

**Name:** Aspen Burnett, LCSW

**Professional Title, Organization:** Director of Behavioral Health, JWCH

**CHIP Title:** Wesley Behavioral Health and Wellness Center

**Project Description:**

Development of a Behavioral Health and Wellness Center that would provide comprehensive services and coordinated Behavioral Health Care by establishing a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) to reduce health disparities.

The program will engage people who are experiencing homelessness, unstably housed or residents of Skid Row downtown/Metro area of Los Angeles. The programs focus will be on people of all ages and their families who maybe experiencing serious mental illness, substance use disorder, and other Behavior issues. Including maladaptive Behavioral patterns related to chronic health conditions.

The center will provide treatment that is patient centered, trauma informed, recovery oriented, and integration of physical and behavioral care that will serve the whole person.

**Key Findings and Lessons Learned:**

The project is in its beginning stages of development. In 2022, JWCH received a \$7 million dollar grant from the state of CA to assist agencies with infrastructure to address homelessness and health care delivery reform and strengthen the Social Safety Net. They were awarded a 2<sup>nd</sup> grant from SAMHSA for \$4 million over four years to support the creation of a Certified Community Behavioral Health Center.

Many lessons have been learned, even though this project has not been fully developed. The first lesson is that understanding the culture, macro, and micro forces that impact a projects implementation is vital. Secondly it is important to understand the dynamics of the social issue where one is trying to affect change. It is very important to think further ahead than the project. I learned that some systems are not ready for this level of change, and this must be taken to consideration when developing a plan of this magnitude.

I didn't realize how deeply complex the homeless issue is in downtown Los Angeles. There is multifaceted issues and forces that affect implementing a program of this sort.

Many entities and agencies are involved in solving the homeless issue. All these agencies and entities have different visions, goals, and approaches to enhancing BH for skid row residents in Downtown Los Angeles. Currently there is controversy and a lack of collaboration and mutual agreement on how these services ought to be provided. It is significant to note the solutions the different entities and agencies believe will help people do not align with many of the consumers beliefs of what they think would be helpful to the residents of skid row in downtown Los Angeles.

The project waits for all entities and agencies to decide the best move forward.