



County of San Diego

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February 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 – March 2021

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

Upcoming Events

6th Annual Critical Issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CICAMH) Conference

On March 19, 2021, the Children, Youth and Families (CYF) System of Care will host the 6th Annual Critical Issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CICAMH) Conference in partnership with the San Diego Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (SDACAP), the San Diego Psychiatry Society, the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists-San Diego Chapter (CAMFT), and the San Diego Psychological Association. This virtual conference will highlight the collaboration between BHS and the different specialties of clinicians managing mental health needs in children and adolescents. The conference emphasizes the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in the management of mental health needs of children and adolescents with focus on specialized therapeutic techniques and up-to-date knowledge on diagnosis and early intervention.

Conference topics include: Emotional intelligence; sleep in children; health and COVID-19; complexities of diagnosing autism in the age of DSM-5; and mental health practice with immigrant and refugee youth. Special emphasis on resilience and management of special needs children with focus on social, economic, and racial disparities. There will be up to eight continuation education units available for this conference. CYF has extended an invitation to the BHAB representative on the CYF Council to attend the conference as a guest. For more information and to register, please visit: <https://cicamh.com/>

Birth of Brilliance Conference: Challenging Us to Create Racial Equity in Early Childhood

On February 25, 2021, San Diego Youth Services (SDYS), San Diego Early Childhood Mental Health Leaders Collaborative, and San Diego Center for Children (SDCC) hosted this inaugural virtual conference with BHS as a joint sponsor. This conference was conceived to raise the collective consciousness around the effects of racial disparities and implicit bias in mental health, social services, developmental services, early childhood education, and medical care. Conference speakers included members of the CYF Council Early Childhood Sub-committee.

Youth Mental Health Well-Being Celebration

CYF, through the CYF Liaison contract with NAMI San Diego, will host the 7th Annual Youth Mental Health Well-Being Celebration as one of the events during "May is Mental Health Month". The virtual event will be free of charge, open to the public, and BHAB members are encouraged to attend. The National Federation of Families theme of "Flipping the Script on Mental Health" will be leveraged locally with a Youth and Families Support Partners subcommittee diligently working on creating a meaningful event.

UPDATES FROM THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES (CYF) SYSTEM OF CARE

California Health Facilities Financing Authority (CHFFA) Investment in Mental Health Wellness Grant Program for Children and Youth

Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), in collaboration with Fred Finch Youth & Family Services (Fred Finch), submitted a grant application to CHFFA on January 29, 2021, and if awarded, will provide capital funding for Fred Finch to purchase a property in East County where they will develop a safe,

secure, crisis residential treatment center to address immediate behavioral health stressors and symptoms that youth and their families experience. Additionally, Fred Finch will develop robust aftercare and follow-up protocols to ensure youth are served in the least restrictive clinical setting. BHAB was informed of this grant submission at the January 7, 2021, meeting and submission of an application for funding was approved by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on January 26, 2021.

CYF Council

The CYF Council continues to meet virtually adhering to COVID-19 physical distancing orders. BHAB has been consistently represented at the meeting by BHAB member Bill Stewart. Detailed information about the CYF Council can be found at:

https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_children/CYFBHSOCCouncil.html.

The following have been the CYF Council areas of focus for fiscal year (FY) 2020-21:

- July 13, 2020 - Annual CYF Council Orientation
- August 10, 2020 - Strategic Planning Part I to provide FY 2019-20 Accomplishments and FY 2020-21 Goals
- September 14, 2020 - Strategic Planning Part II
- October 12, 2020 - Combined Councils Meeting focused on Transgender Health Across the Lifespan
- November 9, 2020 - Supporting Youth Engagement: Live Well Youth Sector
- December 14, 2020 - Dark
- January 11, 2021 - Best Practices for Outreach During the Pandemic
- February 8, 2021 - Best Practices for Engagement During the Pandemic

CYF Update on Advancing the Behavioral Health Continuum of Care

Rady Children's Hospital Hub Program Status: The County continues to meet with Rady's leadership to identify service and capacity needs with emphasis on data and analytics mapping. Work continues planning for the physical facility.

Threat Assessments Evaluations - Program Status: Threat Assessment Specialty Criteria was implemented on July 1, 2020, which created the infrastructure for Treatment and Evaluation Resources Management (TERM) clinicians to provide these specialty assessments.

Continuum of Care Reform and Pathways to Well-Being

The Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) initiative is a comprehensive framework of legislation and regulations designed to improve the continuum of services that support children, youth, and families across child placement settings. The CCR continues to guide Pathways to Well-Being (PWB) and allows for close collaboration across BHS, Child Welfare Services (CWS), the Probation department and more recently extended to systemically incorporate the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) and the San Diego Regional Center (SDRC). The following updates highlight recent work on PWB and CCR:

- Under the umbrella of CCR, the San Diego CYF Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been drafted with intent for State submission in March 2021. The MOU outlines the mission to provide highly coordinated, integrated, and innovative services to children and youth in order to achieve permanency, well-being, and a valued and successful adulthood. As outlined in the MOU, an Interagency Leadership Team has been formed and serves as the governing and

coordinating body of the collaborative work that is focused on timely, coordinated, and trauma informed service provision to youth in foster care.

- Supporting CCR and PBW requires on-going trainings and system development. In partnership with Responsive Integrated Health Solutions (RIHS), BHS and the Academy for Professional Excellence released a new Child and Family Team (CFT) Roles and Responsibilities eLearning. CFTs are mandated by the state and embraced locally as a critical way in supporting youth and families. The course reviews the concept of the CFT and CFT meeting, describes the mandates and identifies the specific roles of all the CFT members. The course is available for viewing at <https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/rihs/pathways/pathways-online-learning/>.
- As of February 2021, eleven group homes have been licensed as Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP) in San Diego County. Of the eleven licensed STRTPs, nine have established BHS contracts. Five BHS contracted STRTPs have Mental Health Program Approval from the Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS) to provide Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS), and four are awaiting final approval. BHS has facilitated multiple STRTP Mental Health Program orientations and continues to provide technical assistance for the STRTPs that need to obtain Mental Health Program Approval from DHCS.

With the release of the Interim STRTP Regulations Version 2 issued by DHCS in Information Notice 20-005 on February 28, 2020, Statewide Criteria for Mental Health Program Approval for Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP), BHS developed a "Interim STRTP Regulations Version 2" guide to highlight details regarding significant updates in Version 2. BHS released an updated STRTP documentation template packet for all STRTP providers in a BHS Information Notice in November 2020.

- The following is a list of licensed STRTPs, noting the six that are still pending.
 - San Diego Center for Children
 - New Alternatives, Inc. #16 -South Bay
 - Fred Finch Youth Center -San Diego
 - New Alternatives #1 -Kenora
 - Casa de Amparo
 - Center for Positive Changes -*Pending final approval
 - Circle of Friends -*Pending final approval
 - Milestone House -*Pending final approval
 - Tiffany's Place -*Pending final approval
 - New Haven Youth and Family Services -*Pending BHS contract and final approval
 - Varsity Team Incorporated - *Application not yet submitted

Family Urgent Response System (FURS)

The Family Urgent Response (FURS) is a coordinated statewide, regional, and county-level system designed to provide collaborative and timely state-level phone-based response and county-level in-home, in-person mobile response during situations of instability, to preserve the relationship of the caregiver and the child or youth. The FURS was enacted through Senate Bill (SB) 80 and Assembly Bill (AB) 79. A local partnership between BHS, CWS and Probation was formed in 2020 to develop the local network. FURS builds upon CCR to provide current and former foster youth and their caregivers with immediate, trauma-informed support when they need it. FURS is intended to have multiple positive effects on the lives of children and youth and caregivers, including:

- Preventing placement disruptions and preserving the relationship between the child or youth and their caregiver

- Preventing the need for a 911 call or law enforcement involvement and avoiding the criminalization of traumatized youth
- Preventing psychiatric hospitalization and placement into congregate care; and
- Promoting healing as a family.

In compliance with State requirements, on January 15, 2021, the County submitted a FURS Extension Request which the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) accepted. The plan outlines the local status for launching a mobile response team with an active procurement to secure contracted services projected for March 1, 2021.

CDSS has recently updated their website to offer a landing page regarding FURS to include general information as well as a Youth Design Art Gallery. <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/foster-care/furs>

Out-of-State Group Homes

After a tragic incident in which a youth died at an out-of-state group home facility, CDSS began conducting assessments of all out-of-state group homes. CDSS found patterns of improper use of restraints and other violations of California standards in all of the group homes. As a result, all out-of-state group home programs were decertified, and plans were initiated to bring all 109 youth from 23 counties back to California within a 45-day window. Counties and providers were notified in December of 2020. Twelve San Diego youth, connected to CWS, Probation or both agencies, were part of this cohort. CDSS has provided Technical Assistance (TA) to Probation and CWS to coordinate appropriate care for these youth in the state of California. The plan is for youth to enter placements in STRTPs or for reunification home to family with community supports in place.

Locally, BHS has been an active participant in the CDSS TA calls and has provided support to Probation and CWS in facilitating clinically appropriate behavioral health care for the subset returning to San Diego County. Care providers most likely to be impacted by these youth's return, (i.e., psychiatric hospitals, the Emergency Screening Unit (ESU), wraparound programs, and Therapeutic Behavioral Services) were notified due to the potential needs and acuity of the youth. CWS and Probation have led the efforts and have ensured the successful transition of the San Diego youth out of the decertified group homes. BHS remains involved and anticipates providing continued support to CWS and Probation as needed. For more information, please see the CDSS dedicated webpage at <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/continuum-of-care-reform/returning-youth-from-out-of-state-programs>

COVID-19 Service Delivery Impacts and Adjustments

Teen Recovery Centers (TRC): With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent shift to remote learning, school-based referrals to the Teen Recovery Centers were significantly impacted. Compared to pre-pandemic (November 2019 to November 2020), there was a 54% decrease in the number of unduplicated youth served in TRCs (from 300 to 130 unduplicated clients). However, there was a 56% increase in service time per client (from an average under six hours to more than nine hours per week) and a 16% increase in the average length of stay in treatment (from an average of more than 72 days to more than 98 days), as the TRC programs recognized and responded to the increased need for support to clients and families related to stress from COVID-19. TRCs shifted to providing telehealth services and supplemented their programming with additional case management and outreach to youth and their families to meet their basic needs and maintain engagement in

treatment. Through CARES Act funding, the “Out and About” series of safe outdoor activities for youth was implemented and benefited TRC clients, children, and youth countywide.

SchoolLink services: As remote learning was implemented at schools, behavioral health service delivery was adjusted to incorporate telehealth. A SchoolLink COVID-19 Module was created highlighting best practices for treatment programs to engage the school community and offer services during the pandemic. The module reviews the framework for care, outlines best ways to connect with schools, addresses telehealth and face-to-face contracts, includes best practices related to referrals, school communication, outreach, family communication, as well as suicide, crisis, and high-risk considerations. Updated fliers were also created to support outreach efforts. Information about SchoolLink can be found at: <https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/rihs-schoolink/#/menu/5b1058975336621b30dfcd5b>. Additionally, in partnership with the Child and Adolescent Services Research Center (CASRC), CYF released two documents that capture best practices in the provision of telehealth services: Clinician Telehealth Checklist-Best Practices and Engaging Children, Youth and Families in Telehealth. Both can be found at: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/CYF/memo_teletools.pdf.

Comparing November 2019 to November 2020 data for children and youth outpatient mental health treatment, there has been a 7% decrease in clients served (from 5,167 to 4,823). The CYF Council has initiated a dialogue regarding best practices for outreach and engagement during the pandemic, offering a space for cross system exchange of standard practices and innovative approaches.

Perinatal services: Perinatal services have experienced a significant impact from the COVID-19 pandemic on all service levels. Given the evolving changes during the pandemic including school closures, challenges in accessing food and other basic necessities, and disease prevention precautions in service delivery, shifts in operations were implemented to maintain access to necessary services. The perinatal system began to utilize telehealth while also providing in-person services following COVID-19 physical distancing and safety precautions. In residential care, adjustments to the physical space within facilities to allow for physical distancing resulted in decreased bed capacity. In comparing data from pre-pandemic to the present (November 2019 - November 2020), there has been a 14% decrease in the number of unduplicated clients served in the residential perinatal programs (279 to 240 clients). The perinatal residential programs have also experienced fewer parents bringing their children into the treatment facilities to stay during their course of treatment.

Outpatient perinatal programs adjusted their childcare services to serve one family at a time and implemented increased cleaning and disinfection protocols. Outpatient perinatal service providers have responded to the impact of the pandemic on client social isolation, mental health, and relapse risk by connecting clients with appropriate resources and services. Providers are supporting the individuals they serve by adjusting their service delivery models and providing more frequent check-ins, additional case management services, and enhanced care coordination. In comparing pre-pandemic to the present (November 2019 - November 2020), there has been a 3% increase in the number of unduplicated clients served in the outpatient perinatal programs (from 364 to 374 clients). Both residential and outpatient perinatal service providers have informed community and service providers that treatment services continue to be available.

In January 2021, CYF was invited to present on San Diego County's perinatal service model at the DHCS Quarterly Perinatal Roundtable webinar to an audience of approximately one hundred statewide county representatives and service providers. The presentation highlighted the unique availability within

County perinatal programs of licensed childcare facilities and on-site child clinicians offering developmental screening, parent training, mental health services, and referral.

Pre-COVID-19 to Current CYF Service Delivery Impact in Perinatal Services

Program	Unduplicated Client Services			Service Minutes			Comment
	Nov. 2019	Nov. 2020	VARIANCE	Nov. 2019	Nov. 2020	VARIANCE	
Mental Health Outpatient	5,167	4,823	-7%	1,314,213	1,133,581	-14%	Billable & non-billable services excluding documentation and travel time
Mental Health STRTPS	113	98	-13%	42,058	33,983	256,247 vs 368,631	Billable & non-billable Outpatient Minutes
				214,189	334,648	44%	
TRC	300	137	-54%	78,930	67,575	-14%	DMC Billable
Peri Out-Patient	364	374	3%	104,931	94,855	-10%	DMC Billable
SUD Residential	279	240	-14%	5,601	3,020	-46%	DMC Bed Days

Emergency Screening Unit

The Emergency Screening Unit (ESU) provides crisis stabilization services to children and youth experiencing an acute psychiatric crisis. The ESU's team offers comprehensive screening services, crisis stabilization and facilitates inpatient hospitalization when clinically necessary. In March 2020, at the onset of COVID-19, there was initially a decrease of 15% in crisis stabilization services while direct admissions (from the Emergency Department directly to inpatient) remained steady at the same rate when compared to March 2019. However, in April 2020, there was a significant drop of 52% in crisis stabilization utilization and an increase of 31% in direct admissions when compared to the same period in 2019. This trend of decreased crisis stabilization and increased overall direct admissions continued through Quarter 2 of FY 2020-21. Although this has since somewhat stabilized, it has not returned to the previous overall outcome data in comparison to March through December 2019. Since March 2020 through December 2020, there has been a total decrease of 33% in crisis stabilization services and direct admits appear to have stabilized but reflect an overall increase of 5% during that period. In the first half of FY 2020-21, ESU screened 703 children and youth in total with a diversion rate of 60%. The ESU is located at 4309 Third Ave, San Diego, 92103. The phone number is (619) 876-4502.

Pre-COVID-19 to Current CYF Service Delivery Impact in ESU Services

Admissions											
2020	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Crisis Services	148	95	103	73	78	105	120	123	97	92	1034
Direct Admissions	13	17	20	19	23	18	21	12	22	12	177
Total	161	112	123	92	101	123	141	135	119	104	1211
2019	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Crisis Services	175	199	190	124	101	118	162	193	154	130	1546
Direct Admissions	13	13	13	14	26	27	12	14	18	19	169
Total	188	212	203	138	127	145	174	207	172	149	1715
% Variance from 2019 to 2020											
Crisis Services	-15%	-52%	-46%	-41%	-23%	-11%	-26%	-36%	-37%	-29%	-33%
Direct Admissions	0%	31%	54%	36%	-12%	-33%	75%	-14%	22%	-37%	5%

Juvenile Forensic Services Stabilization, Treatment, Assessment and Transition (STAT) Team

The Juvenile Forensic Services STAT Team provides mental health services to youth on Probation, in detention facilities, and in the community. Services include, but are not limited to, crisis intervention, assessment, psychiatric assessment, medication follow-up, individual and group therapies, and court-ordered reports. The primary purpose of the program is to provide mental health services to assist youth in the detention facility and in transitioning back into the community upon release from detention. Services are intended to stabilize the youth and reduce exacerbation of mental health symptoms when the youth returns to the home and community.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the STAT team continues offering in-person and face-to-face services in addition to providing telehealth services. In 2020, the STAT team provided the following services at the Kearny Mesa Juvenile Hall (KMJH), East Mesa (EM) and Urban Camp (UC):

- A total of 5,036 referrals were received: 3249 for KMJH/UC and 1787 for EM.
- There was a total of 11,846 clinical visits/sessions:
 - 4684 mental health clinician visits and 963 psychiatric visits at KMJH
 - 1791 mental health clinician visits and 431 psychiatric visits at UC
 - 3114 mental health clinician visits and 863 psychiatric visits at EM

Additionally, the STAT Team participates in collaborative courts, workgroups, and various committees. Some highlights from this past year to meet the needs of the youth during the pandemic were:

- The entire STAT team learned how to leverage the BlueJeans platform and Microsoft Teams software to provide telehealth services to youth when indicated.
- STAT clinical staff conducted psycho-educational groups for the youth in detention on COVID-19, anxiety, and depression.
- A new protocol was established in which all recently released youth are now followed for at least 30 days after release by STAT Team professionals to ensure continuity of services between release and the commencement of services by external providers.

In April of 2021, the STAT Team will be expanded under a partnership through Public Safety Group and HHSA to provide treatment services to youth who are currently under the Youthful Offenders Unit (YOU). The new design created in partnership with BHS, Probation, and the Children's Initiative will provide youth with a longer-term commitment in the detention facility with mental health and substance use treatment while also addressing criminogenic needs.

CYF System of Care Training Academy

The CYF System of Care (CYF-SOC) Training Academy is a collaboration of partners in the four sectors of the CYF-SOC through the contract with Responsive Integrated Health Solutions (RIHS). Representatives from the CYF-SOC identify relevant topics for the workforce, considering the pandemic, how it impacts children, as well as considering racial equity and social determinants of health.

- CYF-SOC Training Academy promoted the following trainings for Fiscal Year 2020-21:
 - Suicidality in Children and Youth (delivered on August 6, 2020)
 - Bridges Out of Poverty (delivered October 6, 2020)
 - Understanding our Own Biases and Assumptions
 - Missed Cues in Service Delivery
 - Supporting People of Color in Treatment
 - Disparities and Access to Healthcare
- The CYF-SOC Annual Conference is scheduled for May 27, 2021. *Youth Substance Use: Risk, Resilience, Reconnection* will be a virtual Conference. The conference will offer presentations on Understanding the Impact of In-Utero Substance Exposure and Implementing Concrete Care Strategies in Caring for Substance Exposed Infants and Toddlers; Early Onset Psychosis and Cannabis Use; California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN): Advocating for a Tobacco-Free California; and Opioid Crisis and Juvenile Drug Smuggling in San Diego County, and more. Up to 10 scholarships will be awarded to peer support partners to attend the conference.
- The 41st annual *California Mental Health Advocates for Children and Youth (CMHACY)* virtual conference is scheduled to on April 28-29, 2021. This year's focus is on Non-Negotiable: Demanding Social Justice & Racial Equity in Our System of Care. Two or more peer support partners will be sponsored to attend through the CYF-SOC Academy.

Children, Youth and Family Liaison (CYFL)

The Children, Youth and Family Liaison (CYFL) <https://cyfliaison.namisandiego.org/> has the primary duty of coordinating, training, and advancing Youth/Family Professional Partnerships for CYF within BHS. Additionally, CYFL collaborates with CYF administrative staff to ensure family and youth voice, choice, and values are incorporated into service development, implementation plans, and overall CYF service delivery.

CYFL manages three cloud-based applications known as Organized Support Companion in an Emergency Situation (OscER), OscER Jr. and Accessing and Leveraging Families Right to Education (alfREDU). These applications provide behavioral health outreach and engagement services to all ages countywide through dissemination and training. The cloud-based applications are available in English, two are available in Spanish and one in Arabic. By June 2022, all three applications will be available in six threshold languages. BHS encourages all providers and advocates to download the applications and share them with the community members as resources. Applications can be found at: <https://cyfliaison.namisandiego.org/connections/>

The SB 803 Peer Support Specialist Certification Act of 2020 establishes a statewide certification program for peer support specialists and provides the structure needed to maximize the federal match for peer services under Medi-Cal. SB 803 was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom on September 25, 2020. CYFL follows the DHCS Peer Support Specialist Listening sessions and feedback gathering and reports this back to BHS and the system of care. The DHCS Peer Support Specialist website can be accessed at: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/Peer-Support-Services.aspx>.

Respectfully submitted,



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