BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD (BHAB) ACTION ITEM
October 1, 2026

2026 DATA NOTEBOOK

The Data Notebook is a structured format to review information and report on aspects of each county's behavioral health services. A different part of the public behavioral health system is addressed each year, because the overall system is large and complex. This system includes both mental health and substance use treatment services designed for individuals across the lifespan.

Local behavioral health boards/commissions (local boards) are required to review performance outcomes data for their county and to report their findings to the California Behavioral Health Planning Council (Planning Council). To provide structure for the report and to make the reporting easier, each year a Data Notebook is created for local boards to complete and submit to the Planning Council. Discussion questions seek input from local boards and their departments. Planning Council staff analyze these responses to create annual reports to inform policy makers and the public.

The Data Notebook structure and questions are designed to meet important goals:

- To help local boards meet their legal mandates to review and comment on their county's performance outcome data,
- To communicate their findings to the Planning Council,
- To serve as an educational resource on behavioral health data and information,
- To obtain the opinions and thoughts of local board members, and
- To identify successes, unmet needs, and make recommendations.

Understanding data empowers individuals and groups in their advocacy. The Planning Council encourages all members of local boards to participate in developing the responses for the Data Notebook. This is an opportunity for local boards and their county behavioral health departments to work together to identify critical issues in their community. This work informs county and state leadership about behavioral health programs, needs, and services. Some local boards use their Data Notebook in their annual report to the County Board of Supervisors.

In addition, the Planning Council provides our annual 'Overview Report, which is a compilation of information from all the local boards and commissions who completed their Data Notebooks. These reports feature prominently on the website of the California Association of Local Mental Health Boards and Commissions (CALBHBC). The Planning Council uses this information in their advocacy to the legislature, and to provide input to the state mental health block grant application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

2026 Data Notebook: Focus on Foster Youth and their Needs for Behavioral Health, Social Services, and Support for Complex Medical Needs.

It is, THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that BHAB supports the approvals and authorizations needed to implement the above recommendation.