



County of San Diego

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TO: Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)

FROM: Alfredo Aguirre, LCSW, Director
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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT – OCTOBER 2017

1. ACTION ITEM(S): None

2. **LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO UPDATES / SPECIAL EVENTS**

2.1 **Recovery Happens**

Together with many partners, BHS hosted *Recovery Happens* on Saturday, September 16. More than 300 people attended this annual event that celebrates those on a recovery journey and all who support them.

The celebration started with singing by the House of Metamorphosis Choir and continued with a moving performance of the National Anthem by Ms. Carmelia Bell. Presentation of the Colors was provided by Veterans Village of San Diego.

As Director of Behavioral Health Services, it was my honor to welcome the group with remarks during the opening ceremonies, and 3rd District Supervisor Kristin Gaspar presented a proclamation to Angela Rowe, president of the Alcohol and Drug Service Providers Association (ADSPA) in honor of National Recovery Month. The enjoyable day continued with personal stories, a recovery countdown, music, fun family activities, a resource fair and health screenings.

2.2 **Meeting of the Minds**

Over 20 BHS staff attended the 20th annual *Meeting of the Minds* conference held at the Sheraton Harbor Island on Friday, September 29, 2017. This conference highlighted innovative and unique mental health prevention, treatment and supportive care topics. This year's theme was "Hope Works." Attendees reported a great experience with a diverse and engaging group of speakers.

2.3 **Upcoming Events**

- **October 14 - Community Alliance for Health Minds (CAHM) Forum**

The theme for this year's forum is *From Hopelessness to Hope and Healing*. It will be held at California State University San Marcos, and offers workshops, speakers and a resource fair. Registration and program information are available at www.cahmsd.org.

- **November 4-5 – Recovery International Western Conference**

This year's conference celebrating 80 years of supporting mental wellness will be held at the Sheraton Mission Valley. Recovery International hosts this event featuring creative learning opportunities, information exchange, inspiring speakers and panels. Registration includes all general sessions, breakout sessions and a resource fair. Conference information and registration are available at www.recoveryinternational.org/resources/.

3. UPDATE FROM THE ADULT AND OLDER ADULT SYSTEM OF CARE (AOA)

3.1 Full Service Partnership Assertive Community Treatment Programs

Full Service Partnership (FSP) Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs offer treatment services for BHS clients in need of intensive, wraparound services and for whom lower levels of mental health care have not been appropriate. These Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)-funded FSP ACT programs also include embedded MHSA housing funds, which support clients in accessing an array of housing options, including short-term, transitional, and permanent supportive housing. In July 2017, 1,457 clients were receiving treatment paired with housing through FSP ACT programs, with approximately 67% housed in permanent housing, 16% in licensed facilities, 8% in transitional housing, 3% living with family or friends, 1% in short-term housing, and 6% in other living situations (including those who remain homeless). The number of FSP ACT treatment slots has increased with the Project One for All initiative; a total of 455 ACT treatment slots were added in Fiscal Year 2015-16 and Fiscal Year 2016-17, and an additional 383 are in place to be added for Fiscal Year 2017-18.

3.2 Project One for All

Project One for All (POFA) is an initiative implemented by the Board of Supervisors in February 2016, connecting 1,250 homeless individuals with serious and persistent mental illness to housing and BHS-funded treatment services. Implementation of the initiative has four core components: outreach and engagement, housing, treatment and outcomes measurement. Both outreach and engagement and FSP ACT treatment capacity have been increased by BHS in support of POFA. As of July 31, 2017, 445 homeless individuals have been housed and are receiving BHS treatment services.

3.3 No Place Like Home

On July 1, 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed legislation creating *No Place Like Home (NPLH)*, a program authorizing \$2 billion in bond proceeds to invest in the development of permanent supportive housing for persons who are in need of mental health services and are experiencing homelessness, chronic homelessness or who are at risk of chronic homelessness. The bonds are to be repaid through MHSA revenues. The \$2 billion is divided into \$200 million in non-competitive allocation funds, which will be distributed to counties in predetermined amounts, and \$1.8 billion in competitive allocation funds. There is also an alternative process allocation that can be utilized in lieu of the competitive allocation by counties with more than 5% of the state's homeless population, such as San Diego. The alternative process allocation will allow qualifying counties to receive a predetermined portion of the \$1.8 billion, and to administer the funds locally. The program also includes \$6.2 million in technical assistance grant funds to assist counties with preparation for and implementation of the NPLH program. In July 2017, the County of San Diego submitted an application to the State to request \$150,000 of these NPLH grant funds.

A 15-member NPLH Advisory Committee has been established to advise and assist the California Department of Housing and Community Development in the implementation of NPLH. Several San Diego-based individuals serve on the Advisory Committee. Murtaza Baxamusa,

Ph.D., director of the San Diego County Building Trades Council Family Housing Corporation, was appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly as the representative of an affordable housing organization. As BHS Director, it was my honor to be appointed by Governor Brown to serve in the seat reserved for the director of a county behavioral health department.

Should the County elect to utilize the alternative process allocation, San Diego County will receive approximately \$143 million in total NPLH program funds. Program implementation is currently pending judicial review, with the first funds scheduled to be released as early as summer 2018.

3.4 Alpha Project for the Homeless – Home Finder Program

The Home Finder Program provides outreach, housing navigation, housing location and tenant support services to individuals experiencing homelessness and living with severe mental illness. The Home Finder Program works closely with two County Behavioral Health Services Outpatient Clinics, Areta Crowell Center and North Central Mental Health Clinic, to provide housing opportunities. Home Finder staff are co-located at the clinics for immediate engagement with homeless clients and to facilitate housing options.

In partnership with 211 San Diego, Home Finder has developed a Housing Resource Hub (HRH) which is an online housing resource directory that is used by housing navigators, designated outpatient clinics and program clients. Home Finder has also implemented a centralized roommate matching program to connect interested roommates and best support clients whose income may limit their ability to sustain housing costs without shared expenses.

In its first year (Fiscal Year 2016-17), 222 individuals were engaged and assessed for housing using the Coordinated Entry System assessment tool. Of these 222 individuals, 163 were engaged in services to locate housing or supported to maintain current housing. Of these 163, 74 were placed into permanent housing. Fifty-five percent of clients who were placed into permanent housing were housed within the first three months of program enrollment.

Through housing and education efforts, the program has engaged with 102 landlords to expand housing options for clients, resulting in 68 new units. Interested landlords are linked to the HRH where they are able to list their housing unit vacancies.

3.5 ACTION Central – A Client Success Story

ACTION Central, operated by Mental Health Systems, Inc., is a FSP ACT program for homeless individuals with a diagnosis of serious mental illness and/or a substance use disorder. Shortly after the program opened its doors in January 2017, staff received a number of referrals from the psychiatric hospital, crisis houses and the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT), among others. One such referral was received from PERT for a 24 year old homeless male with a significant psychiatric and substance abuse history. His encounters with both the PERT and the Homeless Outreach Team have been extensive over the last few years, typically resulting in hospitalization or incarceration.

The client had a number of convictions for substance use issues along with minor theft and other charges related to his homelessness. He had previously refused to engage in treatment services in a meaningful way, often accessing urgent or emergency services and then disappearing. His lengthy disappearances were typically followed by a stay in jail. The client was also routinely hospitalized, often ending up in crisis houses but then leaving after a short stay.

ACTION Central staff provided outreach and engaged this individual with the ultimate goal of clinical and housing stability. Because this program pairs housing vouchers through the San Diego Housing Commission with treatment slots, the client was able to apply for and receive a housing subsidy. Once temporarily housed under the "Housing First" model, the client clinically stabilized and has demonstrated significant progress. He is actively attending groups, addressing his addiction issues, and maintaining a medication regime prescribed by his psychiatrist. The client is also eligible to receive a housing voucher and is currently searching for a permanent place to rent with the assistance of the housing team.

3.6 AOA Collaboration with Public Safety Update

The BHS Adult and Older Adult (AOA) system of care continues to work closely with the courts, Sheriff, District Attorney, Public Defender, City Attorney, Probation and AOA contracted service providers to provide care for justice-involved persons with behavioral health care needs. Working together, we have identified key points in the legal process that provide opportunities for collaboration and wraparound care. These programs and services are helping to successfully "bridge" justice-involved persons as they leave custody and re-enter the community.

A recently added program includes a faith-based in-reach program that provides outreach and engagement to persons while in custody who have a serious mental illness to facilitate transition to the community and access to behavioral health services. This program also provides short-term case management services upon release, helping to link individuals to behavioral health and other social services.

An additional new program is AOA's collaboration with the Public Defender's Office. The Defender Transition Unit includes two BHS clinicians working out of the Public Defender's Office assessing and linking persons referred by attorneys to receive mental health services through our system of care as they transition out of custody and into the community. Collaborative Courts including Drug Court(s), Re-Entry Court and Behavioral Health Court are other collaborations, and provide specialty care for justice-involved persons with substance use disorders and/or serious mental illness.

There are several other examples of programs and services that are becoming a part of our system of care through our partnership with the Public Safety Group. Some of these include the San Diego Misdemeanants at Risk Track (SMART) program with the City Attorney and programs funded through a Proposition 47 grant recently awarded to our County. AOA looks forward to presenting more about these programs in future reports.

3.7 CREST (Cognitive Rehabilitation and Exposure/Sorting Therapy)

CREST is evidence based treatment designed to reduce hoarding behaviors among adults over 60, integrating cognitive training and exposure therapy. In January of 2016, the UCSD CREST Community Program was founded to help older adults with hoarding disorder reduce hoarding behaviors, avoid evictions and improve their quality of life by increasing community connections to resources. The treatment team provides clients with psychiatric assessments, neuropsychological testing and evidence-based individual and group psychotherapy for hoarding, peer support, aftercare, family groups and care management.

In the first year and a half, qualitative outcomes have included prevented evictions, passed health and safety inspections, increased socialization, improved sense of well-being, reductions

in depression and anxiety and increased ability to complete activities of daily living. As of June 2017, the program has received over 149 unique client inquiries and stopped 21 eviction processes.

The clinical team provided over 25 outreach presentations and trainings to community providers and consumers to raise awareness about hoarding disorder. Further, they have compiled a resource directory of 2,500 plus community resources and distributed it to community agencies in San Diego County.

Respectfully submitted,



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AA:bp

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