

Discussion Questions

Understanding MHSA (10 Minutes):

- Start with basic questions to gauge participants' familiarity with MHSA.
- Ask if they know what MHSA funding is and invite them to share their thoughts.

Example: *“Let’s start by talking about what you already know about the MHSA. There are no wrong answers, and we aren’t expecting anyone to be an expert on the topic. We just want to understand what folks might already be aware of and the impressions they have.”*

Guiding Questions:

- Let’s start with some basic information. Have any of you encountered the term "Mental Health Services Act" before today, even if you weren’t entirely sure what it meant?
- For those who have heard of the MHSA before today, can you briefly explain where or how you heard about it?
- When you think of MHSA funded programs and services, what comes to mind?
- Are there any specific aspects of MHSA funding that you’d like to learn more about during our discussion today?

MHSA's Impact (20 Minutes):

- Discuss the impact of MHSA on the community.
- Encourage participants to share any personal experiences or stories related to MHSA-funded services.

Example: *“Let’s go a little deeper and talk about what kind of impact you see MHSA having in your community or in your life.”*

Guiding Questions:

- Have you or someone you know ever interacted with mental health services, including those funded by MHSA (Mental Health Services Act)? Are you comfortable using services like MHSA? Can you share any experiences or stories related to these services?
- Are you willing to seek services for mental health if you know someone who needs these services? What factors influence your decision to seek help for yourself or support others in seeking help?
- Have you or anyone you know benefited directly from services funded by MHSA? If so, could you share a bit about that experience?
- What specific services or programs do you believe have been positively impacted by MHSA funding in our community? Are there any success stories or examples you can highlight?

- Have you noticed any changes or improvements in the accessibility and quality of mental health services in our community since the implementation of MHSA? If so, could you describe those changes?
- When thinking about MHSA-funded services, what words or phrases come to mind? What emotions or feelings are associated with these services?

Community Engagement & Communications (30 Minutes):

- Provide additional information about MHSA and services in San Mateo County
- Ask what services they would like to learn more about.
- Understand where participants would want to hear about services.
- Explore participants' needs and expectations regarding mental health services.

Example: *“I’m going to share some more information about the MHSA and the services it funds in San Mateo County. I’m interested in learning which of these services you’re interested in learning more about, and where and where/how you’d like to learn about them.*

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) was passed by California voters in 2004. The act is funded by a one percent income tax on personal income in excess of \$1 million per year. The primary objective of the act is to transform California’s behavioral health system to better serve individuals with, and at risk of, serious mental health issues, and their families. The MHSA funds many services in San Mateo County, but below are a few you may or may not already know about:

- *Health Ambassadors Program*
- *Crisis Hotline*
- *Pride Center*
- *Cariño Project*
- *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*
- *323*

Guiding Questions:

- Which of these services interest you the most?
- Is there a type of program or service you wish were available for you or your family?
- When seeking information about mental health services or programs, where do you typically go to learn more? Are there specific sources or platforms you trust and rely on?
- Would you prefer to receive information about MHSA services through community events, online resources, social media, healthcare providers, schools, or other channels? What would be the most effective way to reach you and others in the community?
- Are there any community organizations or groups that you believe are particularly effective at disseminating information about mental health services or advocating for positive changes in this area?
- How would people like to receive information about mental health services funded by MHSA? What's the best way to reach you and your community?

Transition to Closing

Closing (10 Minutes):

- Summarize the main points discussed during the session.
- Thank participants for their valuable input and contributions.
- Provide contact information for further inquiries or feedback.
- Stipends will be provide in the amount of \$60

Example: *"Thank you all for sharing your thoughts and experiences today. Your input is incredibly valuable in our efforts to increase access to mental health services in San Mateo County. If you have any more thoughts or questions, please feel free to reach out to us. We will follow up with information about your stipend for participation."*