

14:07:48 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

Please direct any questions or public comments to AB988Info@chhs.ca.gov

More information about the Policy Advisory Group and Workgroups, including meeting recordings and summaries, can be found here:

<https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/committees/988-crisis-policy-advisory-group/>

14:36:10 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

CYBHI = CA Youth Behavioral Health Initiative

14:43:50 From Ariela Cuellar (she/her) - CA LGBTQ HHS Network to Everyone:

Thank you

14:43:52 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

ACES =Adverse Childhood Experiences

14:50:17 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

We'll be taking notes live. If we misrepresent your comments, please do let us know out loud or in the chat. Thank you!

14:57:49 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

Speaking order: Deb, Ruqayya, Ariela

14:58:33 From Angela Vazquez - The Children's Partnership to Hosts and panelists:

+1x100 to Kenna's comments

14:58:37 From Angela Vazquez - The Children's Partnership to Hosts and panelists:

Transparency is key

14:59:53 From Adrienne Shilton - CA Alliance to Everyone:

Want to support Kenna's comments, especially on the role of this group

15:05:55 From Betsy Uhrman - HMA to Everyone:

Ariela, David, Julie, Lishaun

15:06:10 From AnhThu Bui - CalHHS to Everyone:

Thanks for your comment, Deb. Can you provide feedback to how website info can be improved? The California FAQs were posted back in 2022 and we would like to update website.

15:07:54 From John Donoghue - County of Santa Clara BH Services to Everyone:

very much agreed on local community messengers

15:08:10 From AnhThu Bui - CalHHS to Everyone:

In terms of planning for website, that is a discussion in process and thus feedback from the workgroup and advisory group would be important in terms of priority and resource allocation.

15:09:12 From Ruqayya Ahmad – CPEHN to Hosts and panelists:

+1 to providing specific instances that would lead to police involvement

15:13:13 From Betsy Uhrman – HMA to Everyone:

Noting here that Trevor Project is represented on the Policy Advisory Group.

15:15:05 From John Donoghue – County of Santa Clara BH Services to Everyone:

Forums: We've aimed to use as many touchpoints as possible and in various languages represented in our county – static digital programmatic ads, video programmatic ads, YouTube video ads, public digital display boards (at clinics, grocery stores, gas stations, gyms, commerce centers, etc.) streaming TV, local cable TV (especially in-language), streaming audio, local radio (especially in-language), billboards, buses, bus stations, light rail stations, and print materials (wallet cards, posters, tear-off flyers). Also including info presentations to community orgs, care providers, and others. Getting ads into schools where possible. Our cultural communities also share that getting info to churches and places of worship is critical

15:18:09 From John Donoghue – County of Santa Clara BH Services to Everyone:

Second Julie on in-language media. We've worked with Telemundo and Univision for Spanish, local Chinese radio, and local Vietnamese radio and TV

15:19:12 From Angela Vazquez – The Children's Partnership to Hosts and panelists:

Locations – fast food and corner stores, where kids go after school/on their way home with their friends

15:19:14 From David Grady – State Council on Developmental Disability, Central Costa to Hosts and panelists:

When sharing information through schools be sure to include Special Education students.

15:20:23 From Betsy Uhrman – HMA to Everyone:

Speaking order: Ashley, Stephen, Rachael

15:23:11 From Ariela Cuellar (she/her) – CA LGBTQ HHS Network to Everyone:

+1 to preventative messaging

15:28:24 From Ashley Mills – CDPH to Hosts and panelists:

Information regarding MH and police training standards:

<https://post.ca.gov/mental-health-training-in-law-enforcement>

15:34:58 From Ariela Cuellar (she/her) – CA LGBTQ HHS Network to Everyone:

+1 to Kenna's comment/Q

15:39:43 From Nicholas Williams to Everyone:

Flagging here CalOES has a website and open meeting process for your reference: <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/logistics-management/public-safety-communications/ca-9-1-1-emergency-communications-branch/ca-9-8-8-information/>