



County of San Diego

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March 30, 2023

TO: Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)

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

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (BHS) DIRECTOR'S REPORT – APRIL 2023

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) THREE-YEAR PROGRAM AND EXPENDITURE PLAN UPDATE

The County of San Diego, Health and Human Services (HHS) Behavioral Health Services is presenting the recommended MHSA Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2023-24 through 2025-26 (Three-Year Plan). As mandated by the MHSA, the Three-Year Plan, inclusive of all programs and expenditures funded by the MHSA, requires approval by the Board of Supervisors prior to submission to the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC).

The County has continued to make dramatic investments of MHSA funding into essential treatment, prevention, early intervention, innovation, and workforce and education programs, along with critical capital facility and information technology infrastructure since inception. These investments have expanded and enhanced critical mental health programs to support the shift in how residents of San Diego County access care, housing, and support for their behavioral health needs. The County continues to make significant MHSA investments in critical prevention, treatment, and support services through the implementation of the Three-Year Plan and subsequent Annual Updates to advance the development of a regionally distributed model of care focused on prevention and continuous care.

The Three-Year Plan, which includes MHSA funding of approximately \$274.9 million and \$400,000 assigned to the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) to continue statewide PEI campaigns and local PEI initiatives. This includes Each Mind Matters, an initiative aimed at reducing stigma and encouraging people struggling with mental health illness to reach out for support, and "Know the Signs," a media campaign designed to educate the community on how to recognize the warning signs of suicide and where to find professional help. BHS is also working on a proposal to utilize MHSA Innovation funds to pilot the development of a first-of-its-kind Public Behavioral Health Workforce Development and Retention Program that would align with several of the recommendations outlined in the report titled *Addressing San Diego's Behavioral Health Worker Shortage*.

MHSA Community Program Planning (CPP) Process

Community engagement activities to support the CPP process during the most recent MHSA cycle were facilitated via a new five-year contract awarded in May 2022 to University of California, San Diego (UCSD). UCSD, together with its two subcontractors (San Diego Community Health Improvement Partners and Global Action Research Center), collectively make up the UCSD Health Partnership (Partnership). In the Partnership's inaugural year, three primary types of community engagement activities were conducted with community stakeholders throughout San Diego County to gather information and insights to inform MHSA planning. In collaboration with BHS, community engagement activities included the following:

- **Key informant interviews** were utilized to gather input from community leaders and advocates regarding essential understandings and vital steps needed for community engagement efforts across the county.
- **Focus groups** gathered insight into the existing strengths, resources, and needs of program services for specialized populations. Focus group participants were a mix of providers, community advocates, community groups, and consumers of the following identified specialized populations: Parents with lived experience navigating the system; providers/staff providing services to parents in the community; Transitional Age Youth (TAY); justice-involved; faith-based communities; Veterans and active military; perinatal and postpartum care; Native American/American Indian; Hispanic/Latino(a) community; rural community; as well as immigrants and refugees.
- **Listening Sessions** took a variety of forms and reached a wide range of audiences. Partnership representatives leveraged existing community meetings or events to conduct structured feedback activities that addressed behavioral health service needs, opportunities, concerns, and preferred mechanisms for receiving information about behavioral health. Additionally, community trainings about the MHSA and the CPP process were conducted by the Partnership in late Summer and early Fall 2022 and allowed participants an additional opportunity to provide feedback regarding behavioral health services and needs. Learnings from these efforts were synthesized into overarching recommendations for BHS' 2023-2026 MHSA Three-Year Plan.

Over 500 people attended CPP community engagement and feedback events for FY 2022-23, which included four (4) MHSA trainings, eleven (11) key informant interviews, nine (9) focus groups, and nine (9) listening sessions. The qualitative data collected from community engagement activities were thematically analyzed by the Partnership and split into two general categories: 1) perceptions of behavioral health service needs, priorities, and experiences, and 2) feedback on meaningfully and effectively conducting community engagement as part of the CPP process. The FY 2022-23 CPP process identified a wide range of behavioral health needs and ideas for how to improve and expand the existing system to better serve the diverse community needs, while also eliciting preferences regarding how best to conduct CPP work in San Diego County.

The feedback obtained through this initial year illuminated key elements needed to realize the full benefits and potential of CPP. Based on these findings, a multi-year community engagement plan to facilitate the CPP process will be developed in collaboration with BHAB to support the implementation of the FY 2023-2026 MHSA Three-Year Plan. The Community Engagement Plan will be adapted through data-driven decisions, with approval from BHS leadership.

Modernization of MHSA

As announced in mid-March, the Governor will be leading an effort to modernize the Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) to further improve California's Mental Health System. BHS has begun efforts to

assess the potential impact of the Governor's proposed 2024 ballot measure that, as initially outlined, would enhance investments for dedicated housing for individuals with behavioral health conditions and provide increased flexibility in how counties utilize MHSA. As additional information and direction is provided by the State, BHS will engage with various partners at the State and locally, including BHAB, to ensure community input is gathered to inform successful modernization of the MHSA.

BHS SPECIAL EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

County of San Diego Installs Naloxone Vending Machine

On March 2, 2023, the County of San Diego installed a new, groundbreaking resource to address the opioid crisis. A new naloxone vending machine is now in operation in the public lobby at the McAlister South Bay Regional Recovery Center located at 1180 Third Avenue, Unit C3, Chula Vista, CA 91911. There is no need to be a client of McAlister to access this resource.

Naloxone, also known as NARCAN®, is a fast-acting nasal spray that can stop a fentanyl or other opioid-related overdose and save a life by quickly restoring breathing. This new machine will amplify the County's existing efforts to expand naloxone access and help put this life-saving medication in the hands of anyone who wants it, free of charge. It is part of the County's comprehensive Harm Reduction Plan and the first of several other vending machines scheduled to be installed across the region.

For more information visit the following link:

https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/BHS_Harm_Reduction/Addressing-the-Opioid-Crisis/About_Naloxone.html

MHSA Three-Year Plan 30-Day Public Review Begins April 4, 2023

The MHSA Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan for FY 2023-24 through 2025-26 will be posted to the BHS and the Clerk of the Board webpage for a 30-day public review and comment period. The MHSA Plan outlines all MHSA-funded programs and expenditures for the next three fiscal years. The public review period begins on April 4, 2023, and ends on May 4, 2023, with final public input provided through a public hearing held at the May BHAB meeting. The MHSA Three-Year Plan will be presented at the June 13, 2023 Board of Supervisor's meeting for review and approval, as required by the Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission (MHSOAC).

For more information on the MHSA visit the following link:

https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_act/mhsa.html

Community Expo for Mental Wellness Kicks off *May is Mental Health Matters Month*

May is Mental Health Matters Month (MIMHMM) is on the horizon, and BHS and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) San Diego have partnered to host the Community Wellness Expo at the "NAMIWalks Your Way" 5K event on April 29, 2023, at Liberty Station. The Expo will be kicking off MIMHMM and will offer mental health-related resources and interactive activities for community participants. The Expo will feature over 100 exhibitors with a combination of community organizations, providers, and County departments to provide mental health-related resources along with fun and interactive activities for all to enjoy. Every day, millions of people face stigma related to mental illness, causing many to face their mental health challenges for years without help. Mental Health Matters Month provides the opportunity for everyone to come together to illuminate mental health awareness to stop the stigma. Bringing forth this awareness is crucial to helping people reach out for the assistance they need. Stay tuned for more information on upcoming MIMHMM events and materials by visiting the *It's Up to Us* website at Up2SD.org.

Public Behavioral Health Workforce Development and Retention Program - MHSA Innovation Program Proposal 30-Day Public Review Begins

BHS is seeking to propose the use of MHSA Innovation funds for a Public Behavioral Health Workforce Development and Retention Program which, if approved, will implement a combination of tested professional development programs and new strategies tailored to the County's most pressing professional needs. The Innovation proposal is anticipated to be posted to the BHS and the Clerk of the Board webpage for public viewing for a 30-day public review and comment period. The review period is expected to begin on April 4, 2023, and end on May 4, 2023, with final public input provided through a public hearing held at the May BHAB. The Innovation proposal would be presented at the June 13, 2023 Board of Supervisor's meeting for review and approval, as required by the Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission (MHSOAC).

East County Crisis Stabilization Unit and Recovery Bridge Center

The County of San Diego is pleased to announce plans for the construction of a new East Region Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) and Recovery Bridge Center (RBC), which will include sobering services and outpatient substance use disorder services for adults ages 18 and older. These services are part of an array of mental health and substance use services that are regionally distributed across San Diego County and will enable East County residents to access the care they need. The East Region CSU will provide immediate mental health support and treatment services in a therapeutic setting to individuals in acute behavioral health distress who require urgent care. CSU services are short-term and focus on recovery linkage, care coordination, and a warm handoff to ongoing community services and supports. The RBC will be co-located within the CSU facility and will provide short-term services, not to exceed 24 hours, in a supervised, non-medical environment to support individuals whose level of public intoxication puts themselves or others at risk. The RBC will provide diversion, non-residential, non-medical, sobering services in a drug and alcohol-free environment for public inebriates or intoxicated individuals dropped off by health, safety, and law enforcement agencies. Outpatient substance use disorder services will also be available to ensure continuity of care.

Construction of the East Region CSU and RBC is expected to begin early 2024 and is anticipated to take a year. To stay connected with this project, visit the East Region CSU and RBC webpage at the following link: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/csu/eastcsu.html>

TAY Substance Use Residential Treatment and Outpatient Recovery Services Update

- **TAY Substance Use (SU) Residential Treatment** – Episcopal Community Services will operate a Residential SU treatment program designed for TAY ages 18-25. Services include 24-hour non-medical residential substance use treatment, withdrawal management, recovery, and ancillary services to TAY with substance use issues, including co-occurring mental health conditions. Services will focus on harm reduction strategies and incorporate TAY evidence-based practices, artistic expression, prosocial activities, and peer support.
- **TAY Substance Use Outpatient Recovery Services** – UPAC Expanding Horizons will operate a new Outpatient SU treatment program for TAY ages 18 to 25 with SU issues, including co-occurring mental health conditions. TAY will receive clinical assessments for SU and mental health conditions, care coordination, and a "warm hand-off" to an appropriate level of care in the mental health system when need exceeds services available through the SU program. Programming is designed around the specific needs of TAY and include individual counseling, groups, care coordination, harm reduction strategies, drug testing, prosocial activities, artistic expression groups, peer support, recovery residence support, and MAT.

8th Annual Critical Issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CICAMH) Conference – April 21, 2023

Save the Date for the hybrid 8th Annual CICAMH Conference: Building Resilience through Family Engagement scheduled for Friday, April 21, 2023. The conference will focus on engaging families and caregivers of youth who struggle with mental health concerns to foster youth resilience and nurture mental health well-being.

Register at: <https://app.ce-go.com/CICAMH2023> -
For questions, email: CICAMHCONFERENCE@GMAIL.COM

Respectfully submitted,

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