



County of San Diego

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January 28, 2021

TO: The Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)

FROM: Luke Bergmann, Ph.D., Director, Behavioral Health Services (BHS)

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT – February 2021

ACTION ITEM: ADOPTION OF BHAB 2021 STRATEGIC GOALS

The Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) met at their annual fall retreat, held on October 29, 2020, to discuss priority areas of focus for the 2021 calendar year. To more clearly define these areas of focus, BHAB Members were previously surveyed and facilitated discussions were held in BHAB's Continuum of Care (CoC) and Building a Better BHAB (BBB) workgroups. These collective actions resulted in the formation of strategic goals, with an emphasis on enhancing BHAB's value to the community, to be completed through the efforts of distinct workgroups.

The 2021 Strategic Goals and respective workgroups, are as follows:

Criminal Justice (CJ) CoC Workgroup – 2021 Strategic Goals

- Strategic Goal #1: Build BHAB's internal knowledge base by engaging with stakeholders and investigating the impact of behavioral health system of care disparities in the criminal justice system.
- Strategic Goal #2: Build BHAB's internal knowledge base by engaging with stakeholders and learning about evidence-based best practices surrounding community-based public safety programs utilizing the sequential intercept model.
- Strategic Goal #3: Build BHAB's internal knowledge base by exploring restorative and transformative programs with justice-involved people with behavioral health needs to better understand the spectrum of care while addressing disparities.

Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) CoC Workgroup – 2021 Strategic Goal

- Strategic Goal #1: Build BHAB's internal knowledge base to support BHS efforts to improve AOD services by serving as the bridge between the community and BHS, resulting in structured and synthesized feedback from the AOD system of care with a focus in the area of prevention.

Stakeholder Engagement Workgroup—2021 Strategic Goal

- Strategic Goal #1: Build BHAB Member and stakeholder knowledge and capabilities to make more timely and informed contributions to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and BHS by becoming better informed on issues affecting the community, especially underserved populations, as well as issues of health equity, starting with the annual Community Planning Process (MHSA Three-Year Plan).

The following goal will fall within the purview of the BHAB Executive Committee, guiding the BHAB meeting structure and external engagement.

- Strategic Goal #1: Maximize BHAB Members' abilities to focus on BHAB's strategic goals by strengthening the diversity of stakeholder engagement to shape recommendations on meetings day and time, structure, content, presentations, and strong stakeholder feedback loops.

ACTION: Vote to adopt the 2021 Behavioral Health Advisory Board Strategic Goals and establish the Criminal Justice (CJ) and Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) continuum of care workgroups, as well as the Stakeholder Engagement workgroup.

ACTION ITEM: REVISIONS TO BHAB BYLAWS BOARD LETTER

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) established the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) in 2014, by merging the County of San Diego (County) Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board with the County Mental Health Board. At that time, bylaws were adopted to govern your internal operations in accordance with Board Policy A-74, Citizen Participation in County Boards, Commissions and Committees, which oversees special citizen boards that advise the Board and County staff on issues of policy and serve as links to the community.

This action seeks Board approval to amend the BHAB bylaws to align with language in Assembly Bill (AB) 1352, which further defined the roles of County mental health boards in 2019.

The amended bylaws propose changes to:

- Ensure efficient BHAB operations by clarifying ambiguous language relating to terms of BHAB board members serving on BHAB's Executive Committee;
- Align with changes to membership criteria and composition requirements for BHAB, pursuant to AB 1352; and
- Conform with additional requirements in alignment with current California Welfare and Institutions Code, as modified by AB 1352.

If approved, this action would approve the amended bylaws of BHAB and would support the countywide *Live Well San Diego* vision by enhancing community involvement in the planning and provision of behavioral health services, supporting a region that is healthy, safe, and thriving.

It is THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that your Board vote to support the authorizations and approvals needed to advance the recommendation in this Board Letter.

LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO UPDATES / SPECIAL EVENTS

Love Your Heart 2021

The County of San Diego is celebrating ten years of Love Your Heart, an annual event in which organizations across the U.S. and Mexico join together to provide free blood pressure screenings to the public on or near Valentine's Day. This year's event will be held on Thursday, February 11 with extended dates for screenings and activities February 8-14. Due to COVID-19, there are fewer public-facing screening sites expected this year with a shift toward at-home screenings, increased education and promotion of heart-healthy activities, and information. High blood pressure is the most common underlying condition identified in San Diego County's COVID-associated deaths. All San Diegans are encouraged to join the Heart Health Movement with a blood pressure screening. To learn more, visit www.LoveYourHeartSD.org.

UPDATES FROM THE PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UNIT (PCE)

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Prevention Initiative Updates

- **Binge & Underage Drinking Initiative (BUDI)**

BUDI works to address the harmful effects of under-age and high-risk drinking behaviors in our communities by changing community policies, practices, and norms regarding the personal use of alcohol and consequences of over-consumption. <https://alcoholpolicypanel.org/>

During the past quarter, BUDI facilitated several meetings with training presentations including Alcohol Harm and COVID-19: Solutions That Can Reduce Both; Exploring the Relationship Between COVID-19, ACEs, and the Role of Alcohol; and Communities and Law Enforcement: How Prevention Can Be A Bridge During Uncertain Times.

- **Marijuana Prevention Initiative (MPI)**

MPI focuses on reducing youth access and use of marijuana/cannabis products by changing community policies, practices, norms regarding the personal use of marijuana/cannabis including adverse impacts on developing brains, and consequences of over-consumption. <https://www.ccrconsulting.org/mji>

During the past quarter, the Youth Access workgroup of MPI met several times to host presentations including Juvenile Marijuana Use in San Diego County; Friday Night Live "Tobacco Tuesdays" Discussion with Youth About Marijuana; and What is Medical Marijuana and What Do Doctors Think? Additionally, the program manager for MPI presented at the National Prevention Network Conference on the 2020 Marijuana Impact Report Findings.

- **Methamphetamine Strike Force (MSF)**

MSF addresses the adverse personal, community, and environmental impacts of methamphetamine in our County by engaging public health and public safety sectors and the public to change community policies, practices, and norms regarding the illegal production, distribution, and use of methamphetamines. <https://www.no2meth.org/>

Included in the June 2020 MSF quarterly meeting were presentations about the Prosecution and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Services Program (PLEADS) program and a

review of the history of sobering services in San Diego; the San Diego Misdemeanants At-Risk Track Program (SMART); and how these programs fit into the rest of the system of care.

- **Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force (PDATF)**

PDATF addresses the over-use and misuse of prescription medications and the use of heroin and other illicit opiates by changing policies, practices, and norms regarding the inappropriate use of prescribed medications and other opioids.
<https://www.sandiegorexabusetaforce.org/>

Included in the November 2020 PDATF quarterly meeting was a presentation from the first Chief Medical Officer at the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP); a presentation on the San Diego Opioid Project campaign and a presentation on the Countywide Fentanyl Media Campaign.

May Is Mental Health Month (MIMHM) 2021

In support of mental health awareness, BHS staff have commenced planning for MIMHM 2021. Service providers and community or faith-based organizations are once again invited to submit activities planned in recognition of the month to be included in the events calendar which will be included on the MIMHM website, along with additional activities and resources. More information will be made available as plans are developed.

Driving Under the Influence Programs Pivot to Telehealth

There are four licensed driving under the influence (DUI) programs in San Diego County and over 400 programs across California. Licensed DUI programs do not receive public funds and are the only substance use disorder treatment services recognized by the California Department of Motor Vehicles to allow individuals to regain their driver's license after an arrest and/or conviction of a DUI. Licensed DUI programs help safeguard public safety by enabling all drivers to be lawfully licensed to drive, obtaining appropriate vehicle insurance, and counseling at-risk drivers of the dangers and risks of driving under the influence. The San Diego County programs are administered by Episcopal Community Services, The MAAC Project, SDSU Research Foundation, and Occupational Health Services.

Following public health orders related to COVID-19, these programs immediately pivoted to telehealth services beginning in April 2020 and are now providing services through telehealth platforms and limited in-person services. This shift in service delivery greatly increases accessibility to these services for individuals in San Diego County. Staff continue to monitor the waiver in place to allow this service delivery platform.

“Let's Talk About DUI/DUID” Prevention Rallies

Mental Health Systems' North Inland Substance Use Disorder Prevention program hosted a virtual community meeting on December 1, 2020 to educate residents on the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs (DUI/DUID) and issued a call to action to prevent DUI during the holidays. The community meeting highlighted the work and experience of North County first responders and had speakers from the County Sheriff's office, California Highway Patrol and local fire/paramedics that respond to DUI/DUID crashes share their stories. The community meeting also included members of their youth advisory coalition and youth leaders highlighted efforts to reach peers with prevention messaging through social media and safe outdoor education rallies. Youth also assisted in designing posters used during rally points held at major

traffic intersections. Over the past three years, outdoor DUI/DUID education rallies have been held in Escondido, Poway, San Marcos, and San Diego.

Masking Our Faces, Not Feelings Coping During COVID-19 Campaign

The Masking Our Faces, Not Feelings campaign launched in mid-November 2020 to show that even though San Diegans are wearing masks to protect themselves and communities during this pandemic, it doesn't mean they must hide their mental health challenges. Individuals representing various demographics and occupations are featured facing several challenges currently experienced by San Diego County residents. The campaign offers coping tips and directs the audience to the Coping During COVID-19 webpage on the *It's Up to Us* website which includes local resources and a link to the Access and Crisis Line.

The campaign was launched on various platforms including television commercials and digital streaming services, billboards and transit shelters, and paid digital and social media advertisements. As of the end of December, the campaign had delivered over 3.7 million messages which resulted in over 850 thousand audience engagements including those seeking help and information and those interacting online. More information on Coping During COVID-19 can be found on the *It's Up to Us* website at <https://up2sd.org/>.

Fire Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responders Behavioral Health Support Program

A new program for local first responders launched in October 2020. The Fire Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responders Behavioral Health Support Program provides an alternate, free, and confidential space for first responders to seek behavioral health services 24/7, 365 days a year. This program aims to increase awareness about local mental health resources and decrease the stigma and barriers associated with seeking behavioral health support services. It provides a supportive environment for every caller, connecting individuals to local mental health and substance use disorder providers, and offers in-service trainings to First Responders and First Responder organizations to increase awareness about mental health resources and reduce stigma. Help spread the word about this new program. The help line number is 1-833-YU-FIRST (1-833-983-4778). More information about the program can be found on their website at <http://www.SDFirstRespondersProgram.org>. You can also follow the program's Facebook page at <https://m.facebook.com/SDFirstRespondersProgram>.

Community Voice – the Neighborhood Safety Perception Survey

In a recent survey conducted in October 2020, residents of San Ysidro (South Bay) shared their concerns about marijuana use, underage drinking, public drunkenness, drug dealing and other alcohol and drug related issues since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the South Region's Substance Use Disorder Prevention Service provider, the Institute for Public Strategies ([IPS](#)), launched a Neighborhood Safety Perception Survey to receive feedback from residents of five apartment communities in San Ysidro, with more than 200 responses collected. Residents also responded to COVID-19 related questions included in the survey. Survey results provide the project with local data and perception information that will support the project's environmental prevention efforts in San Ysidro. Several media stories were published on the survey including an article by KPBS and a TV news story with Univision KBNT Channel 17. To read the KPBS news article visit <https://www.kpbs.org/news/2020/dec/28/study-san-ysidro-residents-concerned-over-drug/>.

Mental Health Systems, Inc., Courage to Call

The Courage to Call program serves all veterans, retirees, active duty military including reservists, National Guard, and their families by providing Peer to Peer helpline support via 2-1-1 San Diego. Additional support provided includes clinical navigation, counseling services, community referrals and resources, as appropriate. On December 12th, Courage to Call hosted a food distribution event for nearly 300 eligible families and included distribution of disposable diapers as needed. Additionally, the program provided holiday meals for 16 families along with gifts, toiletries, and clothing, made possible by the generosity of community partners.

Father 2 Child Holiday Drive-Through Event

Mental Health America of San Diego's Father 2 Child program held a food and gifts drive-through event to usher in the holiday spirit for participating families. Father 2 Child is a MHA Prevention and Early Intervention program focused on reducing mental health stigma among custodial and non-custodial fathers. The program strives to improve parenting and fathering skills among program participants in San Diego County's Central Region. The event was held in the agency's parking lot in North Park where program staff distributed gifts and food boxes to eager and excited children and their dads. The drive-through event reached 24 fathers and appropriately 30 children.

Fentanyl Awareness Campaign

Fentanyl is a synthetic prescription opioid similar to morphine that is used for surgeries and treatment for acute pain including end-of-life pain but can be 50 to 100 times more potent. Because of its potency, a few grains can cause a fatal overdose. The County of San Diego has been monitoring increases in fentanyl-related overdose deaths over the past five years. In 2020, there was a significant increase in fentanyl-related deaths compared to prior years. Illicit production and distribution are considered to be primary factors contributing to this increase.

Executive leadership for the Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force convened in September 2020 to discuss and collaboratively develop a countywide fentanyl awareness campaign. Two posters to inform the community regarding the dangers of fentanyl contamination and risk of death were created and disseminated in October 2020 throughout various networks including provider networks, community networks and social media platforms. Social media placements resulted in an estimated 1.3 million impressions and over 22,000 exploratory engagements. Billboard and transit shelter placements throughout San Diego communities continued in November and December 2020. Anticipated impressions from these out-of-home placements are estimated at 16 million. Fentanyl warning posters are available here: <https://www.sandiegorexabusetaaskforce.org/>.

Respectfully submitted,



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