THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

DECEMBER **2017**

ASSESSING A NONPROFIT'S INTERNAL OPERATIONS

A REPORT PREPARED FOR

LATINO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

College of Social & Behavioral Science
Master of Public Administration

PADMN 6550
Management of Nonprofit Organizations
Dr. Jesus N. Valero

Assessing a Nonprofit's Internal Operations

Report Written By:
Jose Chacon
Stacie Cottrell
Sahara Hayes
Ginger Phillips
Kassandra Tello
Alexia Williams

Report Cover & Editing:
Georgina Florence Griffith

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The following report produced by the Internal Operations team provides an analysis and overview of best practices for the internal operation functions of Latino Behavioral Health Services (LBHS). The focus throughout this report resulted from concerns communicated by the Executive Director to the Internal Operations team: (1) technology adoption; (2) stronger communication methods; and (3) a defined organization structure. To ensure our recommendations were consistent with the literature and practices of other nonprofit organizations in the United States, the Internal Operation's team analyzed the benefits technology has on organization operations, the importance of effective communication practices, and the implications organization structure has on organization effectiveness. Through this analysis, the Internal Operations team has concluded that for LBHS to improve its current operations, LBHS needs to adopt technology practices that enables LBHS to record client data, streamline communication among internal stakeholders, and track data to gauge LBHS's progress in the community. Second, LBHS needs to adopt policies and procedures outlining clear roles and responsibilities for all internal operation members to ensure organization needs are being met and the mission is being communicated properly.

Introduction

The following report produced by the Internal Operation team provides an analysis and overview of best practices for the internal operation functions of Latino Behavioral Health Services (LBHS). The focus throughout this report resulted from concerns communicated by the executive director to the Internal Operations team. These concerns are (1) technology adoption; (2) stronger communication methods; and (3) a defined organization structure. Therefore, the purpose of this report was to examine how LBHS can improve its internal operations capacities by first providing an overview of LBHS's current operations. Following is an analysis of the strengths and challenges faced by LBHS. The Internal Operations team completed a review of literature related to the three areas of concern and provided a review of best practices regarding considerations for technology adoption and defining roles for peer-support staff. Finally, professional recommendations are provided on LBHS's organizational structure.

Background of LBHS

LBHS is a peer-run nonprofit organization located in Salt Lake City, Utah that is committed to improving the lives of the Latinx community living with mental health and/or substance use issues. LBHS's mission aims to achieve "Awareness, Empowerment, and Recovery" for mental health services among the Latinx community. The vision of the organization is as follows:

> As a peer (consumer/family) organization, the Latino Behavioral Health Services exists to enhance the mental health awareness and well-being of people with mental illness and substance use disorders and their caregivers and loved ones responding to cultural, socio-economic and linguistic characteristics. Success in this mission requires a culture of collaboration, excellence, leadership, and respect in which peers are involved in every level of the LBHS structure
>
> (LBHS Services, n.d. -b).

A unique element of LBHS is that it is a peer-run organization. Peer-run organizations are more prevalent among organizations focused on helping individuals who experience mental health and substance use disorders (Baker, Kaplan, & Gertig, 2009). Based on research by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), having peer support systems provides greater levels of independence, empowerment and self-esteem, as well as improving quality of life and increasing social support, employment skills, and education (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], n.d.). An organization is defined as peer-run when the majority of persons who oversee the operations (e.g. board of directors, staff, and volunteers) of the organization have received and/or continue to receive mental health services, but are in a position of stability and recovery (Ostrow & Hayes, 2015). LBHS places a high priority on maintaining its peer-run status. LBHS's staff personnel, the majority of its board members, and volunteers are peers.

LBHS was founded by Jacqueline Gomez-Arias, with Teresa Molina Ph.D., and Leticia Frias. Ms. Gomez-Arias is the Executive Director of LBHS, and works full-time for the organization. Ms. Molina currently serves on the LBHS board, is a part-time staff member for the organization, and provides peer support. Ms. Frias is also a peer support specialist, works as the Family Programs Coordinator, and serves on the board. During business hours, two volunteers and/or staff members are present in the office completing intakes and working with clients. In addition to staff members, operations are supported by 25-30 community resident partners (CRPs), individuals who are former consumers of LBHS's programs who continue to support the organization as part of their personal recovery. CRPs facilitate groups and events and provide peer support to clients. The board is completed by two additional members— Patricia Riano and Jésus Valero—who have backgrounds in social work and mental health.

Services and Programs

LBHS supports Latinos in recovery by focusing on individuals and their families, partnerships and collaborations with local organizations, and research and internships. The majority of the efforts are dedicated to direct client care. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), approximately one in five adults in the U.S.—43.8 million, or 18.5%—experience mental illness in a given year. Only 20% of Latinx individuals with symptoms of a psychological disorders talk to a doctor about their mental health; while only 10% contact a mental health specialist (National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI], 2017). LBHS offers counseling sessions with a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) for ten dollars per session, as well as several no-cost services and programs. These include educational and peer support opportunities for those who are living with mental health or substance use issues, and similar support for families and caregivers. Peer counselors also provide one-on-one mentoring and suicide prevention training.

LBHS focuses on the Latinx population because there are a variety of barriers for these individuals when accessing care and they are less to seek out mental health treatment (NAMI, 2017). Most commonly, the greatest barriers are limited Spanish-speaking providers and culturally sensitive services (NAMI, 2017). According to NAMI (2017), the inequities the Latinx population experience in both access to treatment and quality of treatment put individuals at high risk for severe and persistent forms of mental health conditions. Another barrier to accessing care is a lack of information and understanding of mental health issues, which can lead to an inability to recognize the symptoms (NAMI, 2017). Other factors affecting access to mental health services are a culture of familial privacy, immigration status, and a lack of health insurance—with one-third of the uninsured in America being Latinx (NAMI, 2017).

For these reasons, LBHS is a valuable community resource. To minimize barriers to mental health services, LBHS never inquires about the documentation status of its clients, charges uncommonly low rates for its intakes and counseling services, and the majority of the courses and programs are offered in Spanish. Perhaps most importantly, everyone on the staff and board of directors is Latinx, and nearly all peer support specialists are as well. This helps to eradicate many of the barriers that clients may experience in a traditional medical setting, and instead puts them in an environment of understanding and empathy.

LBHS collaborates with other local agencies and community groups by providing training and presentations on its services and the needs of the population. These collaborations help to raise awareness on how Latinx populations commonly view and treat mental illness, provide an understanding on how to create an environment that is more responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of this population, and work to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness. Currently, LBHS has established relationships with NAMI, the Utah Non-Profit Association, the Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness, University Neighborhood Partners, the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, AmeriCorps, and The University of Utah (Latino Behavioral Health Services, n.d.–d).

Marketing and Finances

LBHS's marketing is largely reliant on word-of-mouth advertising. Ms. Gomez-Arias has explained that many of the organization's clients do not have high computer literacy, so the consumer media presence is minimal. The organization has an active Facebook page and a website. The Facebook page is used to advertise upcoming programs and events and to highlight the achievements of the organization. The webpage explains the mission and vision of the organization, gives an introduction to the Board of Directors, and provides information and

statistics on mental health. LBHS staff also attend community events, such as farmers' markets, in order to advertise its services in person. LBHS is funded by individual donors and grants, including a block grant from the state of Utah. As of 2015, its income was $36,764. (Guidestar, 2015). Currently, the organization is working on applications for several other grants, including one from the SAMHSA.

Organization Strengths and Challenges

Strengths

Before LBHS opened its doors in 2013, mental health services specific to the Latinx community in the Salt Lake City region were minimal. This lack of services created a gap that needed to be filled among the Latinx community. One of the many strengths of LBHS is that it is the only peer-run center that provides therapeutic services, peer support services, and mental health education geared toward the Latinx community. As a peer-run organization, LBHS exists to enhance the mental health awareness and well-being of individuals with mental illness and their caregivers and loved ones through support, education, and empowerment, while being responsive to cultural, socio-economic and linguistic characteristics.

The peer-run model strengthens the effectiveness of LBHS's operations because peer recovery support services are specifically designed to help fill the needs of individuals who are seeking recovery (Baker, Kaplan, & Gertig, 2009). This model has been demonstrated to be successful for individuals' recovery efforts of mental and/or substance use disorders because such environments provide a safer, "homelike" atmosphere that helps reduce stress, resolve crises, and offer short-term solutions (National Empowerment Center, 2014). In addition, these services are provided by individuals who have experienced, or are experiencing, mental health

recovery and are able to provide a high level of social support through their own individual experiences of recovery (Baker, Kaplan, & Gertig, 2009).

Another strength of LBHS is the passion and dedication that its staff, volunteers, and board display to helping the people they serve. All current board members have a vocational and educational background in services related to mental health. This demonstrates the organization's commitment to deliver quality services to its clients and the community.

A third strength of LBHS's operations is in relation to their programs and services. LBHS's diverse programs are targeted to address mental health and/or substance use recovery efforts for individuals and/or caregivers. Programs currently offered at LBHS include, but are not limited to: Familia a Familia, CRAFT Support Group, Science of Addiction Class, and a 12-Step Substance Abuse Support Group (LBHS, 2017). Ms. Gomez-Arias is always looking to offer more classes to her clients and to grow LBHS. To dissolve the financial barrier for individuals seeking mental/substance use support, all of the programs are offered at low rates and if clients are unable to pay, LBHS will occasionally waive program fees.

Challenges

Limited Technology. As a newer organization that is rapidly growing, LBHS, like all other organizations, has room to grow and strengthen its operations. One of the major concerns voiced by the Executive Director was the lack of technology within the organization. Ms. Gomez-Arias noted that the organization has limited use of technology due to a lack experience and training. The only platform LBHS uses is Facebook, and it is used more to post about in-house jobs or volunteer opportunities than as a tool to get people interested and aware of the services the organization provides.

Social media has proven to be an extremely powerful marketing and communications tool for nonprofit organizations that heavily rely on supporters (Saxton & Wang, 2014). Effective social media requires a great deal of effort and time, but the connections that can be made and the attention one can garner makes it a worthwhile cause. Having limited technology uses and platforms can be hindering the operations of LBHS. For instance, fundraising platforms help to diversify revenue streams and spread the word of organization efforts (Saxton & Wang, 2014). While they may not be large contributions, online donations can be a decent and reliable fundraising source. Social media is also an amazing way to get word out about future fundraising events (Marianne, 2014).

Another barrier to technology adoption for LBHS is the limited access to computers. Technology capabilities are inadequate throughout LBHS because its only computers are those that employees purchase themselves. This limited computer access hinders LBHS's abilities to leverage technology as a vital support tool for effective internal operations. With only a minimal number of internal stakeholders having access to computers, individuals are unable to share and communicate information in an efficient manner. Additionally, there is no shared electronic calendar that enables all internal stakeholders to easily access the daily functions of the organization.

One major challenge that was communicated by the Executive Director to our team was LBHS's lack of technology to support client data collection. All of the LBHS client files and data are kept on paper. When a client comes into LBHS for services, the client's intake information is documented on a piece of paper, then filed in a filing cabinet. While the files are well organized, having nothing stored electronically can present many problems. It is more time consuming to search through the files, and it makes it nearly impossible to collect data to assist

LBHS in getting future grant money. Although LBHS lacks technology, there are many reasons why these problems have not yet been solved. Data collection software is expensive and can be complicated. Computers and training for software programs can be costly and time consuming, and there are learning barriers to new technological practices. The literature review further examines the importance of technology adoption in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of nonprofit organizations.

Limited Organizational Capacity. Another challenge LBHS faces internally is its limited number of staff members. Employees at LBHS are stretched very thin—a common issue among many small nonprofit organizations. Staff members wear multiple hats within the organization as board members and program providers. This dual role within the organization can make it difficult for board members to focus on the larger picture necessary for proper governance (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007). In addition, many staff and volunteer members have full-time jobs outside of LBHS. This low number of staff resources limits the capacity for LBHS to grow and improve the organization. Therefore, it is critical for LBHS to be cognizant of what actions or processes to adopt in order to improve its internal capacity while having limited staff support.

Lack of Organizational Structure. Defined roles and responsibilities at LBHS are at a minimum. Other than the job description for the executive director, there are no policies and procedures in place detailing the internal operation functions of LBHS or that describes the specific job or volunteer duties of each individual employee and volunteer. Although this concern was not specifically addressed by Ms. Gomez-Arias, the lack of an organizational structure is hindering LBHS's ability to operate as efficiently and as effectively as possible. The lack of internal structure leads to poor communication, a lack of understanding of organizational needs, and unclear responsibilities (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007; Block, 1998). In regard to

the executive director's role, the current duties laid out for this position prescribe more roles and responsibilities than recommended. Relying on the executive director to perform numerous tasks for the organization limits the executive director's ability to direct the organization toward serving the organization's constituents (Block, 1998). The importance of organization structure and adjusted job responsibilities are discussed in the literature review.

Literature Review

As mentioned above, the need for technology adoption, stronger communication methods, and a defined organizational structure were major concerns related to the internal operations of LBHS. Therefore, the purpose of this literature review is to examine the research related to these three areas of concern to understand how and why these issues are important to incorporate into the day-to-day operations of the organization. First, the role of technology and its benefits to nonprofit organizations is examined. Second is an overview of communication practices and the implications strong communication methods have on organizations. Lastly, research related to organization structure is examined.

Technology Adoption

Present technology systems in place at LBHS are minimal. These systems include an organizational website, a Facebook page, and an organizational email address. The lack of technology throughout LBHS is a concern because the use of technology helps to advance the mission of an organization (Hackler & Saxton, 2007). Incorporating technology into the day-to-day operations is an effective tool in assisting organizations to achieve their goals and to manage scarce resources more effectively (Merkel et al., 2007). Although LBHS lacks technology, overall, nonprofits tend to lag when it comes to adopting new technology practices (Waters, 2014).

To understand how to better assist nonprofit organizations in adopting technological practices, Merkel et al. (2007) analyzed how to empower nonprofits to develop management practices that carry out information technology (IT) goals. Merkel et al. (2007) disclose that resource limitations—small staff, tight budgets, and a lack of technology support staff—pose a challenge for ongoing support for organizations to utilize technological resources. In addition, grants tend to not support the advancement of technology within organizations; if they do, organizations are often given technology that is outdated (Merkel et al., 2007).

With technology being an integral component of organizational success, Merkel et al. (2007) spent a year with eleven nonprofits to identify technology practices that better support organizations in incorporating technology into their daily operations. A key finding from their research indicates that for technology practices to be adopted, systems need to align with the needs of the organization, allow for volunteer management mechanisms, and include inventory assessments (e.g. patient file logs).

An additional study by Hackler and Saxton (2007) surveyed 1,572 charitable organizations to understand technology characteristics that are effective in achieving strategic adoption of IT resources for nonprofits. Researchers found that the use of technology has the potential to transform an organization's structure, business model, and connections with internal and external networks (Hackler & Saxton, 2007). For this to occur, education and/or tech support needs to be available to ensure the integration of IT systems is effective in achieving organization goals (Hackler & Saxton, 2007). To achieve technological support, it is recommended to recruit board members and/or volunteers who have an IT background who can provide that support (Hackler & Saxton, 2007; Waters, 2007; Merkel et al., 2007).

Communication Methods

Having an effective communication platform can be an important element in helping to address some of the biggest challenges nonprofits face (Waters, 2014). Communication is a core value needed for the existence of any organization (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007). Vuuren, Jong, and Seydel (2007) researched the indirect and direct affects supervisor communication has on organizational commitment. Researchers found that communication from supervisors is critical because it provides a sense of direction, motivation, and competence for the organization (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007). This has important implications for organizational success because communication adds to the efficacy of an organization by employees becoming more aware of its strengths and weaknesses, and provides a clear lens on which values are important (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007).

One method to achieve effective communication within organizations is through communication technology systems (Burt & Taylor, 2000). As early as 2000, Burt & Taylor (2000) had highlighted the need for organizations to adopt technology methods to achieve effective communication. Therefore, the mixture of new technology and communication methods is viewed as being a critical component in achieving organizational success. Communication technology helps to improve external and internal communication among all stakeholders involved with the organization (Hackler & Saxton, 2007).

With communication technology having an effect on operation efficiency and effectiveness (Burt & Taylor, 2000), organizations need to adopt communication uses into management practices to ensure organization operations and needs are being conveyed (Hexom, 2016). Integrating better internal communication mechanisms also translates to improved external communication methods among donors (Waters, 2014). In turn, this will help to cultivate a stronger, lasting relationship among external stakeholders (Waters, 2014). In regard

to LBHS, adopting a communication technology system that would enable supervisors to distribute information across the organization will help ensure that goals, values, and tasks are being better addressed. Improved communication adoption has many positive implications for enhancing the internal functions of the organization and the organization overall. Therefore, it is highly recommended that LBHS consider new communication methods to improve organization success and sustainability.

Organization Structure

The demand for accountability and higher quality services among the nonprofit sector puts pressure on organizations to adopt effective structures that support the advancement of their missions (Burt & Taylor, 2000). One concern our team identified is LBHS's lack of internal structure among staff members at all levels. As a small organization, both volunteers and senior staff members share many of the same responsibilities within LBHS—a practice common among small nonprofits (Wolf, 2012). With limited staff resources, organizations rely on staff and/or volunteers to fill a number of roles and perform a variety of tasks (Wolf, 2012).

Having flexible staff in the nonprofit sector is valuable because administrative and management needs of organizations can change quickly and can require staff to have a varied skill set (Wolf, 2012). Although it is useful for staff members to take on numerous roles within the organization, it is still valuable for the executive director or staff member involved with staff oversight to outline responsibilities for individual positions (Wolf, 2012). In Wolf's (2012) *Managing a Nonprofit Organization: Updated Twenty-First Century Edition*, he recommends that organizations review the various responsibilities within the organization to evaluate if duties are being met and if goals are being achieved. To ensure staff and/or volunteer responsibilities are being met, Wolf (2012) suggests asking the following series of questions:

1. Are the tasks being performed necessary?
2. What tasks need to be implemented for this role?
3. Are there new activities being implemented that require additional work?
4. What specific tasks will be associated with the new activities, if needed?
5. Are there redundant tasks that can be eliminated among other positions?
6. Are there existing tasks that need to be redefined?

Asking such questions can provide a useful outline for organizations to use when developing staff and/or volunteer responsibilities. This helps to create uniformity across the organization and ensure staff or volunteer responsibilities are being met—even when roles are filled by varying members.

  Executive Director. Defining parameters across individual positions is important to ensure tasks and goals related to each position are met (Wolf, 2012). The key person involved in staff responsibilities is the executive director. The executive director assures the processes of the organization are supported by skillful staff and/or volunteers who are knowledgeable in achieving the organization's mission, vision, and direction (Block, 1998). Although a lack of staff structure is not detrimental, subordinates strongly rely on the executive director to communicate the bigger picture of the organization so they do not lose sight the organization's goals (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007). With LBHS lacking a staff and volunteer structure, it is important for the Executive Director to exhibit strong communication among internal stakeholders to achieve a strong organizational commitment and a positive attitude towards the organization (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007).

  An executive director has a crucial role in shaping the mission of the organization for all stakeholders, so it is necessary to be cognizant of the duties needed to perform this position effectively and efficiently (Vuuren, Jong, & Seydel, 2007). The required duties of an executive director include:

Planning	Coordinating
Organizing	Reporting
Motivating	Supervising
Decision Making	Managing Finances
Delegating	Fund-Raising

(Block, 1998).

For instance, delegating responsibilities helps increase organization efficiency and effectiveness (Block, 1998). For appropriate delegation to occur, it requires an understanding of staff's skills and abilities to handle workload demands (Block, 1998). It is a common mistake among nonprofits to assume that all important tasks need to be completed by salaried staff; this mentality can be inefficient and costly when tasks can be delegated to volunteers (Wolf, 2012). Delegating responsibilities to others helps to alleviate work overload for the executive director and therefore can have a positive impact on organizational outcomes (Block, 1998).

The Theory of Organization. A classic theory on organization structure and its effects on organization success is Luther Gulick's *Notes on the Theory of Organization* (1937). Nonprofits, unlike large corporations, have highly flexible organization structures that allow for adjustments to be made to meet organization needs (Wolf, 2012). Although it is a common practice, Gulick believes that having divided labor is a way to increase specialization and efficiency for organizations (Gulick, 1937). Gulick's theory discusses how supervisors perform a dynamic role within organizations to ensure others are reaching the entity's main objective.

As discussed throughout the literature and in Gulick's theory, it is clear that executive directors balance a unique relationship with an organization. Executive directors need to maintain a series of defined core competencies (see Block, 1998, pg. 5) while also incorporating flexibility into their position. This idea has important implications for LBHS. As a small organization with limited staff members, its organization structure demands flexibility; however, as Gulick discussed, having defined roles adds to the efficiency and effectiveness of an

organization. In other words, LBHS needs to adopt a mixture of flexibility and structured roles into its organizational framework. For instance, the roles of the executive director should be rigid and clearly defined (see Appendix A for modified executive director roles). The executive director's critical role in directing an organization demonstrates the need for this position to follow a set of parameters to ensure major functions of the organization are being performed.

In regard to staff and/or volunteer roles, responsibilities for each individual role should be clearly defined to provide structure throughout the organization and allow staff and/or volunteers to fill varying roles when needed. The blending of these two concepts may be necessary for LBHS to operate more efficiently and effectively. Defining individual roles within the organization increases the capacity for anyone within the organization to have a clear understanding of what responsibilities need to be performed regardless of the role they fill. This maintains the flexible structure LBHS needs among its staff and volunteers, while maintaining a division of labor.

Overall, understanding the varying perspectives on organizational structure is beneficial. It can help ensure that the organizational structures adopted best fit the needs the organization. Understanding these varying perspectives has provided valuable insights on understanding how to blend organization concepts to support the diverse needs of LBHS.

Applying these Concepts to LBHS

These research implications can assist LBHS in adopting better technology practices that meet the needs of the organization while simultaneously improving clients' data files and communication methods among LBHS. Additionally, establishing an organization structure that blends defined staff roles with a flexible structure ensures that roles are being filled and duties are being performed evenly; however, this does not apply to the executive director. The

executive director plays a vital role in communicating and setting the vision for the organization's mission; therefore, an executive director's role needs to be rigid to ensure vital functions of the organization are continually being met (Eadie, 2008).

Review of Best Practices

Currently, the concept of peer-run organizations is understudied and the number of peer-run organizations nationwide is low (Ostrow & Leaf, 2014). The limited number of peer-run organizations creates a challenge for making suggestions to improve the internal operations of LBHS based on best practices. Research analyzing leadership characteristics of mental health peer-run organizations indicated that longitudinal studies are needed to analyze organizational patterns that allow for development best practices and recommendations for sustaining organizational practices specific to this model (Ostrow & Hayes, 2015). Although information on peer-run organizations is scarce, resources provided throughout this document are still applicable and vital to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of LBHS's internal operations.

Peer Support Services

LBHS places significant emphasis on being a peer-run organization; however, it lacks a strong organizational structure to ensure peer-support services are being delivered effectively. Although peer-specialists perform a variety of roles within LBHS, it is still vital for these individuals to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities expected when serving clients. According to the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), to increase the capacity of a peer provider workforce, structural measures need to be in place to build better models of care for recipients of services (National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors [NASMHPD], 2014).

For instance, NASMHPD recommends organizations have peer provider titles to distinguish the varying roles peers fill when addressing clients' mental health needs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Certified Peer Specialists
- Whole Health and Resiliency Peer Specialist
- Forensics Peer Specialists
- Recovery Support Specialists
- Family and Youth Support Specialist

A lack of defined peer roles among organizations was identified as being a challenge for peer specialists. Organizations that utilize peer services need to develop clearly written job descriptions, performance expectations, and essential functions of the job that are specific to each peer (e.g. whole health and resiliency peer) (NASMHPD, 2014). In addition, to ensure peers are performing to expectations, each role should identify skills and abilities needed to perform the essential functions of the job.

Evaluation is also an important part of ensuring best practices are being performed among peer specialists. Evaluation helps gauge if roles need to be modified and highlights areas which need improvement (NASMHPD, 2014). More importantly, evaluating peer services helps to highlight outcomes of peer services which are crucial to secure funding sources (NASMHPD, 2014). Finally, it is important for the executive director, or individuals who oversee peers, to assign work duties and monitor peer expectations to ensure best practices are being met.

As demonstrated, peer-support staff play a vital role in ensuring LBHS is providing high quality services for its clients. Outlining all the necessary roles and responsibilities of support staff will help ensure that peers are addressing foundational needs to assist clients in recovery. (See Appendix B for example peer-support staff checklist.)

Professional Recommendations

The Internal Operations team has broken down professional recommendations into two categories: technology and organizational structure. From the beginning, LBHS recognized the need for some type of data collection system, such as electronic medical records or using database software such as Microsoft Access. Because there are so many options on the market, all of which meet different needs in different ways and for different costs, it was not feasible for the team to select one on behalf of LBHS. Instead, we have included detailed considerations for LBHS when selecting its programs.

CRM Technology

Choosing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software for an organization can be a daunting task. CRM is a software platform that enables organizations to collect and manage a large amount of customer data and to develop strategies based on that data; it can serve as useful tool to LBHS (Bain & Company, 2017). The following information is intended to educate LBHS on the concept of CRM, factors to consider when choosing CRM, and potential implications (see Appendix C for CRM suggestions). Although selecting CRM software can be time consuming, adopting such technology can help improve the internal operations of LBHS.

CRM can be viewed as a (1) software; (2) system; (3) service; or (4) strategy (The Connected Cause, 2013). The following definitions provide LBHS with a simplified scope of the role CRM plays in nonprofit organizations. CRM is not merely a software investment, but a powerful technological tool.

CRM as a Software. As a software, CRM holds all data and manages all business practices. When deciding on software, an organization will have to dedicate time to select the software which best suits its needs. First, LBHS should consider potential software's platform compatibility and support to ensure it meets the needs of LBHS.

It is important for LBHS to understand which CRM software will best be compatible with the current management system of the organization. Each CRM package targets an organization of particular size and structure (McDonald, 2005). CRM software is also very robust and can vary in features and functions, but also has the ability to be highly flexible and customizable. For instance, organizations can integrate outside platforms including websites, pay processing services, and crowdfunding into the CRM software as well (Fundly, n.d.). To find software that utilizes this function, it is recommended that LBHS take inventory of its current technological systems and consider the capacity to which CRM will best fit its needs.

Finally, continuous support is another important factor that LBHS will need to address when implementing CRM software. Although LBHS can invest in vendor setup services for its new software, it is highly recommended that LBHS recruit an intern, employee, or board member with previous IT experience (Merkel et al., 2007). Maintenance of CRM software will be necessary for LBHS to use the technology efficiently and address any problems that may arise.

CRM as a System. CRM as a system includes multiple pieces of software working in coordination with business practices to manage information and meet key business needs (The Connected Cause, 2013). As a system, implementing CRM software will affect the structure of the organization and its practices. CRM organizational structure design can divide it into three categories: operational, analytical, and relational.

Operational CRM: Are the actions related to customer services such as orders, bills, sale automation, and marketing and management.

Analytical CRM: Interprets and reports customer data; informational infrastructure which stores analyses, and handles customer related data technology in CRM that includes data storage management system of database, data exploration, and commercial analysis software.

Relational CRM: Includes customer relations to external and internal
stakeholders like Email, telephone, fax, and web pages. In
essence, this section is a communications center which helps
connect the organization with others.

(Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012).

With this in mind, LBHS will have to consider what components of its operations to

address with a CRM software. The Internal Operations team suggests that CRM software could

help LBHS transition from paper documentation of its client data files to electronic files. The

team also believes that LBHS could delegate the roles of its team more fluidly with the use of

CRM software (e.g. as a communication platform, sharing of documents, shared calendar, etc).

Finally, it is recommended that LBHS consider how it would use the CRM data for analysis.

CRM allows data to be stored and reproduced in various formats such as charts, graphs, and

excel sheets. It is important for LBHS to find a CRM platform that best suits its analytical needs.

CRM as a Service. As a service, CRM is focused on improving the customer service

experience and reactively meeting the requests of stakeholders. For example, one CRM platform

may enable you to send emails directly from the platform, while another may require the

implementation of an outside tool to address this communication channel. Therefore, when

LBHS is considering software options, it should address two questions (1) what role will your

CRM be playing on the front end? and (2) Should the CRM software be used to capture data on

the back-end? (Fundly, n.d.). These different software considerations are discussed below:

On the Front End: One of the best features of CRM software is that it can be
used to speed up outreach efforts. Software can be designed
to segment out different constituent groups and even automate
campaigns. In other words, LBHS can delegate various
communication tasks to take place for specific stakeholder
groups with personalized messages.

On the Back-End: CRMs can also automate data collection from campaigns and
run analytics to keep track of outreach efforts. For example,

Facebook keeps track the number of people that your post reached out to. In CRM, this is possible, depending on the software chosen.

As a service, LBHS will have to consider how it will use CRM software to communicate with stakeholders and what type of outreach efforts they want to perform. It is recommended that LBHS list all of its current communication systems to pinpoint which system is the most effective and commonly used. Notating current communication methods will help ensure that LBHS will find a CRM platform that resembles its current communication methods and characteristics. Communications are a very important component when choosing CRM software. CRM as a service can be a great tool, but if its features do not align with how the organization works with its stakeholders then the CRM software will not be as effective (Connected Cause, 2013).

CRM as a Strategy. CRM can also be defined as a strategy. CRM software can be used as a tool to engage both internal and external stakeholders by enabling LBHS to better plan, coordinate, and communicate the needs of the organization (The Connected Cause, 2013). Deciding which CRM platform fits the needs of LBHS will be a timely task; however, it is best to understand the various elements and components of consideration when deciding to invest in software technology (see Appendix D for software checklist example).

Affordability. With a small organization like LBHS, it is unlikely that it will need new, state-of-the-art software. There are numerous CRM software options. For instance, some software is free or charges a small monthly fee. According to the book *Nonprofit Fundraising 101,* it suggests that an organization should choose a platform that will suite the organization at least for five years and meet the organization's current needs (Rodriguez, 2016). To lower setup costs, as suggested previously, LBHS should recruit an intern or board member with IT

experience. It is vital for LBHS to appoint a tech-savvy individual who take ownership of the CRM software. This will enable LBHS to use the CRM features as a tool to improve services and operations (Rodriguez, 2016).

One important aspect of CRM software to consider is the number of clients and/or stakeholder information that will be housed (e.g. donors, volunteers, staff, corporate sponsorships, partners, etc). Some platforms have a limited number of users built into the cost, while others will charge you a small fee. In other words, some software charges based on the number of client profiles (e.g. 100 individual profiles less than 150 profiles) or the cost is determined by the number of each individual profiles created (e.g. two-dollars per client). Usually a good rule of thumb is to delete any records that have been inactive for three years so the organization is not being charged for unnecessary costs (Fundly, n.d.). Therefore, it is recommended that LBHS purchase CRM software with enough profiles that will allow the organization to grow so LBHS does not have to invest in new software later.

Operational Changes with CRM Software. If LBHS invests in CRM software, it needs to carefully consider what functions it is hoping to achieve through the software. As part of the Internal Operations group, we have agreed that LBHS should adopt technology practices in order to improve its organizational functions and communication practices. To ensure that software is carefully considered, LBHS's board, executive director, and senior staff need to understand what information they want to track and which functionalities they are aiming to achieve through the software. Once LBHS has this understanding, it should review current files to ensure accuracy and prevent duplications (Rodriguez, 2016). It is also suggested that data on donors, staff, volunteers, and board are included (Rodriguez, 2016).

When LBHS considers a CRM software, it is recommended that it gather staff input on what software features they would like to see to better address universal organizational needs and achieve best results (Fundly, n.d). Another factor to consider with CRM software is that some programs place a cap on the number of user who can access it. Certainly, LBHS could find a software that supports the organization's needs, but often the more users a CRM supports, the more money it generally costs (Fundly, n.d.).

CRM Overview. CRM software can be a very useful tool for a nonprofit organization to keep track of data and improve its internal operations (Merkel et al., 2007). Picking such a robust system will require LBHS to envision CRM as not only a software, but also as a system, service, and strategy. CRM can be a large investment and needs to be carefully considered so that the software becomes more of a benefit than a burden to the organization. Despite the challenges, CRM can help LBHS organize their data, members of the organization, and other relevant material needed to improve all operations of LBHS. With CRM software, LBHS would also be able to keep track of the services it provides and analyze data to make improvements. If LBHS envisions growth within its organization, CRM software can help the internal operations of LBHS to handle that growth to better serve the Latinx community.

Roles and Organizational Improvements

As discussed throughout this document, one practice that LBHS needs to adopt to improve their internal operations is restructuring their organizational framework to include defined roles and responsibilities. As indicated in the literature, adopting an organizational structure ensures that needs are being met and the mission is being communicated properly.

While doing research for this proposal, the Internal Operations team had conversations with various community stakeholders who have expressed concerns about poor communication,

lack of responsiveness, and unreliability with LBHS. Many of these issues could be resolved with more effective delegation of responsibilities and an improved communication platform. As outlined in the literature review, it is essential for the executive director to have a clearly defined and rigid role to ensure daily functions of the organization are being executed. For example, one crucial role of the executive director is to delegate organization responsibilities to other staff members and key volunteers.

As the literature indicated, having too many roles within the executive director position dilutes the director's ability to realize the vision of the organization and volunteers are often an overlooked source of human capital. It is possible that some of the responsibilities taken on by Ms. Gomez-Arias could be delegated to trusted volunteers and/or staff.

As Executive Director, Ms. Gomez-Arias has the authority to create job descriptions for all staff members and volunteers. Best practices indicate that any job duty that does not require specific attention from the executive director should be delegated to support staff and volunteers. Although Ms. Gomez-Arias has emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility between roles and responsibilities, best practices suggest that employees are better able to meet the expectations of their position if there is a clear understanding of what those expectations are. Additionally, by creating specific jobs and responsibilities, LBHS will be adopting a strengths-based approach to specialization within those positions.

One recognized area for improvement for LBHS is in creating a policies and procedures manual. According to Ms. Gomez-Arias, there are already policies and procedures complete and on paper, but they have yet to be compiled into one document. The aforementioned outline of responsibilities should be included in the policies and procedures manual, once completed. Another method LBHS could use to improve reliability and reputation within the community is

to incorporate a new electronic communication platform. Other nonprofits in the area are using *Slack* for this purpose; however, there are many options available.

To improve stakeholder relationships and increase understanding in the community of the services provided by LBHS, once the aforementioned steps have been incorporated, the next step is to market. The Internal Operations team also recommends a targeted marketing campaign that will demonstrate improvements being made within the organization. It is critical, however, that these communication and reliability concerns have been resolved prior to making the claim in a marketing campaign.

Conclusion

The following suggestions are intended to improve the internal operations of LBHS. The report produced by the Internal Operation team provides an analysis and overview of best practices for the internal operation functions of LBHS. The focus throughout this report resulted from concerns communicated by the Executive Director to the Internal Operation team. To ensure our recommendations were consistent with the literature and practices of other nonprofit organizations in the United States, the Internal Operation's team analyzed the benefits technology has on organization operations, the importance of effective communication practices, and the implications organization structure has on organization effectiveness.

As LBHS expands and grows within the community, it is highly recommended that LBHS consider how to adopt the various practices presented into its organization's internal operations. LBHS's current lack of technology inhibits the organization's ability to operate at full capacity. For instance, the ability for LBHS to synthesize client demographics and/or provide data on mental health needs of clients is inadequate—data that is needed to apply for large federal grants. Secondly, inconsistent communication platforms limit the ability for LBHS

to communicate effectively across the organization to ensure goals and tasks are being completed.

In regard to staff and/or volunteer roles, responsibilities for each individual role should be clearly defined. Defining individual roles within the organization increases the capacity for anyone within the organization to have a clear understanding on what responsibilities need to be performed no matter what role they fill. Lastly, the executive director plays a vital role in communicating and setting the vision of the organization's mission therefore roles need to be rigid to ensure vital functions of the organization are continually being met.

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Appendix A

Updated Executive Director Job Description

Position: Executive Director
Status: Full-time, Exempt
Salary: $16.000

Summary of Position:
The Executive Director (ED) works under the direction of the LBHS Board of Directors to carry out the mission of LBHS (Latino Behavioral Health Services INC.). The ED coordinates the organization's staff and volunteers, its programs, finances and advocacy efforts. This is a full-time, exempt position with responsibility for staff, statewide volunteer pool and numerous community projects.

Description of Duties:
- Translate the strategic direction as developed in partnership with the Board of Directors into day-to-day operations of the organization
- Supervise staff of part- and full-time employees
- Handle all aspects of human resource management, including hiring, terminating and performance counseling
- Collaborate with staff, community partners and board in developing, implementing, and evaluating programs and work plans
- Ensure quality and growth of programs in areas of family and peer education, support and community outreach
- Ensure reliable and timely service
- Oversee the development and coordination of additional programs and services that support the organization's mission and priorities
- Expand our strong community resident partners base
- Work closely with board committees such as Executive Committee and Finance Committee
- Manage grants and contracts for the organization, assuring reporting requirements are met
- Generate new sources of funding
- Oversee annual awareness events, including fundraising events and State Peer Conference
- Proactively participate in local and state advocacy efforts, especially legislative advocacy
- Engage with reporters, local and state government representatives and members of the community, acting as the public face of the organization
- Oversee the Education Coordinator who will provide public presentations, media interviews, seminars and trainings on mental health/illness, suicide prevention and support for individuals and families impacted
- Engage with all LBHS staff in communicating with nonprofit leaders, governmental entities, business and civic leaders to press for positive change and partner on collaborative projects.

Delegate operation functions to knowledgeable staff and/or volunteers

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Excellent oral and written communication skills

Outstanding interpersonal skills

Ability to work with LBHS staff and delegate when competing priorities demand the Executive Director's time and resources

Comfort with being the "public face" of an organization

Applied knowledge of individual, corporate, government and foundation development strategies or ability to learn

Successful experience working collaboratively with community partners

Understanding of nonprofits management

Experience with large-scale community and partner's supervision

Familiarity with Utah's mental health system a plus

Required lived experience with mental illness and its impacts

Must have first-hand knowledge of culture and language of the Latinx population.

Qualifications:

Preferred Bachelor's degree from accredited university.

Certification in Peer Support is required

Relevant experience in a leadership role in the field of human services and/or business development

Successful grant writing experience with foundations, corporations or government agencies

Supervisory and/or leadership experience

Nonprofit experience highly desirable

Required lived experience of mental illness and its impact on the individual, the family, and the community

Experience with grassroots coalition building, advocacy and membership development preferred

Professional dress and demeanor

Must be bilingual and multicultural

Appendix B

Peer Support Staff Role Check List Example

Task	Completed (Y/N)	Details
Overall Client Goals		
Recovery Goals		
Short-term Goals		
Housing Needs?		
Job Skill Needs		
New Activity Needs or Interests		
Personal Interests/Hobbies		
Community Interests		
Additional Information		

Appendix C

CRM Software Suggestions

CRM Software	Description	Price
Bittrix24	Bitrix24 is a collaboration platform. Bitrix24 provides a complete suite of social collaboration, communication and management tools for your team, including CRM, files sharing, project management, calendars, and more. Bitrix24 is available in cloud and on premise.	Free for up to 12 users and 1 Administrator. Next plan is $39/month
Salesforce-Nonprofit Success Pack	The Nonprofit Success Pack (NPSP) helps you get started with Salesforce CRM. NPSP is an out-of-the-box solution for managing relationships, fundraising, programs, reporting, and more. NPSP is fully customizable, so you can track everything that matters to your organization in one place.	First ten subscriptions free for qualified nonprofits. The next edition (enterprise) is $36/month.
Hubspot	A CRM that's free, forever and is easy to use. That means doing more deals and less data entry. Plus, interactions are tracked automatically and deals are displayed on one dashboard for total visibility without added work. Best of all, you can enjoy up to 1,000,000 contacts, users, and storage without any expiration date – whether you're a team of 1 or 1,000.	The CRM software is free which Hubspot prides itself in. Any additional features may cost a monthly fee.
Highrise	Highrise is a cheap, easy-to-use web-based CRM software that tracks all vital business functions in one place. This software enables you to create households (individual client profiles) where you can insert information, input notes, and send emails all from each individual profile. Files can be uploaded into individual "cases" related to each client to maintain a streamlined easy access of client and/or stakeholder information. Tasks can be assigned to staff and/or volunteer members based on clients or the organization need.	Basic Plan is $24/month, allows six individual user access, 5,000 contacts, and 5GB of storage (document uploads).
Google Drive Technology	Google Drive Applications offers functional application services. Google Docs is a great source to write, store, and share information across the organization. Google Sheets provides the ability to create spread sheets to track and manage functions of the organization (e.g. finances, contacts, etc.)	Free

Appendix D

CRM Software Checklist Example

	[Software A]	[Software B]	[Software C]
List top 5 features the organization needs:			
What are our current communication methods:			
Rate Ease of Use (1-5)			
Email Compatibility? (Y/N)			
What operational capabilities are available? (e.g. orders, bills, marketing)			
What analytical capabilities are available? (e.g. reports, client data)			
What relational capabilities are available? (e.g. communication methods)			
What are the costs? How many client profiles?			
Will it support growth in the organization? (Y/N)			