

Director's Report

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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

Behavioral Wellness and Sheriff Department Co-Response Team in the News: Bradley Crable, South County Mobile Crisis Services clinician, was recently interviewed on KCRW, aside Sheriff Deputy James McKarrell. Together, Bradley and James spoke about the value of the Co-Response team in reducing incarceration as well as aiding those in need of mental health care. Bradley shared during the interview that the average number of calls received per co-response day is 6-8. To date, Bradley and James have worked over 40 shifts together and have together made over 100 referrals for services. Of all responses by this team, only 2 have resulted in incarcerations. With approximately a dozen responses resulting in involuntary holds being written to facilitate hospitalization, other referrals include warming centers, Crisis Stabilization Unit, Crisis Residential Program, sobering center, outpatient services as well as providing assistance with taking medications or evening sharing a cup of coffee. Thank you Bradley for your work in our community!

While news media may sometimes focus on individuals with mental illness who may pose a danger to the community it is important to remember that national statistics show individuals with mental illness are more likely to be the victim of a violent crime, not the perpetrator. The symptoms for many living with mental illness are more likely to cause them to withdraw from society, not violently attack it. And specifically regarding gun violence, less than 5% of gun related crimes in the US are committed by individuals with a mental illness. For those who wish to view the interview, please click [here](https://www.kcrw.com/news/shows/the-805/what-really-goes-in-santa-barbaras-dump/finding-alternatives-to-jail-for-the-mentally-ill) or enter the following link:
<https://www.kcrw.com/news/shows/the-805/what-really-goes-in-santa-barbaras-dump/finding-alternatives-to-jail-for-the-mentally-ill>

Biannual DHCS Review of PHF a Success: On February 13, 2019, a review team from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) arrived to the PHF for a Biannual Medi-Cal site review. This review was not planned but followed standard review protocols. The review began with an entrance interview which included Behavioral Wellness staff from PHF Leadership, QCM, Facilities and Administration. On February 15, the review concluded with an exit interview. During the review period, the review team reviewed opened and closed medical records, joined client groups and met with clients individually. In addition, review occurred of the physical plant, emergency disaster plans, clinical practices, policies and procedures, aftercare services, medication practices, denial of rights and staffing vacancies.

The overall feedback provided in the exit interview was very positive, even using words to describe the PHF as a "Super PHF...not by licensure type, but in how the PHF is operated." Comments were made on the "thoroughness of the Psychiatry notes," being "very impressed with the psychosocial assessment," and overall documentation being "incredible."

Areas for improvement which will be noted in the follow up report from DHCS and will require a plan of correction were minimal. These areas include the following:

- Documentation of all PHF staff completing 48 hours of in-service training in the areas of CPI (Managing Assaultive Behaviors), CPR and suicide prevention
- Informed consent for medication use for patients with LPS conservatorships, signed by conservator in a timely manner
- Controlled destruction logs require both RN and Pharmacist signatures (not LPTs, etc)
- Nursing discharge list must reflect that patient has received written information of medication side effects
- Vacant positions for Registered Health Information Technician and Director of Social Services (DHCS to be notified upon these positions being filled)

Behavioral Wellness can expect to receive a report of the review findings within the next few months and will have 15 calendar days from the receipt of the report to return the plan of correction. That said, feedback has been given to indicate a mere 22% disallowance rate would represent a 36% increase from the last review. Huge thanks and appreciation go to the PHF staff and QCM staff who remained on site and readily available to support the review process as well as all others who worked to support review needs during the visit including Administration, Human Resources, Facilities, OQSM, and others.

New and Revised Policies Approved: Behavioral Wellness frequently updates policies to reflect enhancements and changes to programs and practices. The following policies were recently approved and are available on the Behavioral Wellness website at <http://countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness/policies>. You can find policies approved within the last 6 months under the tab “View Only RECENT Policies”. You can also search alphabetically, by category, or by keyword.

Department/CBO policies

1. **Beneficiary Rights (REVISED)** – This policy was updated to reflect Managed Care Final Rule requirements. The Department and its contracted providers must inform Medi-Cal beneficiaries enrolled in specialty mental health and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (ODS) services of their rights, ensure these rights are upheld, and train employees on these rights.
2. **Site Certification for Specialty Mental Health Services (REVISED)** – Ensures compliance with DHCS site certification requirements for county-operated programs and contracted providers delivering specialty mental health services.

Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) policies

3. **CSU Medical Clearance Screening (NEW)** – Establishes medical screening process to assess an individual’s current medical status and stability within the context of approval for services to the CSU.
4. **CSU Intake Procedures (REVISED)** – Establishes CSU referral and intake criteria and procedures.

Lompoc (West County) Regional Partnership Update: The Lompoc Regional Partnership meeting occurs every other month. Please revisit this section in next month’s Director’s Report for an update on this team.

Santa Maria Regional Partnership Update: The Santa Maria's North County Regional Partnership Meetings are held monthly at the Santa Maria Adult Outpatient Clinic located at 500 W Foster Road in Santa Maria, CA (large conference room):

- Children's Regional Partnership Meeting – 3rd Mondays @ 10:00 am – 11:00 am
- Adult Regional Partnership Meeting – 3rd Mondays @ 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

The Santa Maria regional partnership meetings focus on promoting the expansion of cross-sector collaboration through strengthening and sustaining key community partnerships, such as those with the county of Santa Barbara's Department of Public Health, Department of Social Services, law enforcement and a variety of community-based organizations (CBO) providing mental health and/or substance abuse treatment to children, transition age youth (TAY) and adults in Santa Maria. The partnership meetings in February encouraged partners to openly share their ideas for future meeting focus areas to include identifying inter-agency system gaps and proposed resolutions. Additionally, Behavioral Wellness' Santa Maria Children's Outpatient Clinic's SPIRIT Program presented on the array of mental health services that this specialized program provides to at-risk youth and their caregivers.

Santa Barbara Regional Partnership Update:

Adult Regional Partnership meeting

The Adult Regional Partnership meeting took place on February 11. Santa Barbara Sheriff Department-Lieutenant Lammer presented at this meeting. He shared that when he began in his role in 2015, a lot of their partnerships had fallen apart. They have been actively working on improving partnerships and collaboration with Behavioral Wellness, Public Health, Probation, and the Public Defender's Office for the well-being of their mutual clients. Lt Lammer shared that safety cells were being over-used but that now there is a "step up" and "step down" process which assists. If an inmate is locked in a safety cell for up to 12 hours, they will call Mobile Crisis Services. In isolation cells, Medical and Mental Health programs will visit and assess/examine these inmates multiple times per week. Lt Lammer shared of the Sheriff Department working closely with the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) as another example of collaboration. Collaboration also takes place in problem solving. Whereas previously an escort between the jail and Behavioral Wellness would be needed to access the inmate/patient and created a barrier in accessing care. Now, designated Behavioral Wellness staff may directly access clients independently. Lt. Lammer shared that when the new North County jail facility opens in November, there will be a medical and a mental health wing built into the design. Additional information on the jail was shared with the group which was much appreciated such as the goal of using the PHF as little as possible, new positions added to the jail mental health team including a psychiatrist, nurses and additional licensed mental health professions, and that there is currently work to develop a Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) treatment program for inmates prescribed suboxone.

Childrens' Regional Partnership meeting

The Childrens' Regional Partnership meeting took place on February 21. Katrina Vogt of Child Welfare Services presented at this meeting. She overviewed the many teams within the Child Welfare Department. Additionally she shared statistics for Santa Barbara County regarding the number of investigated cases, number of detained children, and the number of unsubstantiated cases. She gave tips on what the criteria is that would necessitate a detention and also the challenges of over reporting. She shared that the number of children in group homes has significantly decreased due to the Continuum of Care Reform and the group discussed the challenges and benefits of this legislation.

Change Agents Update: Change agents met this month to conduct quarterly presentations of all process improvement projects for the system supervisors and managers. Listed below are some of the projects our teams are working on: making the clinic feel more welcoming by displaying client art, increasing staff's confidence with American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) screening tools, improving staff morale and wellness, improving client quality of life for those living at room and boards in North County. Change agents continue to meet monthly to share innovations and ideas and to strategize on the most efficient way to implement interventions and gather data with the overall goal of system improvements.

Cultural Competence and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT) Update: CCDAT members are currently conducting a bilingual survey of all Department staff to gather language capacity data in anticipation for this month's EQRO visit. In April, CCDAT will launch a county-wide needs assessment with the assistance of Dr. Jonathan Martinez, a cultural psychology professor and researcher at the California State University at Northridge and funded by the Southern California Regional Partnership (SCRIP).

Children's System of Care (CSOC) Action Team Update: The CSOC Action Team Meetings are held monthly on the 4th Thursdays @ 10:30 am – 12:00 pm at the Buellton Recreation Center (301 2nd Street, Room A, Buellton, CA).

The CSOC committee seeks to integrate a wide variety of leaders and stakeholders invested in collaboration and ongoing systemic enhancements for children's services throughout Santa Barbara County. CSOC utilizes the monthly action team meeting forum as a responsible and responsive reflection of current needs and concerns that affect the lives of the youth & families served. Additionally, the CSOC team openly discusses community responses to major incidents affecting the population at large, such as school shootings, natural disasters, the social and political environment, suicides, bullying, DACA/immigration issues, gangs/homicides, multi-generational trauma, and more.

The committee invited Ms. Yaneris Muñiz (Behavioral Wellness' Policy and Project Development Coordinator and Ethnic Services and Diversity Manager from the Office of Quality and Strategy Management) to return again to lead an informative and substantive follow-up discussion regarding how to mitigate implicit bias and increase cultural humility in our various systems of care. Additionally, guest presenters, Edwin Weaver (Executive Director of Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley) and Jody Colt (Resource Parent), provided a presentation on Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), a holistic, attachment-based, evidence-based and trauma-informed modality designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children and ultimately transform the systems to be optimally equipped to serve them.

Crisis Action Team Update: The Children's Triage Program (CTP) was started in Santa Maria and Lompoc last month. The CTP is funded through a 3 year grant from the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSAOAC) and provides Behavioral Wellness staffing to treat adolescents experiencing a mental health crisis. The goal of the program is to prevent inpatient psychiatric hospital admissions of adolescents and provide support to those waiting for placement in a psychiatric hospital when safety planning is not possible. Santa Barbara County has no adolescent psychiatric hospital beds, and there is a statewide shortage of these beds causing long wait times in the emergency departments for kids needing inpatient psychiatric hospitalization to stabilize a mental health crisis. CTP staff work closely with adolescents in the hospital emergency departments providing de-escalation, intensive short-term therapy, parent education and case management services. When an adolescent is released from the emergency department the CTP staff

will provide brief, intensive MH services in the home and link to longer-term care. In addition, the CTP staff are available to quickly respond to a crisis in the community when our SAFTY staff are not available and also provide intensive preventative services to adolescents at risk of a mental health crisis. We are hoping to get the program up and running in Santa Barbara later this month.

Crisis Services Manager [John Winckler](#) spoke at this month's NAMI Speakers Meeting on the 28th. John presented on the array of crisis services available in the South County including our Crisis Hub consisting of the South County Crisis Services Clinic, the Crisis Stabilization Unit and the PHF. Behavioral Wellness' Crisis Residential Treatment program (ANKA) was also discussed. John also spoke about the new Co-Response pilot program and the different grants that are in process for co-response, Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion and Homeless Services. Meeting attendees had a lot of questions about the complexity of crisis services, state laws regarding involuntary psychiatric detentions and the scarcity of inpatient psychiatric beds for youth and adults.

The Co-Response pilot team of Behavioral Wellness Case Worker Bradley Crable and Sheriff Deputy James McKarrell continue to stay very busy both in the field and the press. Throughout their 10 hour shifts four days a week they are responding to 5-7 calls per day for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Preliminary data is showing the team is having a very positive impact in a number of areas and this data will be shared in the Director's Report in April. Bradley and James also attended the Crisis Action Team meeting this month and gave a brief (and entertaining) talk on how they operate and the benefits of co-response. They were also mentioned in a recent Santa Barbara Independent news article and were interviewed on The 805 news program sponsored by the KCRW radio station. More on this interview is noted earlier in the report.

Homeless Services (HEART) Action Team: The Homeless Services (HEART) Action Team meeting occurs every other month. Please revisit this section in next month's Director's Report for an update on this team. The next HEART Action Team will take place on April 10, 2019.

CFMAC/Peer Action Team: The CFMAC/Peer Action Team (PAT) met this month to discuss the status of the current Peer Empowerment Manager position as well as discuss the importance of setting regular meetings. The team discussed the history of CFMAC/PAT discussed the purpose of CFMAC/PAT, the location as well as the desired frequency of future meetings. An update was provided on recruitment status. There are currently vacant Peer Employee positions, the Peer Empowerment Manager position and the NEW Extra-Help Special Projects position(s). Lastly, MHSA Chief, Lindsay Walter presented the MHSA Plan Update for 2019-2020.

Forensic Action Team Update: Meeting the needs of people experiencing both homelessness and behavioral health challenges is an important priority for the Department of Behavioral Wellness. Recently, the department augmented this initiative by securing additional funding to expand Homeless Outreach Services into both the North and West regions of the County. This will be accomplished through the utilization of one time Homeless and Mentally Ill Outreach and Treatment (HMIOT) monies, awarded by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). The funding will allow for the hiring of (2) full time civil service practitioners, (1) full time civil service case worker, and (1) extra help part time administrative office professional; the hiring for these positions is currently underway. The newly constructed teams will adopt engagement strategies that meet the specific needs of homeless populations in each region. Behavioral Wellness Homeless Services continues to strive towards maintaining a high degree of collaboration with other Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care providers and will continue to explore opportunities for multi-disciplinary and inter-agency outreach in both the

north and west regions of the county. The next meeting date is March 27, 2019 with a room change to the small conference room (room 127) of the Santa Barbara Children's Clinic.

In addition to the newly secured Homeless Mentally Ill Outreach and Treatment (HMIOT) funding, the department was awarded a cash donation on behalf of the Gordon Family Trust. Behavioral Wellness plans to use the donation and grant funds to purchase at least one van for homeless outreach and service delivery. The van would also be supported by peer support specialists, a case manager, and clinical staff, and will have access to a psychiatric technician and psychiatrist or nurse practitioner via telepsychiatry. The van will contain a commemoration plaque to the Gordon Trust in recognition of this generous donation. To bring greater awareness to its programming, Homeless Services will be facilitating presentations with community providers and other county programs. Homeless services will present to upcoming Behavioral Wellness staff meetings in Lompoc on 3/13/19 and in Santa Maria on 3/20/19.

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

The Department of Health Care Services Shares Implementation Plans for a Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Project Expansion: In an effort to address the opioid epidemic throughout the state, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is implementing the California Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Expansion Project. This effort is funded by the State Targeted Response (STR) grant and State Opioid Response (SOR) grant. These grants were awarded to states by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with the goal of increasing MAT capacity nationwide. Since these funds were awarded, DHCS has identified nearly 30 projects which are being implemented with the support of STR and SOR funds. More information on these projects can be found by clicking [here](#) or entering the following URL: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MAT-Expansion-Project-.aspx>. To receive updates on the MAT Expansion Project described, please email Courtney@harbageconsulting.com.

SYSTEMS CHANGE CALENDAR

- **Behavioral Wellness Commission:** The Behavioral Wellness Commission meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 3:00pm – 5:00pm. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children's Clinic large conference room and the Santa Maria Clinic Conference Room. Questions: Karen Campos, kcampos@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Change Agent Meeting:** Change agents meet the fourth Wednesday of every month 9 – 11 am except during quarterly in-person meetings, which are 9 am – 12 noon. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children's Clinic, Small conference room; Lompoc Conference Room, ACT, upstairs, 401 E. Cypress and Large conference room, 500 West Foster Road, Santa Maria. Questions: Dalila Brown, dbrown@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** Meetings occur every other month on the third Tuesday at 301 N. R Street. Questions: Nicole Becker, nbecker@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

- **Santa Barbara Adult Regional Partnership:** meets every 3rd Monday of the month from 10:00 am – 11:00 am at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Barbara Children’s Regional Partnership:** 3th Thursday of the month from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3rd Monday of the month at 10 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Shana Burns at sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Maria Adult Regional Partnership** occurs every 3rd Monday of the month at 11 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Elodie Patarias, epatari@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or Geoff Bernard, gbernard@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **The Housing, Empowerment, Action and Recovery Team (HEART)** meets the second Wednesday of every other month, 1:00-2:30 p.m. The next meeting is **April 10, 2019**. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Conference Room 261 and Santa Maria Annex via videoconference. Contact Laura Zeitz, lazeitz@sbcwell.org
- **The Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT)** meets the second Friday of each month, 9:30-11:00 am, Locations: Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic Large Conference Room 119, Lompoc B St.
- **The Peer Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the Month from 2 – 4:00 pm. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Santa Barbara Conference Room 261, Lompoc Children’s New Port Room the Santa Maria Annex Room via videoconference.
- **The Crisis Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the month, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Santa Barbara Children’s large conference room 119. Contact John Winckler, jwinckler@sbcwell.org
- **The Children’s System of Care Action Team** meets the 4th Thursday of the month, 10:30 am - 12:00 noon. SELPA Conference Room, 240 E. Hwy. 246, Suite 200, Buellton CA 93127. Contact Shana Burns at sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4th Wednesday from 2:00 – 3:30. The meeting will be held at the Behavioral Wellness Children’s Mental Health Services building, room 119, located at 429 N. San Antonio Rd in Santa Barbara. **Please note:** The next meeting taking place on **March 27** will meet in **room 127** (not room 119). Anyone wishing to join by videoconference or have questions may contact John Lewis in advance (805-450-2545) to make arrangements.