

## **Tri-City Mental Health Services Governing Board**

League of Women Voters of Mt. Baldy Area

Observer Report by David V. Estrada

2019 to 2020

Tri-City Mental Health Services is a municipal district Joint Powers Authority (JPA) organized in 1960 by the cities of Pomona, Claremont, and La Verne. Pursuant to the JPA Agreement Tri-City is governed by a Board of Directors (“Governing Board”) composed of seven members. Members of the board include four city council members selected by their respective cities and three members appointed by the three cities.

Tri-City MHS’s jurisdiction has a population of 220,000 and serves over 10,000 persons a year. Operations are funded by the Mental Health Services Act, Medi-Cal (Medicaid) and the 1991 Realignment under the Bronson-McCorquodale Act. Strengthening the community’s capacity for wellbeing, recovery and mental health is the foundation of Tri-City programming. Available services include but are not limited to prevention and early intervention services, psychotherapy, crisis support, clinical case management, medication support, peer support, linkage and referral, vocational training and support, socialization activities, and community outreach and training.

### **The current members of the Governing Board include:**

1. Robin Carder, (La Verne Council), Chair
2. Jed Leano, Esq., (Claremont Council), Vice-Chair
3. Ronald T. Vera, Esq. (Claremont), Board Member
4. Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, (Pomona Council), Board Member
5. Carolyn Cockrell, (La Verne), Board Member
6. Benita DeFrank, (Pomona), Board Member
7. Vacant (Pomona Council), Board Member

### **Staff in regular attendance:**

1. Toni Navarro, Executive Director
2. Diana Acosta, Chief Financial Officer
3. Nancy Gill, Chief Operations
4. Angela Igrisan, Chief Clinical Officer
5. Dr. Seeyam Teimoori, Medical Director
6. Rimmi Hundal, Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services
7. Natalie Majors-Stewart, Chief Compliance Officer

Regular meetings of the Tri-City Mental Health Services Governing Board are scheduled at 5:00 P.M. on the third Wednesday of the month. In response to mitigating the spread of COVID-19, the Governing Board is holding its public meetings via teleconference. The public seeking access to address and observe the Board proceedings can only do so through remote electronic means, in accordance with California Governor Executive Order N-29-20. Meeting agendas, all supporting documents and meeting minutes from the prior month are published in a timely manner.

The Board follows appropriate government standards and operates transparently. The members of the Governing Board come prepared and are well engaged in all aspects of the agenda. Various administrative staff and front-line workers attend all meetings.

The year 2020 marks 60 years of service by Tri-City Mental Health to the cities of Pomona, Claremont and La Verne, a major milestone for any public institution. Among its many initiatives, Tri-City now provides **Community Services and Supports** with direct services to individuals with severe mental illness. This includes their Full Service Partnership program which has increased in overall enrollment and increased in clients entering services with more medically based needs. The **Community Navigators** program has noted an increase in homelessness in this community. The **Tri-City Wellness Center** has a high rate of success in their employment placement services. The **Supplemental Crisis Services** program provides after hours and weekend support to individuals in crisis and guides them to the most appropriate care. Through the **Field Capable Clinical Services for Older Adults** program, mental health services are provided to older adults at their home, senior centers and medical facilities. The **Tri-City Housing Division** serves individuals with mental health disabilities who are currently homeless or at risk to find and maintain permanent supportive housing. Through their **Prevention and Early Intervention** program they help to identify childhood trauma, early psychosis and provide early intervention. **Community Mental Health Trainers** offer trainings including Mental Health First Aid, Non-Suicidal Self-Harm and parenting classes.

Tri-City Mental Health serves the cities it represents in close collaboration with residents through a system of care that enhances mental and emotional wellbeing. Their annual extensive Stakeholder Process engages hundreds of residents. Stakeholders are divided into workgroups and embedded throughout the three cities for convenience and to encourage attendance. This community based planning process brings a fresh perspective to identify the needs and priorities of the three cities.

COVID-19 will continue to be a significant risk to this community until such time that there is a vaccine. In response to the death of George Floyd, Tri-City continues to evaluate how people can manage difficult emotions related to racial injustice, health disparities, systemic racism and coping with the pandemic. Tri-City is committed to closely evaluating the expected rise in the mental health needs in this community as a result of these current events.

I am proud to report that this great public services organization continues to deliver the highest quality services and continues to operate in a professional and transparent manner. The Governing Board promotes an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

#### **League of Women Voters of California Positions on Government:**

The priorities of the Tri-City Mental Health Governing Board continue to parallel the LWV position in their support for an adequately funded mental health system that provides comprehensive services for all and places emphasis on meeting the needs of the mentally ill, children and the homeless.