

Initiative to Improve the Cultural Appropriateness, Utility, and Reporting of the Mental Health NOMS By the Pacific Jurisdictions:

Summary of Workgroup Discussions and Proposed Plan of Action

Overall Goal:	Improve the cultural appropriateness and utility of the mental health national outcome measures to the Pacific Jurisdictions.
Short-term Task:	To identify and recommend modifications to the current URS data collection and reporting specifications for the following four mental health national outcome measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Living Situation • Social Connectedness • Criminal Justice Involvement
WG Meeting Dates:	December 9, 2008 February 24, 2009 May 11, 2009 May 27, 2009
WG Participants:	American Samoa, Guam, Marshall Islands, Mariana Islands (CNMI), Micronesia, Palau, CMHS, HRSA, NRI
Timeline:	Piloting of recommended modifications: Fiscal Year 2010 Reporting of the modified NOMS: Fiscal Year 2011

APPROACH

REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH PACIFIC JURISDICTION PARTICIPATED IN MEETING DISCUSSIONS. EACH NOM WAS TABLED SEPARATELY AND A DISCUSSION GUIDE WAS PREPARED BY THE NRI FOR FACILITATION. THE DISCUSSION PROCEEDED BY CONSIDERING EACH JURISDICTION'S UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES AND THEN FINDING A VIABLE STANDARD REPORTING PROCESS. IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION, THE GROUP TOUCHED ON AREAS THAT WOULD COMPLEMENT THE SUBSTANCE ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS. FOLLOW-UP E-MAILS WERE SENT TO THE GROUP SUMMARIZING THE DISCUSSIONS, ISSUES, AND AGREEMENTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS.

EMPLOYMENT

Consensus: WG members agreed to expand the URS definition of 'Employed' while retaining the URS definition for the 'Unemployed' and the 'Not in the Labor Force'. The expanded definition for Employed is given below:

"Employed includes all persons who meet the definition of competitive employment and those engaged in productive activities. A person who is engaged in productive activities (regardless of the amount of time spent) from which subsistence living for the

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person and/or his/her family is derived either in monetary or non-monetary form will be reported as employed. Productive activities include only farming and fishing.”

The WG also agreed on the following:

- To retain comparability with other States, the reporting of ‘Employed’ status will be categorized into two: competitive employment and engaged in productive activities.
- Current definition of productive activities will be limited to farming and fishing. This definition, however, is subject to review and further refinement as more productive activities are identified as significant sources of subsistence living in the Pacific Jurisdictions.
- Employment status will be reported only for adults, categorized by demographic categories: age, gender, and diagnosis (reportable in Table 4.1).
- The time construct currently used in collecting the employment status will remain the same, as follows:
 - American Samoa: point in time (question asked at the time of admission)
 - CNMI: point in time (question asked at the time of admission)
 - Micronesia: point in time (question asked at admission and every visit henceforth)
 - Palau: point in time (question asked at every encounter)
 - Guam: point in time (question asked at every encounter)

Discussion item/s (for the June 17 meeting):

- Revised reporting template, URS Table 4. (see attachment 1)
- Piloting of other productive activities (see attachment 2)

Proposed time frame:

July-December 2009:	PJs plan for adjustment in existing data collection and reporting processes using the expanded employment definition and piloting of other productive activities. This includes revision of existing data collection tools, IT/database (re)programming, and training of staff.
January-April 2010:	Implementation of the plan
May 2010	Evaluation of the implementation results
June 2010:	Reporting of PJ’s readiness to report the modified NOM

LIVING SITUATION

Consensus: WG members agreed to expand the categories for living situation to capture persons who temporarily seek shelter from families, relatives, or friends. It was argued that this culturally-accepted living arrangement across the Pacific Jurisdictions conceals the at-risk (for homeless) group or those who roam around to

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seek shelter from families or friends. Currently, these individuals are reported living in private residence.

In order to address this issue, the WG agreed to have sub categories for Private Residence: (1) Independent living – characterized by *stable housing* with fixed address and (2) Dependent living – characterized by *unstable housing*, manifested by frequent address change or roaming around families, relatives, or friends for the primary purpose of finding shelter.

Discussion item/s (for the June 17 meeting):

- Review/finalize the proposed reporting categories
- Revised reporting template, URS Table 15 (see attachment 3)

Proposed time frame:

July-December 2009: PJs plan for adjustment in existing data collection and reporting processes using the added categories. This includes revision of existing data collection tools, IT/database (re)programming, developing a crosswalk if data are currently collected in some capacity, and training of staff.

January-April 2010: Implementation of the plan

May 2010 Evaluation of the implementation results

June 2010: Reporting of PJ's readiness to report the modified NOM

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Consensus: WG members agreed to conduct consumer focus group prior to revising the URS-recommended survey questions for measuring a consumer's perception of social connectedness. WG members feel the need to first understand how different ethnic groups within the Jurisdiction would define the measure of 'social connectedness,' gather their input on the measurement, and discuss its utility to improve the system.

CNMI will conduct the first consumer focus group and will report the results to the WG.

Discussion item/s (for the June 17 meeting):

- Consider the results and lessons learned from the CNMI consumer focus group in designing and planning other Jurisdictions' focus group
- Discuss objectives for focus group and time line
- Discuss technical assistance requirements

Proposed time frame:

July-October 2009: PJs plan for conducting focus group. PJs request for technical assistance, develop logistical plan for conducting the focus group, and develop plan/format for reporting of results.

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Nov-Dec 2009:	Implementation of the plan
Jan-February 2010	Reporting and evaluation of focus group results
March-May 2010	Draft a plan and pilot revised measurement tool (survey questions)
June 2010:	Reporting of PJ's readiness to report the modified NOM

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT

Consensus: WG members expressed difficulty in implementing the current URS-recommended criminal justice questions in the survey. Consumers felt that these are invasive questions. The discussion focused on alternate ways to collect the arrest data. CNMI can get the data from the criminal justice system but that is not the case for the other Jurisdictions like Palau. Another method that American Samoa found feasible to pilot test is through asking these questions as part of the (consumer) assessment.

There was also a discussion on the need for CMHS to revisit this NOM. A more appropriate measure for the Pacific Jurisdictions is the outcome of diversion rather than arrest. Majority of consumers who are referred to the criminal justice system are usually referred back to the Emergency Room for treatment. Dr. Olinda Gonzalez will discuss this issue with CMHS Management and report back to the group.

Discussion item/s (for the June 17 meeting):

- Dr. Gonzalez' report on a possible consideration for a different outcome measure
- Continue the discussion on piloting alternate data collection methods for arrest

Proposed time frame:

July-December 2009:	PJs plan for adjustment in existing data collection and reporting processes using the new outcome measure and/or the URS recommended criminal justice involvement questions. This includes revision of existing data collection tools, IT/database (re)programming, developing a crosswalk if data are currently collected in some capacity, and training of staff.
January-April 2010:	Implementation of the plan
May 2010	Evaluation of the implementation results
June 2010:	Reporting of PJ's readiness to report the modified NOM

IN THE COURSE OF DISCUSSING THE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REVIEW HOW THESE EFFORTS WOULD COMPLEMENT THE SUBSTANCE ABUSE REQUIREMENTS. THE INTENT IS TO HAVE ONE DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM FOR THE JURISDICTION THAT COMPLEMENTS BOTH PROGRAMS.