

Director's Report

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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

DHCS Triennial Review a Success: On February 11-13, the Department of Health Care Services conducted a Triennial System Review of Behavioral Wellness as Santa Barbara County's Mental Health Plan. Preliminary feedback was provided during the exit interview on February 13th. Some of the strengths shared are noted below:

- *Prioritization of monitoring and evaluation of care*
- *Multi-disciplinary partnering through Community Treatment and Support (CTS), Regional Partnership meetings, Interagency Review Committee and Co-Response*
- *Triage Teams*
- *Dedicated Grievance Committee*
- *Service Request Log tracking*
- *Orientation Groups*
- *Robust Cultural Competency program*
- *Dedicated Policies and Procedure Lead*
- *Strong Compliance Program*
- *MD Peer Review process with focus Poly-pharmacy*
- *Integration of Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health on the Access Line*
- *Innovative programs being implemented: Telehealth for remote areas, expanding crisis services, pursuit of housing opportunities*
- *Excellent that the MHP writes all 5150 holds*
- *Effective use of Peers throughout programs*
- *Data driven programs*
- *Collaboration of Practitioner and Parent Partners to support the Children's Crisis Services*
- *Commitment to reduce service barriers and assure rapid access to care*

Special thanks to Careena Robb, Geoffrey Barnard and Kristina Linford for their support of the chart review process. Strengths identified by the review team during chart review include:

- *Data driving approach to chart reviews with a focus around assessments and multi-disciplinary team participation*
- *Many computer generated reports to track service*
- *MHP and CBOs using the same electronic health record*
- *Reduction of service barriers (ex: allowing for interim care plans that enable beneficiaries to quickly begin services)*
- *Poly-pharmacy tracking is very good*
- *Strong process for regular review of over and under-utilization of services*

We are grateful to get feedback on areas of ongoing improvement such as improving the test call process, areas where we can strengthen our QIC Work Plan, enhancing of our chart review process, continued efforts to add Therapeutic Foster Care, enhancement of electronic forms to assure all required areas are

met and to assure consistency. To achieve the level of positive feedback received takes many things including a true system wide understanding of the requirements of a Mental Health Plan, leadership which sustains system knowledge while continually aiming to improve client care, and a keen ability to present our system understanding of the requirements. Special thanks to each and every person involved in making this review a success. Special thanks to **Jaime Huthsing, MFT, QCM Manager** who led this review.

Support in the Community: Santa Barbara encountered yet another tragedy with the loss of two important community members through a hit and run accident. The lives of Adolfo Corral, who worked on the faculty of SBCC) and Mary Jane Corral (teacher at La Patera) were honored during a vigil held at SBCC on Wednesday, February 12. Behavioral Wellness and the Community Wellness Team were present to offer support for those gathered. Behavioral Wellness was also present earlier in the week providing support on the campus of SBCC for faculty and students along with the Community Wellness Team. In addition, the Community Wellness Team offered support at others schools in the community where the Corral children attend as well as supporting the Girl Scout troop also impacted.

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.

1. **Monitoring the Safety and Effectiveness of Medication Practices (Revised)** – This policy outlines the Department’s mechanisms for monitoring the provision of safe and effective pharmacologic interventions for clients.
2. **Mental Health Client Assessment (Revised)** – This policy provides guidance on proper outpatient clinical assessment practices and procedures.
3. **Retention and Destruction of Medical Records (Revised)** – This policy outlines the requirements for maintaining, archiving, and destroying clients’ medical records.
4. **Cultural and Linguistic Competency (Revised)** -This policy communicates to staff and contracted providers the Department’s commitment to provide culturally competent and linguistically appropriate services.

MHSA Community Programs Planning Process: Mental Health Services Act Chief, Lindsay Walter, and the Regional MHSA Community Planning Workgroup is hard at work traveling throughout all regions of the county meeting with stakeholders on ideas and input for the initial draft of the Three Year MHSA Plan Update for Fiscal Years 2020-2023 as required in the Community Program Planning Process. The inclusive and on-going community process allows for the Department to gather feedback about experiences with MHSA programs and the current behavioral health system; to gauge the overall impact and effectiveness of such programs, to record recommendations for improvement of programs and processes, and to acknowledge feedback regarding future and/or unmet needs.

Shared feedback thus far includes focused topic discussions on 1) Housing and Homeless Services; 2) Whole Person Care; 3) Peer Support; 4) Children and Youth Services along with the currently funded MHSA programs. All are welcome to join the conversation at upcoming Department Action Team and Community Meetings throughout the month of February and March.

To learn more about opportunities to engage in the planning process, please see dates listed on the following flyers: [Departmental Action Team Meetings](#) and [Community Meetings](#). Forums taking place during Action Team meetings are also noted in the report under each Action Team's report. For more information about the Community Planning Process or to share input, please contact MHSA Chief, Lindsay Walter, JD at 805)621-5236 or lwalter@sbcbswell.org

Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting: The monthly Regional Staff Collaboration with Public Health took place on January 21st, 2020 with a dynamic presentation by Gustavo Prado from *Our County, Our Kids* on the efforts Santa Barbara County is taking to support foster homes and "forever families" to secure permanency for our children. Information was shared, discussed and encouraged to distribute to the community. Staff from Behavioral Wellness, Public Health, Probation, CWS, Social Services and our CBO's were present. The next meeting will take place on March 17th, 2020 from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Santa Barbara Regional Partnership Meeting: **The Adult Regional Partnership** took place on January 27. Carolyn Paine and Oscar Soto with Community Solutions-Santa Barbara Day Reporting Center attended and gave a presentation on the services they provide. Community Solutions serves adults on Parole who are not considered to be a high risk for return to prison. Some of their services include payment for housing, sober living, employment, substance use counseling, reasoning and rehabilitation groups, and case management specialized on reducing criminal thinking leading to criminal behaviors. Ongoing collaboration will be occurring with Behavioral Wellness. **The Children's Regional Partnership** meeting took place on January 16. At this meeting, Josh Woody, QCM Manager with Behavioral Wellness provided a presentation on the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS). DMC-ODS services are offered to clients with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Services offered through this system are voluntary and require a parent consent for adolescents under the age of 12 years. Although services cannot be offered for people in custody, screenings can occur in custody to establish an appointment scheduled for after the release date. An update was provided on the Access Line which has been conducting an increased number of screenings and providing referrals as result of expanded staffing. A referral form and release of information (ROI) form are available on the Behavioral Wellness website to expedite the process of making referrals.

Santa Maria Regional Partnership Meeting: 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/TAY Regional Partnership Meeting – 3rd Mondays @ 10:00 am – 11:00 am
- Adult Regional Partnership Meeting – 3rd Mondays @ 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

The guest presenters during the month of January were as follows: Casa Pacifica's SAFTY crisis program; DOR (Department of Rehabilitation); and, TMHA (Transitions Mental Health Association) – RLC (Recovery

Learning Center). The regional partnership meetings will continue to be facilitated by John Winckler, LMFT, Division Chief of Clinical Operations, until the Children's/TAY Manager and Adult Manager positions are filled for the Santa Maria region.

Please be advised that both the children's/TAY and adult regional partnership meetings have been cancelled for the month of February. The next meeting is planned for Monday, March 16th @ 10:00-11:00 am (children's/TAY) and 11:00-12:00 pm (adult).

Children System of Care (CSOC) Action Team: The CSOC met on January 23rd and included several new members. Participants reported a dynamic discussion of cultural engagement and humility. Group members expressed interest in the human trafficking program and effective ways of engaging CSEC identified clients, supporting families impacted by CSEC and engagement with law enforcement. Hadisha Person, LMFT, will be presenting on this topic at a future date to be confirmed. The next CSOC meeting will be held on February 27th, 2020 from 10:30 AM to Noon at the Buellton Recreation Center located at 301 2nd St. in Buellton. We are excited to have Lindsay Walter, Deputy Director and Pam Fisher, Assistant Director from Behavioral Wellness to discuss MHSA Innovations focusing on youth. We look forward to having you join us! **The February CSOC meeting will host a MHSA Community Planning session on Thursday, February 27th from 10:30 AM – 12 PM at the Buellton Recreational Center. The Focus Topics are Children and Youth.**

Change Agents Update: Change Agents met this month to review current process improvement opportunities in clinics and programs and receive feedback and support from the team. Some of the current projects include reducing wait time for urgent and crisis needs by creating a flow chart for Administrative Office Professionals (AOPs) to better triage calls and aiming to increase attendance and participation in groups by adding snacks for participants.

Cultural Competence and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT) Update: During the January meeting, CCDAT members reviewed and discussed CCDAT accomplishments such as implicit bias and LGBTQ+ trainings, outreach and engagement activities, Cultural Competency Organizational Needs Assessment and recommendations that were made to the comprehensive mental health assessment. Also, the CCDAT discussion centered on Behavioral Wellness' language assistance services and the upcoming cultural competency training on "The Use of an Interpreter in a Mental Health Care Setting." This training took place on January 15th for staff in Santa Barbara. Additional trainings are scheduled for February 19th in Santa Maria and Lompoc. Vanessa Ramos provided the team with the Help@Hand project update as well as introduced the main areas where Help@Hand will require CCDAT assistance and recommendations. Members will continue to work on establishing 2020 CCDAT goals at the March meeting. **The March CCDAT meeting will host a MHSA Community Planning session on Friday, March 13th from 9:30 AM - 11 AM at Pea Soup Andersen's in Buellton. The Focus Topic is Whole Person Care.**

Consumer Family Member Action Team (CFMAT): CFMAT members had an opportunity to review and discuss the press release handout titled: *Senator Jim Beall Champions Mental Health Legislation to Certify Peers*. Additionally, it was shared that the Peer Empowerment Manager has held a community presentation at each of the Wellness Recovery Learning Centers regarding extra help Peer job opportunities

such as: Help@Hand Project, assist with outreach events, peer support services and peer related special projects with Behavioral Wellness. Updates on the Help@Hand project, MHSA Community Planning Sessions, CFMAT Newsletter and Cultural Competency Diversity Action Team was presented. All members were encouraged to submit newsletter articles to the subcommittee by the end of January 2020 as well as participate in the MHSA Community Planning sessions. **The February CFMAT meeting will host a MHSA Community Planning session on Thursday, February 20th from 1 PM – 2:30 PM at Pea Soup Andersen’s in Buellton. The Focus Topics are Whole Person Care and Peer Support.**

Crisis Action Team Update: The January Crisis Action Team meeting focused on the introduction of our new South County Crisis Services Team Supervisor, **Jennifer Leonard**. Jennifer recently relocated from Oregon where she worked closely with several different municipalities and Law Enforcement agencies on Co-Response programs. Jennifer comes to us with a wealth of Mobile Crisis and Co-Response experience and we are excited to have her on board as we launch the expansion of Co-Response teams in Santa Barbara County.

A two day Co-Response training took place in early February for all Law Enforcement and Behavioral Wellness staff who are interested in participating in the program. Following the training we will be selecting staff for the teams and rolling out the expanded Co-Response in late February. Behavioral Wellness Crisis and CSU staff have been actively preparing for the opening of the Sobering Center on the main campus of Behavioral Wellness, next to the CSU and South County Crisis Services (SCCS). Both CSU and SCCS staff will be involved in the screening and referral of individuals into the Sobering Center and will also be a potential discharge location for clients leaving the Sobering Center who may be in need of further mental health crisis stabilization and/or linkage to mental health services. **The March Crisis Action Team meeting will host a MHSA Community Planning session on Thursday, March 12th from 2:30 PM - 4 PM at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic Large Conference Room 119. The Focus Topic is: Innovative Hospital Collaboration.**

Forensic Action Team: The next meeting is planned for **Wednesday, February 26th @ 2:00-3:30 pm** at 429 N. San Antonio Rd., Santa Barbara – Children’s Outpatient Clinic, room 119. Areas of focus, such as the Prop 47 diversion grant and DSH contract related to AB 1810 to fund important forensic and crisis service programming will continue to be discussed. The email invite list is currently being updated. Please contact Shana Burns, LMFT, Forensics Services Manager, at 805-335-4263 if you wish to be added to the invite list and/or for assistance with attending the meeting via video-conference from Lompoc and Santa Maria.

HEART Action Team Update: The HEART Action Team met on February 12 and dedicated time to focus on Housing and Homeless Services in support of the Mental Health Services Act Community Planning Process. An update was provided on the MHSA three-year plan with a focus on the housing portions of the plan and asked for feedback whereupon robust and diverse commentary was given by participants on housing who represented Behavioral Wellness Santa Barbara, United way, Families Act, Pathpoint, the County of Santa Barbara, National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the FTHC. An update was also given on the status of MHSA funds and on grants that had been acquired and were being applied for. No Place Like Home and the benefits of a crisis respite navigation center were discussed, along with the client to clinical

staff ratio at transitory housing units. Concerns about MediCal billing and ways to be more efficient with funding through MediCal were raised for discussion.

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

National Eating Disorders Awareness Month: Disorders Awareness Week is happening February 24 – March 2. The goal of **National Eating Disorders Awareness Month** is to shine the spotlight on eating disorders by educating the public, spreading a message of hope, and putting lifesaving resources into the hands of those in need. Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness and will affect 30 million Americans at some point in their lives, but myths and misinformation still keep people from getting the help they need.



During this week, communities across the country join the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) to raise awareness through social media campaigns, legislative advocacy, building lightings, local events, and many more activities.

Data from NEDA states that on average, 149 weeks pass before those experiencing eating disorder symptoms seek help. That is almost three years! We know that the sooner someone gets the treatment they need, the more likely they are to make a fast and full recovery. Raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of eating disorders helps to educate, reduce stigma and empowers those need help to take action no matter how long their symptoms have been present. Click [here](#) or visit <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/get-involved/nedawareness> for ways you can get involved in helping raise awareness.

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, Santa Maria Clinic Conference Room and the Lompoc Children’s Clinic Newport Harbor Room. Questions: Jacob Ibrahim at jlbrahim@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; and the Santa Maria Adult Clinic large conference room located at 500 West Foster Road, Santa Maria. Questions: Janal Lopez, janlopez@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** Meetings occur every other month on the third Tuesday at 301 N. R Street. The next meeting will take place on January 21st. Questions: Anthony Hollenback, ahollenback@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. Due to the Martin Luther King Holiday, the next meeting will take place on January 13th. Questions: John Winckler at jwinckler@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: Questions: John Winckler at jwinckler@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. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Conference Room 261 and Santa Maria Annex via videoconference. Contact Laura Zeitz, lazeitz@sbcbswell.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, Santa Maria Annex and Lompoc B St. Contact Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or Anthony Hollenback at 805-737-6610 or ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **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. Contact Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **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@sbcbswell.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. The next meeting will take place on January 23rd. Contact Anthony Hollenback at ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4th Wednesday from 2:00 – 3:30. The next meeting will take place on February 26th. 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. For questions, please contact sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us