

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA  
BEHAVIORAL WELLNESS COMMISSION

Dear Program Director,

The County of Santa Barbara, Behavioral Wellness Commission (BWC) is charged with reviewing programs that are a part of the County's Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol system. We review from five to ten programs a year. Your program has been chosen for this review.

Here are the steps involved:

1. A member of the BWC will call you to schedule the review.
2. Once the date is set, the BWC will send you:
  - a. Letters to distribute to your clients or parents of clients for programs serving children, inviting them to participate in the review if they so choose. (are we doing this?)
  - b. Notices to post at your center to inform clients or parents of clients for programs serving children, of the opportunity to participate in the review. ?
3. On the day of the review:
  - a. Members of the BWC will come to your program and will meet with you to get some background information about your program before interviewing clients.?
  - b. Client interviews will begin. Please have a private room or space set aside. The interviews are totally confidential. The interview can be an empowering experience for the client. It's a chance for them to have direct, personal input into the process of improving our mental health system.
  - c. The reviewer from BWC may want to interview a staff member or two about how the programs work.
  - d. Program Director or assignee will accompany BWC members on a tour of the facility.

Key things to remember:

1. Client interviews are voluntary. We appreciate it if you do everything you can to make sure clients know about the interviews and what they are for, but no client should be told that they have to participate.
2. All information gathered in the client interview is confidential. The reviewer from BWC will not be able to tell you what was said in the interview.
3. The BWC reviewer is only doing an interview with the clients, and will not attempt to intervene in individual treatment plans or offer to fix any problems or complaints a client might bring up.
4. The BWC reviewer will not look at client charts, billing records, financial documents, or any of the other records. Our focus is on the clients, the services they receive, and how they feel about it.
5. The reviewer from BWC will write a summary based on the findings of the interviews. The summary will be presented to the Director of the Behavioral Wellness Department and a copy to the Program Director.

In the event you disagree with any of findings or recommendations of the BWC, you'll of course have an opportunity to respond to the BWC and we urge you to do so. We like to emphasize that this is a friendly review rather than an investigation. Not only is this process of value the Behavioral Wellness Department in their evaluation of programs, but it helps make the BWC stronger and more articulate advocates for mental health funding when we meet with Supervisors during the course of the year. Also, the reviews help us understand what's happening on the front lines of the mental health and drug and alcohol systems, which then adds immediacy and depth to the recommendations we make in our Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors.

If you have any questions about this review process, we'll be glad to answer them. Please feel free to call???? at any time.

Sincerely,  
Sharon?  
BWC Chair?