



UC San Diego

Housing Council/Collaborative Data Presentation

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (BHS)

Housing Council/Collaborative | Thursday, August 7, 2025

BHS Communication & Engagement (C&E) Unit

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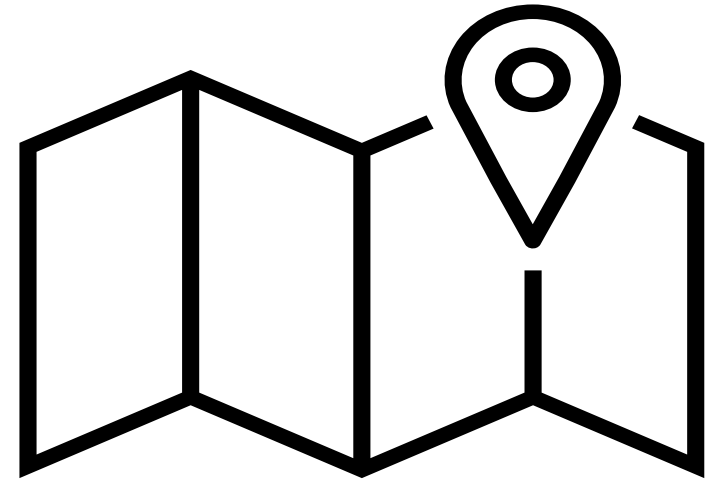
Dr. Krystal Lira-Esparza, PhD

Today's Presentation



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

- **Why Are We Here - BHS C&E**
- **Key Findings - UCSD**
- **Q&A - C&E and UCSD**
- **BHSA Engagement Process - BHS C&E**
- **Q&A/Next Steps - All**



Why Are We Here



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

1

5/1/25 - BHSA Housing Overview and Listening Session at Housing Council Retreat. Transition Housing Council to a Collaborative.

2

6/7/25 - Focus on transitioning Housing Council to a Housing Collaborative. High-level key findings from 5/1.

3

8/7/25 - Data Report from 5/1. How will BHS implement these findings and process steps.

4

Next steps – integration into BHS Integrated Plan (IP) draft. Housing Collaborative public comments are encouraged.

Key Findings

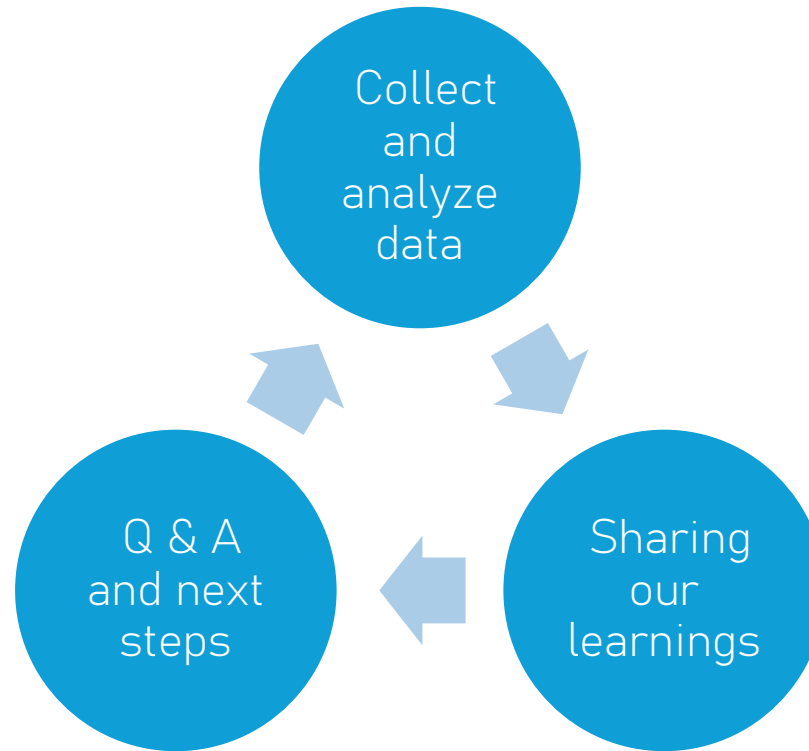
UC San Diego



Housing Council: Data Presentation

Dr. Krystal Lira-Esparza
UC SAN DIEGO HEALTH
8/7/2025

Goals



Original Questions



1. Where in current service and/or housing systems are the most rigid policies (and how do they impact individuals with complex behavioral health needs)?
2. Given those policies, where are opportunities for flexibility or improvement?
3. Recommendations for making services more accessible and culturally aware for individuals with lived experience?
4. How can individuals with lived experience help shape policies and practices in both housing and behavioral health systems?

Method



Step 1: Data cleaning and organizing



Step 2: Identification of themes by question (Q1-Q4); Thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006)



Step 3: Finalizing themes and identifying representative definitions and quotes

Question One



Where in current service and/or housing systems are the most rigid policies (and how do they impact individuals with complex behavioral health needs)?

1. **Eligibility and Access Barriers:** Strict eligibility criteria for housing supports create significant barriers, particularly for individuals with complex needs. E.g., strict qualifications for housing, certain populations prioritized over others, background check requirements, and extensive documentation requirements.
2. **Inflexibility of Policies:** Policies related to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and other funding sources often do not align with the actual needs of clients, leading to delays and difficulties in accessing services.
3. **Impact on Mental Health and Housing Stability:** Rigid policies can exacerbate mental health issues, making it more challenging for individuals to maintain housing.
4. **Need for Low-Barrier Options:** There is a strong call for low-barrier housing options that allow individuals to access services quickly without facing excessive hurdles. Additional call for support with employment opportunities.

"Background check requirements - people have to jump through hoops to request reasonable accommodations to 'override' denials. Some people end up not accessing housing."

"Opportunity for individuals to find meaningful, long lasting employment rather than require any job to receive housing support."

Question Two



Given those policies, where are opportunities for flexibility or improvement?

1. **Universal processes**, that include expedited services, resource coordination, a centralized housing administration system, and a streamlined application process.
2. **Education and support**, such as educating stakeholders on laws and best practices, as well as providing training for service providers. Additionally, there is a need to support individuals' long-term employment needs to promote housing stability.
3. **Policy and funding changes**, including calls for increased funding for housing and services and the need for creating and advocating for policies that support equitable housing.

"Universal housing applications and reporting requirements."

"Streamline the application process so that it does not take 30-90 days to approve applicants for housing."

Question Three



Recommendations for making services more accessible and culturally aware for individuals with lived experience?

1. **Mobile and On-Site Services**: Accounting for the need for accessible **mobile services** for intake and assessment, as well as bringing assessments directly to the communities where individuals reside. Other notes: need for **centralized transportation system** and reducing barriers to access and providing support that is culturally responsive.
2. **Peer Support and Involvement**: The importance of **integrating peer specialists (i.e., those with lived experience) throughout all phases of program development**, service delivery, and implementation. This includes hiring more staff with lived experience and ensuring that their feedback is incorporated into processes such as outreach and applications, and decision-making processes, including Request For Proposals (RFP).

"Meeting individuals where they are. Supporting ease of access to limit barriers. Hiring diverse workforce."

"Continued focus on peer staff and professional development and growth for peer staff so that lived experience is reflected across roles within provider agencies."

Question Four



How can individuals with lived experience help shape policies and practices in both housing and behavioral health systems?

1. **Inclusion in Decision-Making:** Actively involving individuals with lived experience in decision-making processes is key, as their participation in planning teams and feedback sessions ensures that their insights and needs are directly reflected in policies and practices.
2. **Advocacy and Stigma Reduction:** Individuals with lived experience can play a vital role in advocacy and reducing the stigma around behavioral health and housing. This advocacy works to influence policy changes and can reshape societal perceptions of the challenges faced by those in these systems.

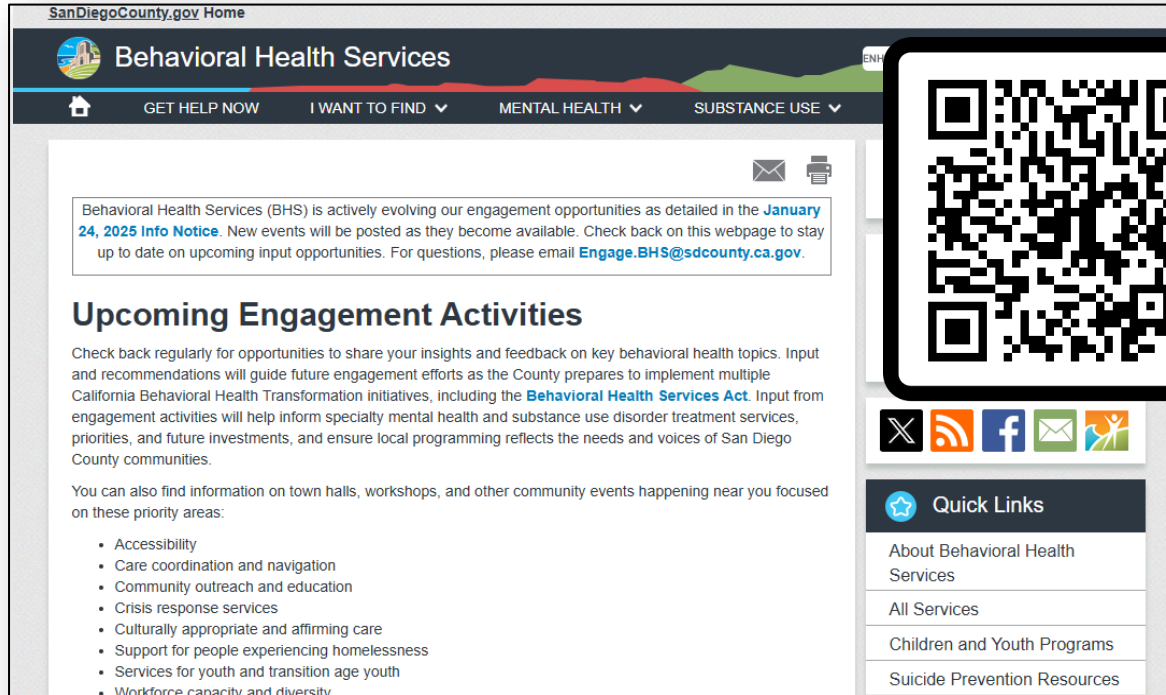
"They can speak to what actually works and be a real advocate of lived experience. Reduce stigma on what a person w lived experience may look like."

"They need to be included from the beginning, even feedback session planning. Words matter!"



THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?

Next Steps



SCAN ME

Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

Planned Engagement Activities

Engagement Activity Summaries

Contact Us

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