



HATFIELD RESIDENT FELLOWSHIP PROJECT BRIEF

Young Adult Services Strategic (YASS) Plan

Child and Family Behavioral Health Unit, Oregon Health Authority (OHA)

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Project Dates: June 24, 2024 – February 21, 2025

PROJECT GOAL

Young adults (ages 17 to 25) have needs that are different from those of children and older adults. Thus, providing comprehensive age-appropriate behavioral health (BH) services through the child and adult system is challenging. The large group of young adults with mental health conditions are vulnerable to substance overdose and suicidal ideation. Therefore, the overall goal of this fellowship project was to assist the YASS Planning Workgroup in developing a strategic plan for a robust set of BH services for young adults in Oregon. The chart below shows the intended progression of the project:

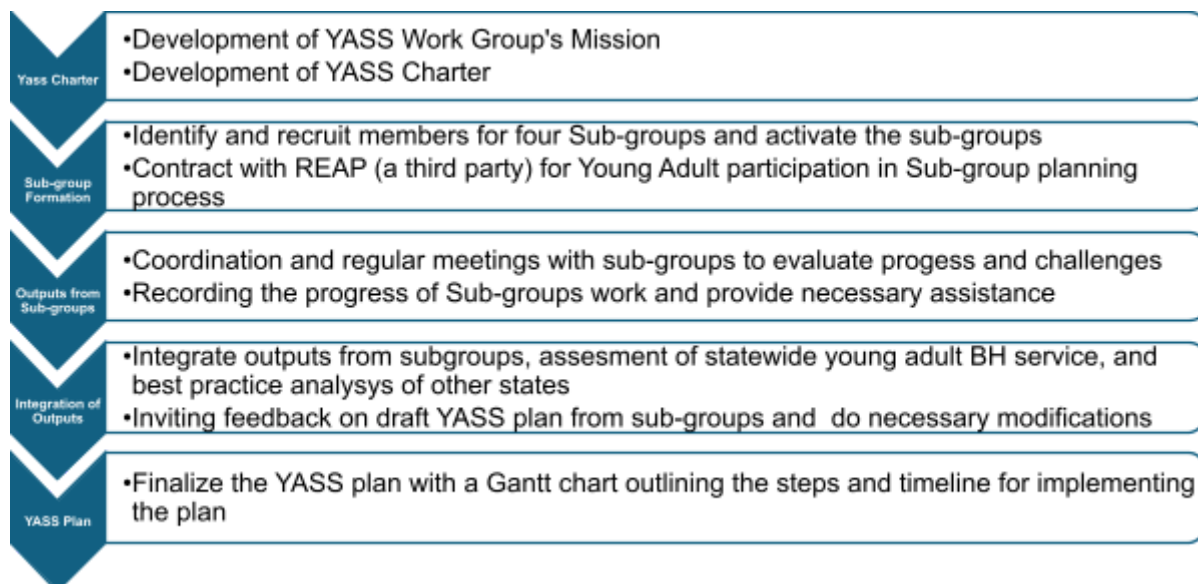


Chart showing the progression of the YASS Planning project

STRATEGY

To achieve the project goals, I have adopted the following strategies:

1. I invested time in a detailed orientation on related divisions and units of OHA, specifically, the Mental Health Division and Behavioral Health Unit, as they were critical to YASS planning.
2. Arranged 1:1 meetings with stakeholders connected to young adult BH services.
3. Conducted a statewide assessment of current young adult programs to identify service gaps.
4. Identified the states having similarities in BH service needs of Oregon and conducted research on the work occurring in those states and current best practices at state and national levels.
5. Attended several young adult and family support group engagements to learn about the service recipients' feedback, which provided helpful information about the effectiveness of BH services.
6. Attended regular meetings of all three young adult programs' statewide leadership meetings to understand providers' challenges in BH service deliveries for young adults.

CHALLENGES

1. Ensuring young adult participation in the YASS planning process was challenging as the arrangement required a third-party contract for recruiting and orienting young adults with the planning process. The third-party contract is a lengthy process.
2. It was challenging to learn quickly about the OHA Mental Health Division, its various units, and the responsibilities of different staff members regarding the YASS planning.
3. Finding the required number of subgroup members was challenging. Each subgroup requires members from different units and departments, and most departments and units do not have additional staff to commit to YASS planning. Again, subgroup members are already over-committed to their departmental responsibilities and can hardly spare enough time for subgroup work to support the overall YASS planning process.

TAKEAWAYS

1. OHA, Coordinated Care Organizations, service providers, and service recipients have complex relationships, and there is a lack of convenient communication among all these entities. Young adults and their families often face challenges in navigating this complex communication path.
2. Each BH service program is connected to many departments and must meet numerous criteria, which entails extensive coordination and cross-departmental knowledge of program coordinators.
3. BH services program initiatives are often subject to funding shortages, which limit the intended progress in service deliveries. Thus, the growing demand for BH services can not be met immediately. However, OHA's flexible work culture fosters much-needed innovations in program development and crisis management.
4. Changes in BH health policies or the development of new programs are time-consuming because they require following diligent processes that may take years to effect.
5. Young adults often struggle to navigate Medicaid eligibility and coverage for different BH needs, which hinders appropriate BH service deliveries when needed. Moreover, the lack of regulations for young adults in OAR (Oregon Administrative Rules) complicates BH service delivery.

RESULTS

1. Statewide assessment of current young adult programs for BH services.
2. Research summary on young adult BH work occurring in eight other states that share similar BH situations like Oregon and current best practices.
3. YASS Workgroup charter

4. Formation and activation of four sub-groups for the YASS planning process
5. A draft strategic plan and Gantt chart outlining the steps and timeline for implementing the plan.