



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD ACTION ITEM NOVEMBER 4, 2021

UPDATE ON HARMFUL SUBSTANCE USE IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

To address the unprecedented crisis in substance use harms, including alarming trends in accidental drug overdose deaths, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) has taken a number of actions to advance existing efforts and aggressively address this issue and the associated stigma which is frequently associated with people who struggle to overcome substance use. Recent actions include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) in 2018 which provided an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate the integration of substance use disorder (SUD) specialty care with mainstream healthcare;
- Finding prior Board direction opposing harm reduction programs including the “Resolution to Oppose Needle Exchange Programs” to be no longer in effect;
- Directing creation of an Action Plan to realize a Syringe Services Program to meet the needs of San Diego County and;
- Directing the creation of a comprehensive County Substance Use Harm Reduction Strategy (Harm Reduction Strategy).

Today’s update includes a report on the Harm Reduction Strategy presented June 8, 2021 (04), the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System, and other related bodies of work from the County’s Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) including efforts to provide housing resources for those with chronic substance use conditions.

All updates and actions align with the County’s strategic approach to strengthen service delivery and the *Live Well San Diego* vision by transforming treatment for addiction, while continuing to educate the larger community on effective care for people who misuse substances.

It is THEREFORE, staff’s recommendation that your Board vote to support approval of the recommendations and actions outlined in this Board Letter.