

- My name is Vera Vassel, RN

I am an MHC (please use the whole name) RN, on DMH's FCCS (please use the whole name of the program) Older Adult Team at the Edelman Mental Health Clinic

- In my opinion the aim of partnership and integration is to build a "health services, wellness, and healthcare delivery system that works in unique settings, with unique populations, in unique ways. There is a reason for this.

That said, before partnership and integration, we worked in silos. Providing a continuum of care was practically impossible. Just getting appointments was tough. It wasn't that long ago that I, and several of my colleagues, had to wait, from the second a medical center opened, to the instant it closed, just to get someone with a severe mental illness treated for a broken bone. The public faced challenges. So did those of us who worked for LA County. Forget about trying to move patients and clients and their records from one Department to another. Today, this has improved because we are on an electronic health record system that allows me and others in DMH to access records quickly and I was told that eventually we can communicate and send messages via HIPPA secure email system to other providers.

- Now is a time for *transformative innovation*. To serve homeless populations, and those on the verge of homelessness, we need to deliver specialized services in accessible, patient and client centered, and community-based settings. We cannot send folks from vulnerable populations on a scavenger hunt.

We cannot move them around from office to office, expecting them to check off things from a list. To break the cycle we need sustainability. I am excited to hear that our mental health providers will also be on eConsult.

- As you will hear, there is also a great of action in the jail health system. It used to feel inevitable, when patients and clients with mental health or health conditions from jail will end up back in the jail system, because their needs were not met in a coordinated way. None of us came into this work to support this revolving door. That is why we're changing it.

Today, because of partnerships and Health Agency integration efforts, we are more likely to get referrals when those who are in need of mental health, and other services, who are released from jail. We also now have a mechanism in place that makes it possible for us to get medical records. Those discharged are given enough medication to cover the time until they are able to check into a clinic. Now is the time to take advantage of the opportunities provided by partnership and integration, and to expand on them.

- The list of "TO DOs" is long, and so far we've taken steps. We need to get to the point where DMH, DPH, and DHS computer systems are fully integrated or where clinical information is accessible, so no one falls through the cracks. But the only way to get there is for us to move this partnership and continue our integrative process in the right direction.

So let's do that together. Thank you.