RECAP Session 1
ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

NCMHA Learning Collaborative
How SAMHSA Block Grants Can Support Older Behavioral Health
Session 2
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SAMHSA BLOCK GRANTS Recap

• Funds available to all States to provide community mental health services

• Noncompetitive, formula grant

• The plan/application must be reviewed by the Planning Council

• The state must submit comments/recommendations from the Council – whether acted on or not
Recap

• Required under federal law as a requirement of receiving Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG) funding from SAMHSA

• Many states have formed integrated Councils, to include SAMHSA’s Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUPTRS BG) funding

• State differences; diverse membership; bylaws

• Consult SAMHSA Technical Assistance – **STATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCILS, An Introductory Manual, April 2023**
Purpose

SAMHSA BLOCK GRANTS

- Flexibility in use of funds for both new/unique programs or supplement current programs
- Prevention, treatment, recovery support services
- Use of funds restricted – may not use for
  - Inpatient services for mental health
  - Purchase, improve land or facilities
  - Purchase medical equipment
  - Provide financial assistance to entities other than public or nonprofit
Under federal law, the planning councils have three primary duties:

- **To review** the state’s MHBG application and report and **make recommendations** to the agency receiving the grant.
  - may be a mental health agency or behavioral health agency also having responsibility for substance use disorder (SUD) prevention and treatment.

- **To serve as advocates** for people with mental illness, including adults with serious mental illness (SMI) and children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance (SED).

- **To monitor, review, and evaluate** the adequacy of mental health services in the state.
**Criterion 4:**
Targeted Services to Rural and Homeless Populations and to Older Adults

Provides outreach to and services for individuals who experience homelessness; community-based services to individuals in rural areas; and community-based services to older adults.
ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

• Attend meetings

• Review qualifications - If you qualify, request consideration as a Council member

• Develop contacts – Council Chair - officers, Agency Liaison

• Invite others in your network

• Every meeting has “public comment” – advocate for inclusion of older adults as an underserved population

• When info/programs/strategies are presented, inquire if they include older adults

• Develop your ask/recommendation - what can be accomplished in your state, available/needed resources, strategies

• Additional advocacy
  • MHBG is posted for public comment – involve your network in sending comments/recommendations about the behavioral health disparities for older people