

Director's Report

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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

Behavioral Wellness Supporting Community Response with Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19):

As we mark close to a month's time of California's Stay at Home and Social Distancing orders, it has been amazing to watch the creativity among staff in the continued mission of prioritizing care for clients and acting in roles as disaster service workers. We are learning to adjust to the concept of social distancing in our personal lives as well as at work. We know that physical distancing does not mean social isolation and in fact may be helping to strengthen our connections and perhaps even serve as a model for a new way of business in future. There are so many examples of the creative work adaptations made by Behavioral Wellness staff to assure essential service delivery and remaining fully engaged with one another and service delivery amidst this challenging time.

- The use of Zoom to connect face to face with teams, despite physical distancing has been astounding. Staff are quickly adapting to a new way of doing business through telehealth to ensure ongoing mental health services are being provided in the safest manner possible. Teams have maintained regular check ins on tasks as well as continue the strong connections with others. In many cases, there has been more frequent contact with clients using telehealth than experienced previously with required in-person visits.
- Behavioral Wellness staff have provided support the Santa Maria Shelter as well as the Emergency Operations Center. At the Shelter, staff support has worked to assure that Behavioral Wellness clients continue to receive services and linking other shelter residents to needed mental health services and linking shelter residents to mental health services if not already connected.
- Methadone is able to be delivered to people quarantined in their homes, and clients have been allowed increased access to take-home dosing to encourage social distancing.
- The Crisis Stabilization Unit, Crisis Services, Co-Response teams and Psychiatric Health Facility remain open for staff to provide essential services to individuals in need.
- Efforts have been made to educate and train medical staff from the outpatient delivery system of Behavioral Wellness to help at the Crisis Stabilization Unit to assure adequate staffing is available as needs increase, and as CSU staff begin to fill staffing gaps at the PHF. Symptom screening of staff and clients is being conducted several times per day at PHF and other residential programs.

- Supervisors are working with staff to assure staff are safe and those working at home have a system in place to continue their work and have regular connection to those on site.
- Dedicated staff are assisting with transportation of ill individuals from emergency rooms to hotels for required quarantine.
- Staff are dedicated to work at the Emergency Operations Center in various functions.
- Mobile Crisis staff county-wide continuing to go into emergency rooms to conduct 5150/5585 evaluations/write holds or develop safety plans for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Virtual assessment screens are being pilot tested in the Marian Emergency Department.
- The Access Line has remained fully staffed while maintaining social distancing.
- Behavioral Wellness continues to lead the Community Wellness Team with adapted services for COVID-19 which are virtual and available countywide.
- The Public Health Department generously delivered the supplies to the PHF and CSU to make face shield masks PPE for staff using common office supplies- this innovative crafting uses clear folio report covers, masking tape, egg-crate foam and stretchy wound tape to produce a durable shield for @42 cents!

We truly are all in this together. Even among the challenges we are now faced with in navigating these necessary changes, people are showing resilience. Elbow bumps, waves from afar, the common knowledge that we are all in this together and we will all get through this together, perhaps even stronger than before.

Behavioral Wellness Self-Care During COVID-19: Self-care is important all the time, but especially during the global COVID-19 pandemic and with its impact within our community. Self-care is any activity done to take care of ourselves. As those working in the world of Behavioral Health, we often overlook our own self-care. However, now more than ever, self-care is important. We would like to share some of the activities that our Behavioral Wellness staff are doing to take care of themselves. Take a look at what just some of our staff are doing for self-care:

**Tracy Segura, LPT
Lompoc Adult Outpatient**

To keep warm and calm on cold nights during this Covid issue I have been taking plenty of bubble baths with essential oils and/or bath bombs. My coworker makes the bath bombs and bubble bars to destress, so I am helping us both out by keeping her in business.

Kelly Griffin
Lompoc Practitioner

I have been practicing gratitude daily by reaching out to staff or friends I appreciate, in addition to people in other departments that have been a support. Using Zoom has helped me feel more connected to my work family which is so important in this job. When telecommuting, my fiancé and I are taking our two rescue dogs on several walks per day to get fresh air and sunshine. I have also been doing something physically active at home in between appointment by setting up a daily challenge of how many squats, pushups, and planks I want to complete.



Jorge Munoz
South County Crisis Services

I am spending time with and walking with my Puppy “Sosa.” I am playing games with my wife and kids. We have pulled out our old home video tapes. The memories are priceless. And I am working on sharpening my DJ skills



Kimberley Matthews
Financial Office Professional II

I am still hard at work though I'm at home. However, I do take my breaks as I should but hadn't been doing just prior to all of this. I have set my phone with not only an alarm to get up in the morning but one for every break, lunch and time to stop work. It's a gentle ring that just reminds me to get up and move around and get a healthy snack or meal and at the end of the day it reminds me to transition to "home" life. I have been working with my sister to adopt a healthier food intake without so much "snacking" on crackers and cookies. It helps to have my own refrigerator close at hand but I hope to develop some better habits that will continue when we eventually go back to the office. It feels good to follow a healthy routine.

Michael Tate
Human Resources Manager

I am going on lots of walks, a ton of yardwork and I use my peleton to get a workout in.

Calvin Glosser
Program/Business Leader - General Manager

To keep sanity:

Weekly: Row 22-34 miles. Smell various blooms in backyard that bees hum with joy about. Daily: Watch popcorn movie. Pick a random location in the world to experience via pics and videos. Nothing beats rowing while watching muted kid's animation flicks and blaring rock/pop playlists into my headphones. Well, maybe hiking/walking in nature but we are staying in at present.



Joshua Woody
Quality Care Management Manager

My yard has never looked better! And getting out and working in the dirt is a stress relief and good way to get exercise. Now I need to focus on the inside of my house... haha

Pam Fisher
Deputy Director

Taking a break while taking a walk with Olive.



Veronica Heinzelmann
Santa Barbara Regional Manager

My daughter and I have created a family/work/classroom schedule including daily breaks to go either hiking, walking or biking each day. There is the daily creative arts option of which we gathered rocks (during our outside activities) painted them, then ultimately just today began putting together a painted rock/succulent garden.



**Anthony Hollenback
Lompoc Regional Manager**

For me practicing gratitude daily, prayer/meditation, cooking, gardening and spending time with the horses where I live (I live on a horse farm in Santa Ynez). Keeping the “calm” in my life helps me focus on whatever needs my attention in BeWell.



**Alice Gleghorn
Director**

When COVID hit, I was training for a hiking trip to Italy- the trip is canceled but I keep training to reduce stress and have logged up to 30 miles a week! This picture is at Rocky Nook Park a few days ago with the creek full from recent rains. I don't know if anyone's noticed, but I think the drought is over!



What is YOUR Self-Care?

Please submit your COVID-19 Self-Care to Suzanne Grimesey at suzkirk@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Screening for Zero Bail Jail Discharges Related to COVID-19: Upon notice of the zero bail jail discharges which were expected to occur last weekend through Monday 4/13/2020, Behavioral Wellness immediately began preparations. With little notice afforded for the exact date of discharges, significant coordination efforts took place with the jail to assure a successful process. 22 people were identified for discharge from the Santa Barbara County Jail. On Saturday, eight QCM and two ADP staff were available to provide screenings in private viewing booths via telephone throughout the Jail. 31 inmates were offered screenings for Residential substance use disorder services and general connection to substance use disorder and mental health services. 16 of these inmates were referred to services. All who were screened were informed of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services and some accepted referrals to MAT outpatient programs. Of those, one person was identified with high needs and referred to our MAT Access Point pilot program upon release. Upon discharge, inmates identified as having Opioid Use Disorders by Jail staff will be provided Narcan to take home. A huge thank you to all Behavioral Wellness staff who worked diligently over the Holiday weekend to assure the success of screenings and linkages to services.

Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP) EQRO System Review: Despite the numerous changes resulting from the impact of COVID-19, the first ever ADP EQRO Review did take place in March. Rather than taking place in person, the review occurred by Zoom and with great success and described as highly collaborative. Special thanks and recognition to the leadership of Josh Woody and the Quality Care Management team for their direct contributions to making this review a success. System strengths highlighted in the exit interview include:

- Centralized access screening
- Detailed Cultural Competence Plan in place
- Positive recognition of training on how to use interpretation services, ensuring that CBOs are comfortable accessing interpreters
- Great job with use of evidence-based practices throughout the system
- Strong collaboration with organizational providers to provide support with documentation and billing. In addition, stability among providers was noted (low turnover)
- Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs) are well written and meaningful.
- Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) minutes demonstrate structure and Quality Improvement tracking measures in place
- Excellent job in developing residential treatment options in all regions of the County in addition to the Sobering Center now open in South County.
- Recognition of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services including those provided through Aegis and the presence of MAT providers with expertise in pain management.
- Recovery oriented System of Care
- Co-Occurring services present which embrace relapse as a part of the recovery process. The ability to educate the courts on this philosophy was recognized as the best seen among any County.

Opportunities for growth were also acknowledged. Some of the areas highlighted include:

- High call abandonment rate of the Access line which is tied to wait times. The recommendation to improve this is to add staff as in addition to considering a restructuring of the Access Line as has been effective in other counties.

- Data on Urgent calls appears lower than what would be expected. Suggestion on broadening definition of Urgent.
- Improvement in tracking transitions to higher as well as lower levels of care
- Continued service growth in the Juvenile Justice system and throughout schools

Mental Health Plan (MHP) EQRO System Review: The MHP EQRO review was moved to a desk audit due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The desk audit was completed between March 24th and April 3rd. EQRO reviewers met with Behavioral Wellness staff several times via Zoom to answer any questions that they had around the documents that were submitted. Helpful feedback was provided specifically for our Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs) and our QIC Work Plan. A complete report will be sent in the next couple of months. Much thanks to the Quality Care Management staff who led this process despite the challenging circumstances as result of the COVID-19 preventing an in person review.

Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting: With the emergence of our current health crisis, all staff in the Lompoc region have begun to provide services (i.e. case management, counseling, medication, outreach, rehab/education) via telephone or tele-health. Clients have been grateful, appreciative and have also adapted to this new format. There has been an increase in client activity, new referrals and former clients looking for support. Throughout this shift, the Lompoc Region has provided a strong continuity of care for our clients and families. Lompoc clients have the option of receiving medication services in person (on-site in Lompoc) or via Tele-health. Injections are being provided by the local VONS Pharmacy. As staff continue to become more familiar the technology available to connect with clients, Supervisors and Staff are all exploring the possibility of creating groups to support clients as well. Throughout the health crisis, all Supervisors and Regional Manager have continued a vibrant in-person/on-site presence.

Santa Barbara Regional Partnership Meeting: For the month of March, the Adult and Children's Regional Partnership meetings were cancelled in the wake of the evolving COVID-19 situation and resulting social distancing/minimizing in person contact guidelines that have been provided by Behavioral Wellness in addition to the Governor's order. In following the department's continuity of operations plan, we initiated and implemented minimum necessary staffing in the outpatient clinics on March 20, 2020. Both the adult and children's clinics for South County remain open with rotating staff coverage providing in person essential services as well as staff telecommuting providing telehealth services. Some Adult and Children's staff have also been cross trained to provide services and supports to the Crisis Stabilization Unit and are in the process of completing requirements to be able to assist at the Psychiatric Health Facility should the need arise due to potential staffing shortages. Overall, staff have successfully adapted and continue to adapt to the quickly changing environment of providing telehealth services for our clients.

Santa Maria Regional Partnership Meeting: Santa Maria Adult and Children's Regional Partnership meetings were cancelled in respect to social distancing guidelines of COVID-19 and assuring the health and safety of staff and clients. Both the adult and children's clinics remain open for in person services as well as telehealth options. As well as staff from other sites, many staff have been active in providing support for the Santa Maria Emergency Shelter.

Consumer Family Member Action Team (CFMAT): The Spring CFMAT Newsletter can be found [here](#) and is located on the Behavioral Wellness website at the following address:
<https://www.countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness/asset.c/5700>

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Newsom Administration Launches Focus on Supporting Californian’s Behavioral Health Needs Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic: The County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA) applauded Governor Newsom’s focus on Californians’ behavioral health as the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, social isolation, and school closures have resulted in stress, anxiety and other emotional effects on children, adults, families, and older Californians. CBHDA released the following statement from Executive Director Michelle Doty Cabrera: “Californians are likely already feeling the effects of the stress related to this global pandemic in terms of their mental health or the need for support around substance use disorders. County behavioral health directors greatly appreciate Governor Newsom’s recognition of the behavioral health toll Californians are feeling as a result of this pandemic and the physical distancing measures enacted to slow its spread. “As we work together to address the physical health aspects of this pandemic, it is important to acknowledge the parallel behavioral health epidemic which is resulting from the public health crisis and will continue as an ongoing need. County behavioral health departments are on the frontlines providing for the mental health and substance use disorder service needs of vulnerable Californians served by the public behavioral health system. Our counties operate many of the crisis and warm line resources linked to on the state’s COVID-19 resource site and stand prepared to link Californians to trusted behavioral health resources.” “Given the unique emotional needs of children, Surgeon General Nadine Burke-Harris’ unparalleled leadership on issues of trauma and adverse childhood experiences are a tremendous asset to our state as we confront the monumental challenge of COVID-19. We look forward to helping deploy the Surgeon General’s ‘playbooks’ and resources for children, adults and caregivers. “As Governor Newsom noted, paying attention to our emotional health will help Californians build the resilience and recovery supports needed to weather this crisis. CBHDA provides assurance that California’s county behavioral health departments stand ready to partner with the Governor, Surgeon General, and Administration to support Californians and our state’s behavioral health recovery.”

Resources for emotional support and wellbeing: <https://covid19.ca.gov/resources-for-emotional-support-and-well-being/#top>

Manage stress for health: <https://covid19.ca.gov/manage-stress-for-health/>

California Surgeon General’s Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19:
https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/caregivers_and_kids_california_surgeon_general_stress_busting_playbook_draft_v2_clean_ada_04072020v2.pdf

SYSTEMS CHANGE CALENDAR

Please Note: Due to COVID-19, to protect the health and safety of our staff and other partners, no Action Team meetings will be held in person for the foreseeable future. All will be held remotely.

- **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 jibrahim@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. 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. Questions: Roberto Rodriguez at robertor@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@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 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. Meetings 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