



# County of San Diego

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TO: Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)

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

## **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (BHS) DIRECTOR'S REPORT – April 2022**

### **BHS CONTINUUM OF CARE: HOUSING UPDATES**

#### **Background on BHS Housing Work**

The BHS housing program provides an array of short-term, transitional, and permanent supportive housing for persons with behavioral health conditions who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The goal of these programs is to provide, safe, clean, affordable housing options to BHS clients in order to promote client dignity and support them in their recovery.

Many of the origins of the BHS housing program lie in the passage of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in 2004, which created the first source of ongoing funding for housing in San Diego County dedicated to persons with serious mental illness (SMI), who were experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Along with the ability to provide capital funding for the creation of permanent supportive housing, MHSA funding led to the following:

- The creation of a housing team within BHS to support new housing programs and contracts;
- The establishment of a Behavioral Health Housing Council, comprised of behavioral health and housing stakeholders, to advise BHS on housing issues; and
- The procurement of a supportive housing technical assistance contract with the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH).

Passage of the MHSA also led to the creation of new Full-Service Partnership (FSP) Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs in San Diego County, which included staff positions dedicated specifically to housing and embedded "Member Housing" funds to support clients in housing. Several years earlier, the first FSP ACT program serving Downtown San Diego resulted in the first collaboration with a local housing authority to provide housing vouchers or subsidies dedicated to BHS clients. In 2001, the San Diego Housing Commission agreed to pair 89 sponsor-based subsidies with services from this ACT program. Since that time, BHS has established relationships with housing authorities and departments throughout the county, and now has more than 1,200 vouchers and subsidies dedicated to persons with serious mental illness and/or substance use conditions. In addition, embedded "Member Housing" funds now exceed \$8 million per year.

To support the growing body of housing work, over the last four years the BHS housing team has grown from one staff position to six, under the direction of Dr. Piedad Garcia, BHS Deputy Director of the Adult and

Older Adult (AOA) system of care. BHS's housing technical assistance contract with CSH has also been enhanced and reproposed to provide expanded services and support.

### **BHS Strategic Housing Plan**

BHS's housing work is guided by the BHS Strategic Housing Plan (Housing Plan), which is created by CSH with input from BHS, the Behavioral Health Housing Council, and various community stakeholders. First developed in 2007 as the MHSA Strategic Housing Plan, the Housing Plan highlights successes and challenges in creating and maintaining housing for persons with behavioral health conditions and identifies forward-looking goals and focus areas to strategically guide the continuing housing work.

Recently, the Five-Year (2022-2027) Strategic Housing Plan was finalized after a 30-day comment period. The content of the plan was formed through extensive community input gathered by CSH and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) San Diego. CSH and NAMI solicited input through several methods, including conducting 16 focus groups (14 with persons with lived experience of behavioral health conditions and/or homelessness); 13 listening sessions; 286 client surveys, including 110 from people in custody; and an online input form. In addition to persons with lived experience, input was provided by: substance use and mental health providers; primary healthcare providers; housing agencies and authorities; homeless services providers; the justice-involved/law enforcement sector; affordable and supportive housing developers; the faith community; and the income/employment/benefits sector.

As stated in the new Housing Plan summary, this Five-Year Plan envisions "creating homes with intention, purpose, and collaboration" and outlines guiding principles and targeted responses that will maximize a range of housing options for people with behavioral health conditions. The Housing Plan's goals are driven by the voices of people with lived experience, with an approach that is rooted in principles of equity and inclusion. The Housing Plan aims to maximize opportunities for community integration as well as choice in housing and service options that best meet individual needs and recovery goals.

The goals and focus areas identified in the most recent Five-Year Strategic Housing Plan are:

#### **Goal #1: Opening More Doors**

- Focus Area #1: Diversity of Housing Options
- Focus Area #2: Housing Equity and Supporting Community Integration
- Focus Area #3: Priority Populations
- Focus Area #4: Geographic Diversity and Regional Distribution of Housing

#### **Goal #2: Driving Collaboration Through Active Connectivity**

- Focus Area #5: Effective Collaboration and Integrating Systems
- Focus Area #6: Ongoing Pandemic Response

#### **Goal #3: Expanding Services Approaches**

- Focus Area #7: Recovery and Retention Supports
- Focus Area #8: Flexibility in Service and Housing Models
- Focus Area #9: Bringing "Moving On" Opportunities to Scale
- Focus Area #10: Increasing Wraparound Service Supports

The finalized Five-Year Strategic Housing Plan and summary document is available online at the following link:

[https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental\\_health\\_services\\_act/mhsa\\_housing.html](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_act/mhsa_housing.html).

### **MHSA Developed Units**

The implementation of the MHSA created the opportunity to use secured funding to build and maintain permanent supportive housing (PSH), as well as providing capital loans to affordable housing developers for the acquisition, design, construction, rehabilitation, and operation of permanent supportive housing units. These MHSA developed units serve MHSA-eligible tenants (persons with serious mental illness (SMI) or serious emotional disturbance (SED) who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness) and

are deed-restricted to serve this population for the 55- year term of the loans. Supportive services for these units are provided by BHS-operated and contracted service providers, including FSP ACT, Strength Based Case Management (SBCM), and tenant housing support programs. Ongoing care coordination is monitored in regularly scheduled “crosswalk” meetings, facilitated by CSH, and bring together developers, property management, service providers, and BHS staff to address problems as they arise with the aim to increase housing retention. Altogether, 678 MHPA developed housing units are operational, under construction, or funded and in development through these programs.

### **Special Needs Housing Program and MHPA Housing Program**

The County has dedicated more than \$53 million of MHPA Community Services and Supports (CSS) funds to the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) for the Local Government Special Needs Housing Program (SNHP) and its predecessor, the MHPA Housing Program. These three programs fund MHPA developed units and upon completion, these programs will result in approximately 372 permanent supportive housing units for persons with SMI/SED, and more than 1,400 additional units of affordable and supportive housing for other populations. Of the 372 SNHP units, 354 units are currently operational, and 18 units are under construction or planned for development. SNHP-funded developments include:



**Trinity Place:** Located in the Grantville neighborhood, Trinity Place provides 18 units to seniors (ages 55+) with SMI who were experiencing homelessness in the city of San Diego. The property received approximately \$2.7 million in SNHP funding and features project-based vouchers (PBVs) from the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) for all tenants. Trinity Place held its official grand opening on September 24, 2021, with remarks provided by BHS Director, Luke Bergmann. Additional information regarding the property can be found at the following link:

<https://www.countynewscenter.com/county-adds-more-supportive-housing-units-for-seniors/>



**Ivy Senior Apartments:** Located in the Clairemont neighborhood, Ivy features seven MHPA units, also for seniors with SMI who were experiencing homelessness in the city of San Diego. The property also provides SDHC PBVs for MHPA residents and received more than \$1 million in SNHP funding. Ivy completed lease-up in Winter 2021, and held its official grand opening on March 18, 2022, with remarks provided by Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Director, Nick Macchione. Additional information regarding the property can be found at the following link:

<https://www.countynewscenter.com/new-supportive-housing-community-for-seniors-experiencing-homelessness-opens-in-clairemont/>

### **No Place Like Home**

On July 1, 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed the No Place Like Home (NPLH) Act (SB 1206) into legislation. This program dedicates \$2 billion in bond proceeds to invest in the development of permanent supportive housing for persons with SMI/SED who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. NPLH funds may be used to finance capital costs of rent-assisted units in rental housing developments, including costs associated with acquisition, design, construction, rehabilitation, or preservation. NPLH bonds are currently being repaid with funds reallocated from MHSA funds. In total, the County of San Diego (County) is expected to receive more than \$120 million through NPLH.

Like the MHSA capital funding programs that preceded it, NPLH loans are issued to qualifying affordable housing developers, and units are deed-restricted to serve eligible clients for 55 years. Due to a designation from the California Department of Housing and Community Development Services (HCD), the County is able to administer the loans locally, rather than relying on the state to perform this function. In San Diego County, this means that NPLH loans are issued and monitored by Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS), which is also part of the County's HHSA. BHS will provide services to NPLH units for at least 20 years, and referrals for units will come through the region's Coordinated Entry System (CES), which is managed by the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH).

As of March 2022, there are **10** developments, totaling **266** NPLH units, with conditional NPLH funding and service commitments. These developments also include an additional **721** units of affordable and supportive housing for other populations. NPLH-funded developments include:



#### **St. Teresa of Calcutta Villa**

Located in the East Village neighborhood in the city of San Diego and officially opening in February 2022, St. Teresa of Calcutta Villa (SToCV) was the first NPLH development in the county to complete construction and begin moving in tenants. It is also the largest MHSA development to date, with 60 NPLH studios for persons with SMI, and includes an additional 266 units of affordable and supportive housing. County News coverage of SToCV can be found at the following link:

<https://www.countynewscenter.com/st-teresa-of-calcutta-villa-brings-400-affordable-housing-units-downtown/>

#### **Windsor Pointe**

Located on two separate parcels in Carlsbad, Windsor Pointe is the second NPLH development to lease-up and the first in North County. The development has 24 NPLH units, including three multi-bedroom MHSA units—the first in the county—which will serve MHSA-eligible families. Move-ins are scheduled to begin in April.

An additional eight developments with **182** NPLH units are planned or under construction in Chula Vista, Escondido, Oceanside, the city of San Diego (Lincoln Park, Nestor, and San Ysidro), and unincorporated Vista.

#### **Independent Living Association (ILA) and Recovery Residence Association (RRA)**

In 2012, BHS created the Independent Living Association (ILA)—originally using MHSA Innovations funding—to establish and monitor quality standards for independent living homes (ILHs). ILHs provide shared housing for persons with disabilities, such as mental illness, who may be experiencing homelessness or be at risk of homelessness. Operated by Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP), the ILA was the first program of its kind in the state, with several other local governments subsequently establishing their own ILA programs based on the San Diego model.

In addition to monitoring quality standards, the ILA maintains an online searchable directory of ILA member homes and provides resources to independent living operators, tenants, and service providers. In 2018, the ILA contract was enhanced to add a Recovery Residence Association (RRA) as well, providing similar services for recovery residences, which house clients with SUDs. As of January 2022, the ILA has grown to **104** member homes with **969** beds, and the RRA to **43** member homes with **446** beds. Beginning March 1, 2022, a new ILA/RRA contract was executed with CHIP that includes goals to add additional ILA and RRA member beds over the next 4 years.

### **Home Finder and Tenant Peer Support Services (TPSS)**

For clients who are not served by SBCM or ACT programs, the Home Finder and Tenant Peer Support Services (TPSS, pronounced “tips”) programs were created to provide housing support services. Established in 2016 and 2018, respectively, the programs provide housing navigation and tenant support services to clients receiving BHS outpatient clinic services and clients not connected to treatment who are referred to new MHSA developed units.

Combined, these programs serve nearly 600 clients annually who are accessing a wide array of permanent supportive housing resources, including: sponsor-based subsidies; project-based vouchers; mainstream vouchers; Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs); standard “Section 8” tenant-based housing vouchers; and MHSA developed units with Capitalized Operating Subsidy Reserves (COSR). Recently, a new contract for these services was awarded to Alpha Project and is scheduled to begin in Spring 2022. The new contract will combine TPSS and Home Finder services and expand them countywide, while also increasing the number of clients receiving services each year.

## **HOUSING SERVICES FOR FAMILIES**

### **Monarch School Housing Program**

Through the Community Research Foundation (CRF), Mobile Assessment and Screening Team (MAST), the Monarch School Housing program provides on-going case management to 25 families with children at the Monarch School, that are enrolled in the Monarch School Housing Program. These support services promote wellness, self-sufficiency, a better quality of life and by stabilizing participating families in housing.

### **Recovery Residences for Perinatal Outpatient Treatment**

Six BHS regional perinatal outpatient treatment programs provide outpatient substance use disorder (SUD) treatment, recovery, and ancillary services to women who are pregnant or parenting, women and adolescent females who are pregnant or parenting and have substance use issues, including co-occurring mental health disorders. Perinatal services (ages 15 and older) are gender-specific, trauma-informed treatment and recovery services for expectant women or new mothers and their dependent minor children, from birth through 17 years of age. From Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-20 to the present, 1,920 unique clients have received perinatal outpatient treatment services.

On average, 19-20% of perinatal SUD treatment clients are homeless at the time of admission to treatment. Beginning with the launch of Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) services in FY 2018-19, Recovery Residence (also known as sober living facilities) funding was added to the six BHS regional perinatal outpatient treatment contracts to support short-term housing for perinatal clients who are experiencing homelessness, are at risk for homelessness, or whose current living environment is not conducive to recovery due to domestic violence or substance use by others in the home. The inclusion of Recovery Residence funding has made it possible for over 564 women and families to have a safe and supportive place to live while engaged in SUD treatment.

In FY 2021-22, additional funding sources through the Substance Abuse Block Grant (SABG), as part of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), allowed enhancements to support the housing needs of perinatal clients and families receiving SUD treatment, including the purchase of “Move-In Kits” to support perinatal outpatient and residential clients and their families in transitioning into safe housing that is supportive of SUD treatment and recovery. The “Move-In Kits” include household furnishings and personal items customized to the needs of each family. The programs report that the “Move-

In Kits” are proving to be invaluable to families who lack basic household items such as a bed, kitchen utensils, and bath towels. As an example, one perinatal treatment provider has been able to increase the availability of Recovery Residence beds to clients in treatment by 36% due to the availability of SABG CRRSAA funds.

### **The McAlister Institute for Treatment and Education (MITE) Sober and Friendly Environment (SAFE) Housing**

SAFE housing provides transitional sober housing in a residential environment for women and their dependent children, who have a Child Welfare Services (CWS), court-ordered family reunification plan, and who have completed a SUD treatment program. SAFE housing has a five-unit apartment complex with a maximum capacity of 22 beds for women and children. The complex has an on-site, live-in manager to offer a clean, safe, and supervised environment for women and their children as they take the next steps toward living independently in the community.

Placement of women and their dependent children in the SAFE Housing program is based on those who have:

- Been identified and pre-screened by CWS in consultation with SUD treatment providers; and
- Have or can reasonably expect to have, within sixty (60) days, one or more children under the age of ten in their custody and control.

Women who have been pre-screened can be referred to SAFE Housing for a scheduled eligibility and application interview. Children may then join their parents in residence according to the approval and permission of CWS. This safe environment allows women the space to build the necessary skills to successfully transition towards reunification with their children, independence, and empowerment. In FY 2020-21, the SAFE Housing program served an average of seven families per month.

### **Looking to the Future**

Although the supportive housing programs provided by BHS have transformed thousands of clients' lives (allowing them to focus on their recovery and pursue their goals), work continues to expand and improve the housing and services offered. The ongoing BHS department reorganization will create a Homelessness & Housing division dedicated to supporting BHS's housing and homelessness services, and efforts such as the Community Harm Reduction Team (C-HRT) and its associated bridge shelter and safe haven components represent a continuing effort to create and expand housing opportunities for persons with substance use conditions. Ultimately, BHS's housing work will not be complete until every person with behavioral health conditions has a safe, affordable, nurturing place to call home. BHS will continue to advocate for and support the expansion of various types of housing to meet the needs of the community, and to this endeavor will pursue funding opportunities such as the Community Care Expansion Grant.

### **Community Care Expansion (CCE) Grant**

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and Department of Social Services (CDSS) have announced the release of a joint Request for Applications (RFA) for the third round of Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) that will be awarded via competitive grants. Funding to support Community Care Expansion (CCE) in this round totals \$570 million and will be available to qualified entities to support the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation to preserve and expand adult and senior care facilities serving Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) and Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) applicants and recipients, including those who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This includes outpatient alternatives, urgent care, peer respite, wellness centers, and social rehabilitation models. Eligible facility types are outlined below.

## Residential Support Programs

BHCIP-funded facilities listed here are primarily focused on shelter and support services, from overnight to many months; funded facilities are required to serve Medi-Cal recipients. CCE will fund adult and senior care settings that provide care and support to seniors and adults with disabilities.

	BHCIP	CCE
Peer respite	x	x
Recovery residence/sober living homes	x	x
Adult residential facilities (ARFs)		x
Residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFE)		x
Permanent supportive housing (PSH) that serves the needs of seniors and adults with disabilities (including models that provide site-based care, such as Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly [PACE] and the Assisted Living Waiver programs)		x
Other residential care settings that serve the target population, including recuperative care sites		x

Applicants CCE and BHCIP funding include counties, tribal entities, and non-profit entities and for-profit entities. Grantees must provide matching funds and must commit to use restrictions for the property per the CCE guidelines.

The County is expected to hold an industry day on April 8, 2022, welcoming agencies, organizations, administrators, and facility operators, including subacute care providers, licensed residential facility operators and administrators and community stakeholders, to discuss to get stakeholder input that will help inform the optimal strategy to apply for CCE funds. Topics discussed will include description of funding and goals, provider interest, capacity to apply, potential County technical assistance and partnership opportunities, with the ultimate goal of increasing capacity across these domains within San Diego County.

## **BHS SPECIAL EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **8<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Mental Well-Being Celebration**

Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) system of care through the CYF Liaison contract with NAMI-San Diego, will host the 8th Annual Youth Mental Health Well-Being Celebration. This is one of the “May is a Mental Health Month” events and it is scheduled as a virtual event on May 6, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. The event will include a virtual resource fair at 4:00 p.m. This celebration is free of charge, open to the public, and BHAB members are encouraged to attend. A link for open attendance will be provided as the date approaches.

### **CYF Annual Conference**

The CYF Annual Conference will be held virtually on May 26, 2022. The focus of the 2022 conference is Peer Partners in CYF. Up to 20 scholarships will be awarded to peer support partners to attend the conference. The appointed BHAB members to the CYF Council are invited to attend as BHS guests.

**Link to Register:** [https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/rihs/cyfsoc-conference-2022/?utm\\_source=Gmail&utm\\_medium=Email+Signature&utm\\_campaign=CYFSOCCON2022](https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/rihs/cyfsoc-conference-2022/?utm_source=Gmail&utm_medium=Email+Signature&utm_campaign=CYFSOCCON2022)

Respectfully submitted,



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