



County of San Diego

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LUKE BERGMANN, Ph.D.
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December 23, 2021

TO: Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)
FROM: LUKE BERGMANN, Ph.D., Director, Behavioral Health Services

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (BHS) DIRECTOR’S REPORT – JANUARY 2022

BHS DEPARTMENTAL OPTIMIZATION

Some exciting changes will be occurring within the County’s Behavioral Health Services (BHS) department over the next year to further support the delivery of data-driven, quality mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services to the most vulnerable individuals and families within our community.

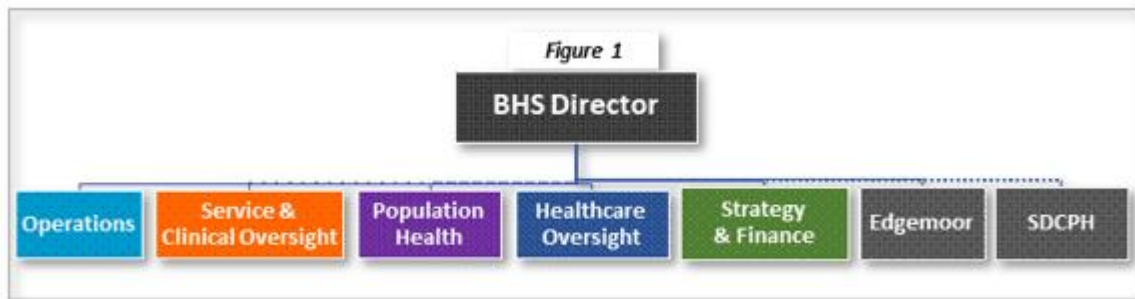
BHS services have grown exponentially over the last few years with the budget increasing almost 85% since Fiscal Year 2015-16 to \$817.6 million in Fiscal Year 2021-22. To ensure BHS has the adequate support and infrastructure in place to sustain the growth and increasing complexity of services, and in anticipation of further growth within the department, BHS will be restructuring our internal structure to align with similarly sized healthcare organizations. Adequate support for department growth includes additional BHS staff positions and opportunities for employee growth, there will be no job attrition as a result of this process. BHS will maintain continuity of current functions and activities during the transition to ensure services and current activities are not disrupted. Edgemoor Distinct Part Skilled Nursing Facility (Edgemoor) and the San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital (SDCPH) will also continue normal operations during the transition.

Key Changes

BHS will realign departmental infrastructure, resources, and staffing to optimize the configuration of key activities and functions. Administrative units within the department will be shifted and enhanced to align under Operations, Service and Clinical Design, Population Health, Healthcare Oversight, and Strategy and Finance (*see Figure 1*). Initial steps towards implementing these changes will impact Children, Youth and Families (CYF) System of Care, Adult and Older Adult (AOA) System of Care, juvenile forensics, and SUD services.

To ensure seamless navigation throughout the systems of care, there will be a transition away from distinct systems of care with oversight defined by age cohorts and instead transition into a structure defined by service category. Within the service categories, there will be specialization by age cohorts.

Similarly, SUD services will be integrated with mental health services within each service line to ensure seamless service delivery across the behavioral health continuum of care.



In support of the new organizational structure, BHS will operationalize new positions approved in the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Revised Budget (Operational Plan), as follows:

- **Administrative Services:** New positions will maximize efficiency, strengthen oversight, enhance technical expertise, expand data capacity and integration, and support service integration to yield more impactful outcomes through the enhancement of data sciences and systems management, strategy and finance, contract support, privacy and compliance, service and clinical design, quality assurance and quality improvement, health plan administration and population health.
- **Direct Services:** New positions will provide critical direct services within SDCPH, juvenile forensics, and care coordination services.

Phase 1

The organizational changes will be operationalized over the next fiscal year and are expected to be iterative as the organization evolves. Some fluidity is anticipated during this journey, along with continual adjustments as business needs become clearer. The hope is to shift into the new structure by end of the fiscal year with the goal of having infrastructure in place to sustain growth and increasing complexity of services, and in anticipation of further community need. The anticipated impact to stakeholders and contractors is expected to be minimal.

The following changes became effective as of December 3, 2021 and are the first steps to align BHS with similarly sized healthcare organizations.

- Formally Establish the Population Health Unit
The Population Health Unit, which has operated as part of the Clinical Directors Office, will formally be established under the leadership of the Chief Population Health Officer, Dr. Nicole Esposito. This unit will implement a population health approach to support access to behavioral health care by ensuring those in need have access to services, working to identify and eliminate health disparities, driving excellent health outcomes and supporting continuous improvement.
- BHS Budget Team Shift to the Strategy & Finance Unit
The BHS Budget team, will shift under the Strategy and Finance Unit under the leadership of the Acting - Chief Strategy and Finance Officer, Nadia Privara. The Budget team leads budget development and implementation activities for BHS units, including BHS Administration, SDCPH, Edgemoor, and County-operated services, as well as manages expenditures and revenues, leads quarterly fund balance, provides various financial analysis. and assists in year-end activities.

- **BHS Fiscal Team Shift to the Operations Unit**

The BHS Fiscal team will remain under the Operations Unit under the leadership of the Chief Operations Officer, Aurora Kiviat. The team is responsible for all fiscal functions to support the 300+ contracts currently within BHS including contract budgets, revenues, contractor invoices, contract spending, year-end activities, and other tasks related to the fiscal management of contracts.

BHS employees within these units will continue to function in their typical role and support their current functions until formal shifting of bodies of work, tasks and activities occurs, if any.

Next Steps

In addition to the restructuring of operations at BHS there will also be changes to the approach of reporting on the important and extensive work carried out by the department, specifically with regards to the monthly Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) Director's Report. For 2022 the Director's Report will shift away from highlighting the work of individual units and instead focus on large bodies of work across the department such as:

- Capital projects (e.g., Central Region Behavioral Health hub)
- Large initiatives and collaborations (e.g., Mobile Crisis Response Teams)
- Procurements
- Population health and equity work, etc.
- Other key events, activities and initiatives impacting BHS

The 2022 Director's Report calendar is still being developed and efforts are underway to strategically forecast BHS initiatives to align with each month's Director's Report topic, though some current reporting will remain. Edgemoor and SDCPH will continue to be featured as joint units in one of the Director's Report editions. Behavioral health related special events of interest to the community will continue to be featured in the Director's Report.

We look forward to navigating the road ahead and will continue to communicate additional information as it becomes available.

Behavioral Health Special Events

2nd Annual Birth of Brilliance Virtual Conference

The 2nd Annual Birth of Brilliance virtual conference is scheduled for February 24, 2022. The focus of this conference is to raise awareness about the effects of racial disparities and implicit bias in mental health, social services, developmental services, education, medical care, and juvenile justice, to serve youth and families in a way that centers equity to amplify the brilliance of all children. Registration is now open at: [Birth of Brilliance Virtual Conference 2022](#)

7th Annual Critical Issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference

The 7th Annual Critical Issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CICAMH)-Managing Change in a Changing World conference is scheduled for March 11, 2022. The goal of this conference is to bring the most current relevant topics youth are facing. Offerings will include foster care issues, human trafficking in social media, youth drug use during the COVID-19 pandemic, unaccompanied minors at the border and their stay in San Diego, impact of extended screen time on developing youth, gender affirming care, and more. The 2022 conference will offer a hybrid format with the option to attend virtually or in-person, with a limited capacity for in-person attendance to ensure physical distance and safety guidelines. More information will be available soon.

Behavioral Health Services
Director's Report – January 2022

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'LUKE BERGMANN', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

LUKE BERGMANN, Ph.D., Director
Behavioral Health Services

c: Nick Macchione, Agency Director
Cecily Thornton-Stearns, Assistant Director and Chief Program Officer
Aurora Kiviat Nudd, Assistant Director and Chief Operations Officer
Nadia Privara Brahms, Acting-Assistant Director, Chief Strategy and Finance Officer