Senior Access to Supports and Services (SASS) Program

A program for older adults age 60 and over who are diagnosed with a severe mental illness and are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or isolated and home-bound.

Cultural and Linguistic Services

Language assistance and interpreter services are available to all clients who request such assistance. American Sign Language Interpretative services are available for beneficiaries with speech and/or hearing impairments.

Assessment Process

The identification of a SMI older adult may be done in two ways. Either the MHRT from the SASS program identifies the individual during prevention and early intervention, or an outside person may identify the individual and notify the SASS team.

Referrals to the SASS Program

To refer an individual to the SASS program please call (760) 351-2821, or mail/fax a SASS Referral Form to: 220 Main St. Suite 201, Brawley, CA 92227 ATTN: SASS Program. (FAX Number: (760) 351-7702).

For more information contact the SASS Program at (760) 351-2821
220 Main St., Suite 201
Brawley, CA 92227
Fax: (760) 351-7702

Senior Access to Supports and Services (SASS) Program

Imperial County Behavioral Health Services
Senior Access to Supports and Services is a program funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)

Administration Staff

Director of I.C. Behavioral Health
Michael W. Horn, LMFT

Senior Behavioral Health Manager
Francisco Ortiz, MFT

Behavioral Health Manager
Cindy Coronado, MFT

Program Supervisor II
Sylvia Benavidez, BA

Program Staff

Vijay Chennamchetty, Psychiatrist
Alvaro Camacho, Psychiatrist
Julio Camargo, MFT Intern
Kay Caudillo, LVN II
Rosemary Jones, LVN II
Norma Avila, MHRT I
Gracie Grijalva, OT
**Summary of SASS Program**

The Senior Access to Supports and Services (SASS) program will provide services to older adults age 60 and over who are diagnosed with a severe mental illness (SMI) and who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, or isolated and home-bound. These individuals may also be diagnosed with a substance use disorder.

The SASS program will consist of a Full Service Partnership (FSP) Team made up of Imperial County Behavioral Health Staff, the older adult, the Peer Advocate, and staff from various community agencies. The Full Service Partnership Team will be a mobile team, traveling throughout the community to identify potential clients and provide appropriate treatment and assistance.

All services will be personalized, integrated, and developed to emphasize cultural competency, recovery, and resiliency through collaborative efforts within the community.

**Goals of the SASS Program**

- A reduction in isolation, homelessness, use of emergency room care, need for skilled nursing facility care and involuntary services (i.e. psychiatric hospitalizations)
- To promote safety, a stable living situation, and a suitable community life for the SMI older adult
- To promote recovery and resiliency for the SMI older adult

**Services Offered by the SASS Program**

The SASS program offers various services to older adults diagnosed with a severe mental illness (SMI). Depending on the individual’s specific needs and impairments, one or more of the following may be provided:

- Medication Support Services
- Crisis Intervention
- Targeted Case Management
- Mental Health Services Case Management
- Psychiatrist Services
- Psychological Evaluation and Therapy
- Psychiatric Nursing Services
- Alcohol and Drug Treatment

These services may be offered by the FSP team at the individual’s residence on an as needed basis.

Each individual admitted to the program will be assigned a Peer Supporter who will perform the following functions:

- Present an explanation of services offered by the SASS program to the SMI older adult
- Provide empathic support to engage the older adult
- Link the individual and family and/or support persons to community agencies
- Educate the older adult, their family and/or support persons to recognize symptoms when they appear and steps in accessing services

**Gatekeepers for the Isolated and Home-bound**

The use of community gatekeepers is essential in identifying the isolated and home-bound population. The gatekeepers may be postal carriers, paramedics, law enforcement, in-home supportive services, clergy, physicians, Salvation Army, Emergency Room Staff, hospital discharge planners, police officers, APS workers, apartment managers, senior center staff, Allegria Adult Day Health Care Center, Day Out Program, I.C. Area Agency on Aging, Senior Nutrition Services, Clinica De Salud, and other healthcare providers.