



Director's Report

March 16, 2016

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Escrow Closes on Santa Maria CSU: On February 19th escrow closed on the Agnes Avenue property in Santa Maria that will serve as the new Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) in North County. The county's first CSU opened in Santa Barbara in January. A CSU is a short-term treatment facility for adults who are experiencing an acute reaction to a crisis event. It provides up to 24-hour supervised, structured treatment and observation in a safe environment as an alternative to hospitalization. The Santa Maria CSU is expected to open in Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

Kudos for Behavioral Wellness Staff: Lee Bethel, Deputy Chief Probation Officer, had strong words of praise for Department of Behavioral Wellness staff members Stacy McCrory, MFT, Forensic Services Manager, and Jason Tarman, MFT, Juvenile Justice Mental Health Services Supervisor and his team for their assistance in a recent Institute for Medical Quality (IMQ) inspection ... Carla Dartis, Senior Strategist with the Alameda County District Attorney Office, thanked Lisa Conn, MFT, Supervisor of the Resiliency Interventions for Sexual Exploitation (RISE) Project for her "extraordinary contribution to the Fresno February 25 Regional Information Summit. The Commissioners are still commenting on how much they learned. Your powerful presentation has me on a quest to delve in deeper into health delivery and the challenges with Medi-Cal and mental health supports." ... Jennifer Newbold, Vice President and Director of Behavioral Health for PathPoint, recently saluted MIS staff members Jelena Pavlov, Robert Rankin and David Simon for their assistance in producing reports. "They are so fast to respond, helpful, and a true pleasure. They make my job not only more efficient, easier, but also more pleasant."

Behavioral Wellness IT Manager Hired: We welcome Marshall Ramsey as our new Information Technology (IT) Manager. Marshall began work on Monday, March 14. Marshall joins the department with over twenty years of experience. He obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from the University of Texas. Prior to his relocation to Santa Barbara, Marshall owned and operated Ramsey Systems, directing and managing all aspects of IT consultation in Austin, Texas. Marshall also worked as the Managed Services Director for Mission IT Services and the IT administrator for Lichliter/Jameson and Associates, both also located in Austin. In 2012 Marshall moved to Santa Barbara and served as the Senior Consulting Engineer for Sagewood Systems, providing consultation to Cottage Health Care Systems. We welcome Marshall to the Behavioral Wellness team!

New Crisis Programs Evaluated: In January and April 2014 the Department of Behavioral Wellness received grants from the California Health Facilities Financing Authority (CHFFA) to support new programs designed to improve responses and care for individuals in crisis with severe mental illness and substance abuse throughout Santa Barbara County. Grant funding supports three separate programs: the Mobile Crisis Support Team Program based in Lompoc, the Crisis Residential Treatment Program in North and South County and the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) Treatment Program. Behavioral Wellness has partnered with UCSB to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs and recently submitted an evaluation report to CHFFA for the first year of the grant. Here are the findings:



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- The Lompoc Mobile Crisis Support Team hired three mental health caseworkers, two practitioner interns, one recovery assistant, and one psychiatric nurse. Grant objectives to decrease wait time were met; the wait time for crisis response from the Mobile Crisis team is currently 15 minutes in Lompoc and 30 minutes in Santa Ynez.
- In both the North and South County Crisis Residential Units, clients reported that they were satisfied with the program and staff. Both residential programs also experienced high levels of client engagement, with approximately 80% of clients participating in group and individual programs offered at the residential units.
- In the North County, clients did not report significant improvement in symptoms of psychological distress from intake to discharge. However, the average level of distress at intake was moderate and at discharge was low. There was significant improvement in the number of clients with stable housing at discharge, and 71% of clients were connected to outpatient care.
- At the South County facility, clients reported significant improvement in symptoms of psychological distress from intake to discharge. Progress was made toward improving clients' housing situations, with 80% of clients reporting stable or permanent housing at discharge. More than 75% of clients were also connected to outpatient care.
- The Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) in Santa Barbara started admitting clients in January of 2016, and evaluation results will be included in the next report to CHFFA.

Safety Codes Established for Behavioral Wellness Service Sites: In collaboration with the Santa Barbara Public Health Department, on March 14 the Department of Behavioral Wellness Safety and Risk Management Committee launched a color-coded Emergency Alert Code Plan. The rollout will be reinforced by several activities, including providing a code summary to all staff members that can be affixed to the back of staff badges, training, technical assistance and drill preparation.

Behavioral Wellness Co-Sponsors Mental Health Awareness Event: On Tuesday, March 22, the Department of Behavioral Wellness and Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) will present "Changing the Conversation About Mental Illness," a lecture and questions and answers with Alison Malmon, Executive Director of Active Minds. Active Minds is the leading nonprofit organization that empowers students to speak openly about mental health to educate others and encourage help-seeking. The event will occur from 1-2 pm at the Garvin Theater on SBCC's west campus. The lecture is supported by a grant obtained by the Department of Behavioral Wellness from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), part of an ongoing effort to provide outreach and assistance to young adults at risk for first episode psychosis. More information about Ms. Malmon and her organization is available at activeminds.org.

Nutrition Curriculum Being Developed for Outpatient Clients: In recognition of the key role that nutrition plays in maintaining good health, a new curriculum is being developed for outpatient clients. Five or six modules will address a variety of topics, including Healthy Eating on a Budget, My Plate, and Basic Cooking Skills. Lead staff members developing the nutrition curriculum are Kathy Burkley, RD, Food Services Supervisor with the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF), and Yaneris Muñiz, Behavioral Health Policy Coordinator.

Crescend Health Makes Community Debut: On March 10, Phoenix of Santa Barbara hosted a formal re-branding party at the historic Carrillo Adobe in downtown Santa Barbara to announce becoming "Crescend Health." J. T. Turner, Executive Director, introduced the event and welcomed guests. Mayor Helene Schneider presented Crescend Health's Board President Julie Kessler Solomon with a Letter of Recognition from the City honoring Phoenix for providing high quality residential and outpatient mental health services since 1972 and for becoming "Crescend Health." Hillary Blackerby presented J. T. Turner with a Letter of Recognition from State

Assembly Member Das Williams. Suzanne Grimesey, Chief Strategy Officer from the County Department of Behavioral Wellness, congratulated Crescend Health on the unveiling of its new name and thanked the agency for its many years of collaboration with the Department.

Phoenix of Santa Barbara remains the legal name of the agency; Crescend Health is its new DBA. Crescend's programs include Mountain House and Phoenix House with 26 residential treatment beds, the Dual Diagnosis Program, treating adults with addictive and psychiatric disorders, with a capacity of 45 clients, and the Mainstream Program, which works with families and individuals on a fee-for-service basis, providing family, individual and group therapy, as well as innovative case management. For more information visit www.crescendhealth.org

US Senate Passes Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act: On March 10 the United States Senate passed CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. According to the Legal Action Committee, a nonprofit advocacy organization, "Senate passage of CARA marks a significant step forward in the fight against heroin and prescription opioid addictions and overdoses." CARA expands access to addiction treatment, provides funds for recovery and prevention programs, and creates new opportunities for treatment as an alternative to incarceration. "The Center urges the House of Representatives to pass the bill, and Congressional appropriators to fund CARA now."

First Episode Psychosis Training Held: On March 11 a training on effective outreach and assistance for individuals experiencing first episode psychosis (FEP) was conducted by Stars Behavioral Health. Funded by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the training was attended by 28 Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) peers and staff and UCSB resident assistants. The session focused on the Transition to independence Process (TIP) model, an evidence-based practice for improving outcomes for youth with emotional/behavioral difficulties. The Stars Behavioral Health Group serves more than 20,000 California children, youth and families annually at 16 program sites.

Ethical Issues in Treating Inmates to Be Studied: According to a report by Maiken Scott in newsworks.org, researchers in Philadelphia are looking into ethical issues involved in treating inmates in American prisons. Between 15-20 percent of inmates in American prisons have a serious mental illness. Many therapists are torn between a loyalty to their patients and to the institutions employing them. More information is available [here](#).

Systems Change Calendar

Please confirm the meeting time and location prior to attending.

- **March 17, 2016 - Children's Regional Partnership Santa Barbara:** Meets the 3rd Thursday of month at the Santa Barbara Children's Clinic 429 N San Antonio Rd., Room 119, 1:30 pm -2:30 pm. Contact: Crystal Ramirez, cramirez@co.santa-barbara.ca.us .
- **March 17, 2016—Consumer and Family Meetings:** Meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 1455 Mission Drive, Holiday Inn Express, Solvang, 2:00-4:30. Contact: Tina Wooton twooton@co.santa-barbara.ca.us; 681-5323.
- **March 21, 2016 - Regional Partnership, Santa Maria:** Meets the 3rd Monday of the month at the main Foster Road Conference Room. Children's 1:00-2:00 pm; Adults 2:00-3:30 pm. Contact Elodie Patarias, epatari@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.



- **March 23, 2016 - Change Agents:** Meets the 4rd Wednesday of the month 9:00-12:30 pm at the Marriott Hotel, Buellton. Contact: Kathie Cisek at 681- 4773, kcisek@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.
- **March 23, 2016 - Crisis Action Team:** Meets the 4th Wednesday of the month 3:00-4:00 pm at the ADMHS Santa Barbara Children's Conference Room 119. For more information, contact Dr. Ole Behrendtsen, obehrendtsen@co.santa-barbara.ca.us; 681-5235.
- **March 24, 2016 - Children's System of Care:** Meets the 4th Thursday of the month 10:30-12:00 pm at SELPA Conference Room; 240 E. HWY 246, Suite 200 Buellton CA 93127. For more information, contact Tom Sodergren (805)570-5240 or TSodergren@casapacifica.org. or Ana Vicuna avicuna@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.
- **March 24, 2016 - Cultural Competency Action Team:** Meets the 4th Thursday of the month 10:30-12:00 pm at ADMHS Conference Room 119, Lompoc and Santa Maria video conference call. For more information contact Cuco Rodriguez: (805)681-4505 or cucorodriguez@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.
- **March 24, 2016 – Steering Committee:** Meets the 4th Thursday of the month 1:30-4:00 pm BOS Conference Room Santa Barbara
- **April 4, 2016 - Peer Action Team:** Meets the 1st Monday of the month from 10:00-11:00 a.m. via video conference, Santa Barbara MHS Conference Room, Santa Maria Foster Road Small Conference Room, Lompoc Cypress Conference Room. Contact Tina Wooton, twooton@co.santa-barbara.ca.us; 681-5323 or Kit McMillion, 259-9609; naftili@icloud.com.
- **April 13, 2016 - Housing, Empowerment, Action and Recovery Team (HEART):** Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 1 pm - 2:30 pm, via video conferencing between Lompoc Cypress Conference Room, Santa Maria Foster Road Annex, Santa Barbara Conference Room 261, ADMHS Administration. Contact: Debbie McCoy at 455-9334 or deborah.d.mccoy2@gmail.com; Laura Zeitz, (805) 722-0136 or lazeitz@co.santa-barbara.ca.us; Frank Thompson (805) 957-1301 thompsonhc@aol.com
- **April 18, 2016 - Regional Partnership, Santa Maria:** Meets the 3rd Monday of the month at the main Foster Road Conference Room. Children's 1:00-2:00 pm; Adults 2:00-3:30 pm. Contact Elodie Patarias, (805) 934-6546 or epatari@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.

