

# Director's Report

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## DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

**May is Mental Health Awareness Month:** May is Mental Health Awareness Month. This year's theme is "Express Yourself" and is all about how expressing yourself in creative ways can help with self-care and supporting your mental wellness. While this May has not lent itself to celebrating together in person, we have still been able to take part in many virtual activities. There are many options for promoting Mental Health Awareness Month, all of which people have been able to join in from home or online while practicing physical distancing.

Behavioral Wellness has sponsored daily virtual activities during the month of May in addition to daily positive messages being sent out by email each morning. Daily virtual activities can be found in the [May 2020 Mental Health Awareness Month Virtual Activities Flyer](#). These activities will continue every day in May at 3 p.m. through Zoom and are open to all. In addition, Behavioral Wellness has been creating positive chart art messaging around town as well as positive fence art where positive words and messages are prominently displayed for the community at large to enjoy. Lastly, the Help@hand program has custom made "thinking of you" cards for older adults in our community which will be delivered in collaboration with the Housing Authority of Santa Barbara. These cards also include resource information for the older adult community.

Every year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. And, while 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime, everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health. During this time, staying connected is important now more than ever. It is important to remember that physical distancing does not mean isolation from others. Stay connected with others through phone calls, video chats and other creative means. Take time to reach out to someone who you know may be alone or struggling.

The entire Santa Barbara community is experiencing the challenges connected to the impact of COVID-19. Now more than ever we need to reject the stigma around mental health. Nobody is every alone. There is help and support is always available. Behavioral Wellness remains fully operational during the COVID-19 impact and has expanded to provide telehealth as an additional option for services to protect the safety of clients and staff. The Behavioral Wellness 24/7 Access Line is 1-888-868-1649. Additional helpful resource information includes the COVID-19 Guide to Well Being Apps in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) as well as Mindful Minute brochures in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

**COVID-19 Updates within Behavioral Wellness:** As we move into our 10<sup>th</sup> week since the Stay at Home Orders were issued by the Governor, we are continuing to evaluate the impact on and within our Behavioral Wellness system. Some of the key highlights we are seeing include:

- Decrease in daytime Access Line call volume
- Recent increase in information requests for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder treatment services
- Decrease in Substance Use Disorder treatment screenings and referrals
- Increase in the number of deaths by suicide in the month of April
- Increase in referrals for mental health screening from the Child Welfare System, seen in March and April
- High demand for PHF beds for criminal justice system referrals
- Community Wellness Team remains active with consistent call volume to the Resource and Referral line, linking community to a variety of virtual mental health resources available countywide ranging from individual counseling to online support groups
- Behavioral Wellness services remain open with telehealth options
- The Help@Hand Connectedness Guide for COVID-19 is available on the Behavioral Wellness website [here](#).

**How to Support Those with Hearing Loss:** Tony Hollenback, LCSW, Lompoc Regional Manager was highlighted in the recent version of **Hearing Health Spring Edition** with his article on **How to Support Those Living with Hearing Loss**. Behavioral Wellness is fortunate to have his expertise within the department. The full article can be viewed [here](#).

**CREDO47 Stabilization Center Now Open:** Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness CREDO47 Stabilization Center (formerly known as the Sobering Center) has re-opened its doors to the community. The newly named CREDO47 Stabilization Center, operated by Good Samaritan Shelter, is one of many services which operate within the CREDO47 Services program which also includes the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU), South County Crisis Services (SCCS) and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) which will be starting soon.

The CREDO47 Stabilization Center is a jail diversion program funded through the State of California, Proposition 47 funding. The Center will provide sobering services, divert individuals from jail and potential legal repercussions of minor offenses, and will be used to connect them to drug and alcohol programs, case management, housing, and other services in the area. “With the abrupt closing of bars and other venues where alcohol is readily available due to COVID-19, service needs have uniquely been impacted and the CREDO 47 Stabilization Center is here to help,” shares Alice Gleghorn, PhD, Director for the Department of Behavioral Wellness. With the recent closure of the Sobering Center in downtown Santa Barbara, the CREDO 47 Stabilization Center will provide vital services for southern Santa Barbara County.

**Hours of Operation:** 24/7

**Location:** 427 Camino Del Remedio, Santa Barbara. **NOTE:** Those with referrals should call before arrival to ensure a bed is available.

**Phone number:** 805-250-9022. Medical clearance takes place prior at CSU, 305 Camino Del Remedio.

**Staffing:** Sober Coach, Emergency Medical Technician and Registered Nurse

**Referral Agencies:** Law Enforcement, Probation, Behavioral Wellness, Public Defender

**Eligibility:** Individuals over the age of 18 who are cooperative with law enforcement during arrest will be assessed by medical professionals for eligibility

The CREDO47 Stabilization Center, in addition to all programs within the CREDO47 Service system (CSU, SCCS, MAT), practices social distancing guidelines and ensures the necessary protective gear is worn to assure safety of staff and clients. Once evaluated and accepted to the program, individuals have a safe and controlled environment for up to 72 hours to “sober up” and receive medical stabilization. Individuals are provided with food, hydration and medical monitoring throughout their stay and linked with ongoing mental health resources.

**Behavioral Wellness Honors National Nurses Week:** May 6 is National Nurses Day which began National Nurses Week. In 1982, a congressional resolution designated May 6 as National Recognition Day for Nurses. A few years later, in 1990, the American Nurse Association expanded the recognition to create National Nurses Week, which takes place May 6–12. This is an important time of the year to recognize nurses and the vast contributions and positive impact they make in lives every single day. Behavioral Wellness could not be prouder of the nurses who work tirelessly and have truly dedicated their lives to serving our community.

National Nurses Week provides us with an opportunity to celebrate the many ways nurses make a difference, from addressing public health challenges to delivering culturally competent care and increasing diversity and inclusion in nursing care. With the current local challenges of COVID-19, our nurses have gone above and beyond to provide the highest of quality of care for clients served while doing so in a manner which ensures safety for clients and staff.

Whether it be a nurse working tirelessly within the Behavioral Wellness Psychiatric Health Facility, Crisis Stabilization Unit, on a community-based team or serving on a clinic-based team or program, to all of our Behavioral Wellness Nurses, your passion for the health of our departmental clients is appreciated every day. Thank you for all you do. Your overall compassion, optimism and kindness do not go unnoticed and we appreciate you!

Thank you to all who took some time during National Nurses Week (May 6-12) to recognize a nurse who has touched you or a loved one this year. The many incoming affirmational emails received were much appreciated.

**Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP) Update:** The County substance use disorder (SUD) continuum of care is fully operational. All services, from early intervention to residential to outpatient to aftercare are intact and receiving clients. Outpatient treatment providers have largely succeeded in transforming face to face treatment to service contacts over the phone or through telehealth, evidenced by consistent levels of DMC billing. However, providers who serve complex clients and clients with co-occurring conditions have reported difficulty in maintaining client engagement. As a result, two outpatient providers (Sanctuary

Treatment Center and LAGS) continue to provide limited face to face services in addition to telehealth and or telephone services.

Residential treatment admissions have increased during COVID-19 from thirty three (33) in February to forty eight (48) in April. Opioid treatment program (OTP) services have not experienced a significant decrease with COVID-19 in terms of medication administration or dosing. The census for both the South and North County OTP clinics remains approximately the same as pre-COVID levels, combined seven hundred and fifty (750) in both clinics with roughly half of the clients receiving take home doses of methadone.

County ADP staff continue to provide a full range of administrative monitoring, training and technical assistance for providers as required by the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). In addition, ADP staff have undertaken two complex projects: Creating a MAT Access Point in South County to capture clients with opioid use disorders (OUD) within the Behavioral Wellness system and the jail who otherwise will not receive vital medication and behavioral health treatment services – and - ADP is working with Santa Ynez Tribal Health (SYTH) to explore the development of a specialized treatment program within the current outpatient system of care for members of the Chumash tribe.

ADP's CalWORKs Resource Support Team (RST) continues to serve Welfare to Work families experiencing barriers to employment. The RST program works directly with DSS CalWORKs clients to assess for barriers to employment and provide treatment, interventions, therapy and referrals. Under COVID-19, RST programming has completely moved from face to face services to telehealth and telephone service delivery. With the current conditions, there is increased demand to address homelessness, domestic violence, substance use, food insecurities, mental wellness, and child welfare concerns. RST continues to receive new referrals from DSS. Although assessment and delivery of services has changed, clients have been responsive and open to receiving services via telehealth/telephone services. Many clients reside in residential/shelter programs; these programs have been supportive of the change and have set up necessary technology to assist client in accessing services.

SUD Prevention Services continue to make a difference in our communities by working within coalitions and families to combat underage and excessive drinking, marijuana and Prescription drug use. Although challenging, reaching youth during this time has been a welcomed opportunity when a laxer licensing system has made alcohol more accessible than ever before. Through the Strengthening Families Program, families have been reaching out for support more than ever. To help both our communities, families and youth, prevention services are adjusting the services so that it supports the need. Families seeking support as a family are able to get support through the Warming Lines and youth are reaching out with the support of coalitions through social media where youth are active in focus groups, advocacy and media development. Prevention staff are available to support all their efforts and needs.

**Crisis Action Team:** The Crisis Action Team met in April via Zoom meeting with regular attendance. The meeting focused on updating attendees on Crisis Services operations during the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent reduction in on-site staffing. While all Crisis Services remain operational during this time, there has been an effort to incorporate more telehealth in crisis evaluations. Marian Medical Center set up a

mobile Ipad linked to a secure Facetime or Skype connection so Crisis Services staff could potentially conduct crisis evaluations via telehealth in the emergency department. However, the majority of Crisis Services staff continue to conduct crisis evaluations in person.

In anticipation of potential staffing shortages in our PHF, outpatient nursing and Recover Assistant staff were cross trained to work at both our CSU and PHF to cover shifts if needed. COVID-19 screenings were implemented at both the CSU and PHF to help prevent infections within the crisis settings. In an effort to adhere to social distancing requirements, our Co-Response teams moved to responding to calls in separate vehicles. In addition, some outreach/engagement activity was reduced. Sobering Center referrals pivoted to accommodate jail releases related to the California Judicial Council “Zero Bail” decision to release certain jail inmates to reduce risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the jail system. Our SUD, Justice Alliance, Crisis Services, CSU and Sobering Center staff are working collaboratively to screen jail inmates for SUD services prior to release, bring them to the Sobering Center for further SUD and Mental Health assessment, and transition them appropriate levels of care throughout our system.

Lastly, the completion of the Crisis Services Manager recruitment process was announced with the onboarding of Jeff Shannon, LMFT as the new Crisis Services Manager. Jeff is relocating back to Santa Maria from the Bay Area where he has lived for many years. Jeff has a strong background in the mental health field including overseeing a crisis residential facility as well as over 10 years as a law enforcement officer with the City of Berkeley. We are happy to have Jeff joining us and look forward to introducing him to everyone!

**Children’s System of Care Action Team:** CSOC – Met on 4/23/2020 with a presentation from Crystal Martinez, LMFT from the RISE Project. Crystal gave a dynamic overview of working with individuals impacted by Human Trafficking, effective strategies of engagement and resources to support the community. The upcoming RISE/TAY FSP merger was also discussed with the goal of providing a seamless system of care for our high-risk youth. The next CSOC meeting will be held on 5/28/2020 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and is available by Zoom. Contact Janal Lopez for more information and to join our next meeting.

**Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT):** In light of current circumstances, the April Consumer and Family Member Action Team Meeting was held via Zoom Conference with success. The meeting covered a range of topics including updates from the each of the CFMAT subcommittees, Help@Hand team and the Behavioral Wellness Website. In response to COVID-19, Vanessa Ramos shared that the Help@Hand team developed a social connectedness guide and technology applications brochure with a goal providing other avenues of staying connected with others and self-care options through technology. Team members were provided with a brief tutorial on how to use the Zoom application and were encourage to reach out to the Help@Hand team for further support on how to navigate the Zoom platform. Additionally, team members were reminded of the upcoming training opportunities as well as the “Access” training. The next CFMAT meeting will be held on Thursday, May 21 and will take place on Zoom at 1pm.

**Forensic Action Team:** The Forensic Action Team Meeting seeks to connect a wide variety of leaders and stakeholders invested in cross-sector collaboration and ongoing systemic enhancements for services provided to criminal justice-involved juveniles and adults. Meetings occur monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays @ 1:30-3:00 pm (via Zoom). The April meeting was well-attended and focused on the positive teamwork between Probation, Sheriff's Office, Public Defender and Behavioral Wellness in response to the early jail release process resulting from the new COVID-19 laws. Additionally, representatives from each sector shared both the operational changes they have made in response to the COVID-19 health crisis, as well as the silver linings and learnings stemming from the pandemic and this unprecedented time. The next Forensic Action Team meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May, 27<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30-3:00 pm**. Please contact Shana Burns, LMFT, Forensics Services Manager, at (805) 335-4263, with any questions and/or if you would like to be added to the invite list.

## **NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS**

**Marking “May is Mental Health Month,” CBHDA Calls for Attention to COVID-19’s Parallel Behavioral Health:** On the first day of May 2020’s “Mental Health Month,” the California Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA) called for immediate attention to the needs of Californians living with mental illness and substance use disorders who face extremely high risk from coronavirus. CBHDA also called for California to gear up for a surge in demand for public behavioral health services, warning that a parallel behavioral health epidemic resulting from isolation, economic and emotional fallout of COVID-19 will continue long after the virus is contained.

“This year’s Mental Health Month begins as Californians are hopeful that we have succeeded in flattening the curve on the worst physical effects of the pandemic. And yet, the expected impact on Californians’ behavioral health is just beginning,” said Dr. Veronica Kelley, Director of San Bernardino County’s Department of Behavioral Health and CBHDA Vice President. “Mental Health Month is an opportunity to educate Californians about caring for our behavioral health alongside our physical health, and these lessons have never been more important than they are during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we take this month to celebrate opportunities for mental well-being, we are also asking California leaders to ensure behavioral health is a priority in the state’s recovery plan and to flatten the curve on the mental health toll created by these unprecedented events.”

As Californians experience the trauma, stress, and anxiety around becoming sick, the death of loved ones, job loss, prolonged school closures and effects of prolonged isolation we have begun to see increases in anxiety, depression, and ultimately substance use disorders and suicide rates, that will be felt across populations. Without swift action which has been called for on behalf of CBHDA, California’s COVID-19 pandemic will morph into a behavioral health epidemic.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us).
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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. **Note:** The next meeting will take place on **May 21** by Zoom at **1pm**. Contact

Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or [marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) or Anthony Hollenback at 805-737-6610 or [ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) to get zoom log in information.

- **The Consumer and Family Member 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](mailto: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 Jeff Shannon, [jeshannon@sbcbswell.org](mailto:jeshannon@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. Contact Anthony Hollenback at [ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday from 1:30 - 3. Meetings are held at the Behavioral Wellness Children’s Mental Health Services building, room 119, located at 429 N. San Antonio Rd in Santa Barbara, with the **May 27** meeting will be occurring via Zoom. For questions or Zoom log in information, please contact [sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)