

National Association for County Community and Economic Development  
Awards of Excellence Committee

**2018 Awards of Excellence**

8/17/2018 deadline

**Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles**  
**Promoting Healthy Communities for Older Adults- Los Angeles, CA**

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**Entry Form** [top](#)

**1. Enter the name of the agency or agencies responsible for the program entry:**

*This information will be on the plaque if your entry wins the award.*

Community Development Commission/Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles

**2. Indicate the brief title of the program or name of the project to be considered for an award of excellence, using the exact wording that you would like to appear on a plaque, should your entry win:**

Promoting Healthy Communities for Older Adults

**3. Indicate Congressional District(s) served by project and name(s) of U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators:**

47, 40, 28, 33, 25, 28, 32, 38, 44

**4. Indicate the awards category for which you are applying:**

*REMINDER – Multiple categories require multiple processing fees.*

- Community Development
- Economic Development
- Homeless Coordination/Assistance
- Affordable Housing
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program
- Planning/Policy/Program Management
- Innovation

## Program/Project Summary

### **5. Briefly describe the problem, the innovative solution, and results.**

*This brief summary is important and will be used to describe your program/project in NACCED's awards packet, on the web site, and in any communications with Congress or the Administration.*

The Community Development Commission/Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (CDC/HACoLA) owns and manages Public and Affordable Housing throughout Los Angeles County, housing 6,396 residents with limited means, of which 1,433 are older adults. As the population ages, CDC/HACoLA has focused efforts on promoting healthy aging in place for older adults living in public housing. With their expertise in mental health and supportive services, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) has provided training to CDC/HACoLA employees, and facilitated monthly consultation meetings for technical assistance. In addition, LACDMH has co-located service providers at all 13 senior public housing developments to improve outcomes for older adults through health and wellness workshops, clinical services, resources, and referrals.

## Problem or Need

### **6. What circumstances or situation in your county stimulated the need for this program or project? What were the objectives in designing the program or project?**

Recognizing the need to promote healthy aging in its public housing communities, the CDC/HACoLA partnered with LACDMH to enable residents to age independently, with as little interruption as possible in daily living.

By 2030, it is estimated that Los Angeles County will have three million residents over the age of 60. The County of Los Angeles Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services Department, the City of Los Angeles Department of Aging, and the Los Angeles County Commission on Aging collaborated to conduct a large-scale needs assessment of older adults in Los Angeles County. The study provided an understanding of the strengths and needs of older adults as reported by the Los Angeles County's assessment participation study. This report enabled agencies, like CDC/HACoLA, to fully understand and serve older adult needs, and to groom its employees to effectively interact and engage with older adults living in public housing. As Los Angeles County's population ages, CDC/HACoLA seeks to engage LACDMH to ensure healthy aging programs are in place for older adults in public housing communities. With this in mind, CDC/HACoLA and LACDMH collaborated to address the mental health needs of older adults. The implementation of this program address several challenges associated with engaging older adults including: stigma related to mental health, isolation, language barriers, and establishing trust.

## Solution

### **7. Describe the critical elements of your project/program and how they remedy the problem or address the need described above. Include any key steps, decisions, partnerships, etc. How were the objectives met? Describe the innovation in this solution.**

The program model consisted of three implementation steps: 1) Co-location of mental health providers in public housing communities to deliver mental health support services completed by February 2017 in all 13 senior public housing sites; 2) Regularly scheduled consultation meetings to address case scenarios that place older adults at-risk for eviction; and 3) Training for CDC/HACoLA employees to better prepare them for the changing needs of older adults.

1. Co-location: Initially, CDC/HACoLA prioritized six of its 13 senior public housing sites needing mental health support at Lancaster Homes, Nueva Maravilla, Carmelitos, Orchard Arms, West Knoll, and Whittier Manor. LACDMH identified service providers in proximity to each housing location. Planning meetings were held with LACDMH, CDC/HACoLA, and the service providers to discuss needs of the populations, resources already in place, service provider capacity, and the spectrum of services offered. CDC/HACoLA provided private office space to the LACDMH service provider through the execution of a Community Space Use Agreement which stipulated the office hours and types of services at an agreed amount of time each week on site.

2. Consultation Meetings: LACDMH held monthly conference calls and for CDC/HACoLA employees to discuss case scenarios on pressing older adult issues or behaviors that may lead to eviction. During the calls, CDC/HACoLA worked with LACDMH addressing problematic cases, and proposed recommendations to maintain and promote healthy aging and living for the older adult.

3. Training: Providing mental health trainings to CDC/HACoLA's workforce strengthens the employees' ability to interact and engage with older adults who may be experiencing symptoms of mental illness. LACDMH presented a list of educational presentations to CDC/HACoLA and presented on topics including: Mental Health in Older Adults 101, Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR), and How to Manage Difficult Interpersonal Situations.

Through the partnership CDC/HACoLA and LACDMH provided a liaison to help steer the partnership, be the primary

gatekeepers for inquiries, employee trainings, and ensure staff are present for call consultations. LACDMH worked closely with its service providers in capacity building to include older adults in public housing into their existing contracts.

### Costs and Sources of Financing

**8. Describe in as much detail as possible the source(s) and use(s) of funds to construct the project or start up the program, as well as the sources and uses of ongoing operating funds if applicable. Describe any innovative or unusual cost savings or financing techniques.**

LACDMH views the collaboration as an excellent opportunity to offer Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention services to CDC/HACoLA residents at risk for, or with, mental illness. Leveraging mental health services to sustain housing, positively impacts a sense of safety, stability, and well-being. LACDMH and CDC/HACoLA operating costs include existing staff time to act as liaisons for this project. LACDMH contributed materials for staff trainings and trainers. CDC/HACoLA contributed specific work in outreach of older adults to participate in activities, as well as free space for service providers to provide mental health activities. The LACDMH providers utilized existing funds to provide an array of services to engage the CDC/HACoLA residents. No additional funding for services was needed for this project.

### Results

**9. Describe the tangible results of the program. Describe how the project or program will be sustained over the long term. If the project or program is not currently operating, please explain why not. How or why do you think important aspects of this project or program might be adaptable to other communities?**

To date, the collaboration has successfully co-located service providers at all the 13 senior public housing sites. Between February 2017 and February 2018, the service providers have positively impacted 300 public housing older adults. Through clinical services, outreach, and engagement, group activities such as Healthy Aging Bingo, and the facilitation of 26 mental wellness forums (i.e. hoarding, preserving your memory, grief and loss, holiday blues, coping with change, and resiliency, etc.), many of the older adults have reported a reduction in isolation by themselves and neighbors, and an overall satisfaction with the quality of activities delivered by the service providers. LACDMH has facilitated 14 consultation calls that resulted in the discussion of 20 case scenarios.

In one case, an 87-year old, male, public housing resident, was in jeopardy of eviction due to extreme hoarding which resulted in several failed housekeeping inspections. LACDMH referred the resident for services, where he has begun to trust the therapist. Cleaning services were provided to the resident, this is an ongoing case where therapy continues and risk for eviction is low due to the interventions of LACDMH. Finally, 300 CDC/HACoLA employees have benefited from trainings provided by LACDMH. Employees reported increased knowledge about community resources and the capacity to identify residents who may need additional support related to mental health concerns.

CDC/HACoLA and LACDMH continue to collaborate on combining existing resources to maximize cost effectiveness in serving the needs of Los Angeles County residents living in public housing. Due to the success of the collaboration to promote healthy communities for older adults, current planning is underway to expand the collaboration to include families, children, and adults in four of CDC/HACoLA's large family housing developments. This partnership allows for both entities to address concerns in a concerted effort to meet the community's mental health needs and promote a strong system of care for public housing residents.

### Application Questions [top](#)

### Documents [top](#)

#### Documents Requested \*

Photos/Visual Documentation

#### Required? Attached Documents \*



[DMH Yoga](#)

[Managing Your Medications Seminar](#)

[DMH Staff session with a public housing resident](#)

[DMH seminar for older adults](#)

\* ZoomGrants™ is not responsible for the content of uploaded documents.

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