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June 17, 2021

TO: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Otto Solórzano, Acting Director

SUBJECT: **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE L.A. FOUND INITIATIVE (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 20, 2018)**

On February 20, 2018, your Board unanimously approved a motion by Supervisors Hahn and Barger to establish the L.A. Found Initiative, a Countywide effort to prevent and respond to wandering among individuals with Alzheimer’s, Dementia, Autism, and other cognitive impairments. This report provides an update on the major L.A. Found accomplishments since our December 2020 report. Key updates include:

Project Lifesaver (PL) Pilot

- To date, 804 bracelets have been issued, more than 80% of our goal of issuing 1,000 devices.
- We have safely reunited 23 Project Lifesaver participants with their families since L.A. Found began.
- The National Association of Counties (NACo) awarded a 2021 achievement award for L.A. Found in the category of Human Services.



Marketing and Outreach

- Due to public health guidelines, in person outreach was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in collaboration with the 4th Supervisorial District and Alzheimer's L.A., we conducted two (2) webinars in English and Spanish titled "Dementia and Home Safety: Tips for Caregivers." The English session included 164 attendees and the Spanish session had 72 attendees.
- We are thankful to the Department of Public Social Services, Alzheimer's L.A., the Office of Supervisor Janice Hahn, and our L.A. Found Taskforce members for sharing the event on their social media platforms, newsletters and via text message to In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) providers.
- In collaboration with IHSS, we anticipate presenting at their General Staff Meetings to ensure that the 1,000+ IHSS Social Workers are aware of the initiative.
- L.A. Found was featured in La Opinion in April 2021 and Despierta America in May 2021. Despierta America is a Spanish language morning television show airing nationally on Univision. This is the second time L.A. Found has received national media exposure.
- We participated in the "All in for Self-Determination Conference" held by Disability Voices United. This conference focuses on California's Self-Determination program, which provides developmentally disabled individuals and families with more freedom, control, and responsibility in choosing services and supports. A total of 1,200 individuals attended the 3-day virtual conference and L.A. Found was featured as a virtual exhibitor.
- L.A. Found staff met with the City of Paramount (City) to discuss collaboration in offering Project Lifesaver bracelets to their population with autism and other cognitive impairments. Our goal is to partner with the City to conduct a presentation to residents of Paramount on L.A. Found in July/August and work with the City to refer qualified individuals to the program.
- Social Media Outreach continues, providing L.A. Found program information, COVID-19 prevention and safety measures, and vaccine availability information. We are working closely with our community partners to continue sharing valuable information on resources and programs that benefit our PL participants and caregivers. At the end of May, we conducted our first Facebook Live Event with the Alzheimer's Association of Southern California to provide an overview of L.A. Found and how individuals can apply for PL bracelets.

Alternative Technology

- Last year the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded a \$150,000 grant to L.A. Found. We are using the grant to explore alternative tracking technologies, such as GPS and cellular-based technology, to supplement PL.
- Later this summer, the first of three (3) GPS tracking devices will be issued to 30 PL families, followed by the other two (2) devices shortly after. The pilot technologies will be evaluated for efficacy and easiness of use while simultaneously wearing the PL device.

County Staff/First Responder Training

- Over 2,900 County employees have completed the virtual L.A. Found training available on the County's Learning Management System. The training consists of five videos that focus on topics such as PL, at-risk persons who wander, and identifying individuals with Dementia and Alzheimer's.
- The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) is using their mobile, Multiple Interactive Learning Objectives (MILO) simulator to train First Responders about the L.A. Found initiative and de-escalation tactics. This interactive training teaches first responders how to deescalate tense situations when interacting with those who have Autism. Key elements of this training can also be applied to individuals with Dementia. To date, the LASD has provided this training to more than 3,500 First Responders.

L.A. Found Taskforce

- We continue convening the monthly L.A. Found Taskforce meetings, comprised of key internal and external stakeholders who provide their input and expertise on L.A. Found implementation activities and strategies.
- Taskforce members developed a new Hospital Due Diligence Checklist for missing persons with cognitive impairments, in collaboration with hospital leadership from Providence St. Joseph's, Martin Luther King Jr., USC Verdugo Hills, and Glendale Adventist. This checklist outlines the steps to take in completing a search to help identify an individual with Alzheimer's, Dementia, or other cognitive impairment who is brought to a hospital without identification. The checklist was vetted by social workers and the California Department of Justice. A total of 165 social workers were trained through the Hospital Association of Southern California on how to use the checklist. Our goal is to develop a strategy to implement use of the checklist by County Hospitals and Medical facilities.

- Additionally, Taskforce members have connected with the Regional Centers to find ways to collaborate and expand program awareness to individuals with Autism and cognitive impairments, including a presentation to the Long Beach Aging Services Coalition. The Taskforce is meeting this month to establish a subcommittee to focus on outreach opportunities throughout L.A. County.

NEXT STEPS

Marketing and Outreach

Marketing and Outreach continue as key priorities to promote caregiver awareness. In partnership with Alzheimer's L.A., two webinars in Mandarin and English will be conducted in the summer or early fall 2021. As the County reopens, the goal is to resume in person outreach events with community agencies.

Additionally, the L.A. Found website will be enhanced to improve the customer experience. The goal is to refresh the site with a new look and enhance content organization. We are also creating a caregiver section and adding law enforcement/first responder information. The enhanced website is scheduled to be launched later this year.

Funding

For Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 the anticipated program budget is \$1.155 million of which \$693k is County funding and \$462k comes from various federal and State funding sources. The funding will support administrative costs, PL tracking technology and First Responder Education. Funding is also allocated for registry services and social service provider education. Through the Community Development Block Grant from the Los Angeles County Development Authority, L.A. Found will receive \$65k for communication and outreach efforts. In addition, we will continue to seek funding for case management services for PL participants. While working with these families, it is evident that many need further assistance in connecting to available resources.

PL Bracelet Distribution

Moving into FY 2021-22, we continue distributing PL bracelets to reach our goal of 1,000 devices, while supporting the need for replacement parts for participants who have been part of the program longer than one year. The PL devices require periodic replacement of batteries and other parts to maintain functionality.

First Responder Training

The LASD continues offering L.A. Found training to First Responders and law enforcement personnel throughout the County. At this time, LASD has MILO sessions scheduled through August 2021, with additional requests coming in from County Departments and other law enforcement jurisdictions.

CONCLUSION

We look forward to working with your Board, other County Departments, and stakeholders to further enhance L.A. Found and build on our successes. The next report is targeted for December 2021. Should you have questions, please contact me directly, or your staff may contact Kevin Anderson, Special Assistant, at kanderson@wdacs.lacounty.gov.

OS:LCS:VS:CLP

c: Chief Executive Office
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Department of Mental Health
Department of Public Health
Sheriff's Department