



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 – MARCH 2022

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS SERVICES

The vision of the Behavioral Health Continuum of Care (CoC) is to achieve a transformational shift from a model of care driven by crises to one driven by chronic or continuous care and prevention through the regional distribution and coordination of resources to keep people connected, stable, and healthy.

To achieve this vision, BHS is developing immediate and long-term strategies to expand chronic and continuous care capacity, which includes coordination of ongoing care, linkages to housing, and seamless connections to integrated primary care. Services will be regionally distributed and designed to work in coordination with various partners, including hospitals, community-based providers, cities, law enforcement, and many others.

Included in this continuum are Mobile Crisis Response Teams and Crisis Stabilization Units. These services provide early intervention and prevention options for service recipients that are designed to reduce avoidable intervention with law enforcement, potential for incarceration, and the burden on hospital emergency departments. Additional models of crisis service care include the Tri-City Psychiatric Health Facility and the Children, Youth, and Families System of Care Emergency Screening Unit.

Implementation of the Behavioral Health CoC supports the development of effective preventive solutions, along with the design of a more cohesive, efficient care and treatment system that optimizes patient outcomes and achieves overall cost-savings. The CoC adopts the Triple Aim objectives of improving the patient experience, improving population health outcomes, and reducing long-term costs.

Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) Program

On June 25, 2019, the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved a recommendation to enhance the crisis intervention options available to the community by establishing an MCRT pilot program which became operational in January 2021. MCRT was designed to help people who are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis by dispatching behavioral health experts to emergency calls instead of law enforcement, when appropriate.

The MCRT program provides a person-centered approach to respond to non-violent behavioral health situations in the community. These situations are often more effectively addressed, and with less risk of trauma to already vulnerable service recipients, by trained clinicians and peers. MCRTs are comprised of

licensed mental health clinicians, case managers, and peer support specialists who respond to behavioral health crisis calls that do not involve known threats of violence or medical emergencies.

On June 23, 2020, the Board further expanded the MCRT program by approving an expedited rollout of MCRT services countywide. In June 2021 the regional MCRT contract was established and, through a phased roll out approach, the MCRT program was expanded to all regions in the County.

As of February 14th, the MCRT has responded to 647 referrals, assisting in facilitating 110 individuals to new admissions to ongoing outpatient services. The majority of calls responded to have resulted in the individual receiving intervention services and able to remain in the community.

Crisis Stabilization Units (CSU)

CSUs serve individuals experiencing a mental health crisis and provide services for up to 24 hours. CSUs provide immediate stabilization, and on-going clinical assessment and stabilization – which includes treatment with medication and linkages to other behavioral health services. These services ensure those in a mental health crisis can continue to avoid unnecessary use of hospital emergency room resources. CSUs also allow for a timelier transition of individuals from law enforcement custody to a hospital care setting.

2021 saw incredible growth of this critical service through the expansion of CSU capacity throughout the County, adding 32 more recliners, with another 12 planned for this spring to be co-located inside the North Coastal Live Well Center which will bring our total capacity to 64 recliners and 18 CSU beds at the San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital. Additionally, BHS is actively seeking a location for a community-based CSU in the East County. The CSU programs have been working in collaboration with community providers, MCRT, and local law enforcement to provide safe, clinically appropriate services.

Tri-City Psychiatric Health Facility Update

In September 2019, the BOS authorized an agreement to pursue the development of a psychiatric health facility at Tri-City Medical Center's main campus located in Oceanside to build back capacity of crisis services in North County. The services are designed to support connections to the continuum of care, providing for appropriate care transitions to the most appropriate levels of care, and meeting the needs of patients, families, and the community.

When operational, this facility will offer patient-centered care in a 16-bed mental health treatment center, providing short-term, inpatient services that include assessment, crisis planning, medication, supportive therapy, discharge planning, and community supports. Walk-in or outpatient services are not provided, with 24/7 security onsite for this locked facility. Upon discharge, patients will be connected to appropriate community-based care services.

Design of the facility site has been completed, and construction will proceed in anticipation for the facility to begin seeing patients in late 2023. The services provided will complement other recent continuum of care investments in the North County region. Community engagement forums were held on February 2, 2022, and February 16, 2022, to provide the community with project information and answer questions. Details and additional resources for this project can also be found at: www.sandiegocounty.gov/TriCityPHF.

Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) System of Care Emergency Screening Unit

The Emergency Screening Unit (ESU) provides crisis stabilization services to children and youth experiencing an acute psychiatric crisis. The ESU team offers comprehensive screening services, crisis stabilization, and facilitates inpatient hospitalization when clinically necessary.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21, the ESU:

- Had an overall decrease in utilization of 5% when compared to the prior fiscal year; crisis stabilization services decreased by 4%, and direct admissions decreased by 6%.

- Screened 1,699 children and youth in total, with a diversion rate of 65.2%; a 4.1% reduction when compared to the prior fiscal year.

In FY 2021-22, the ESU:

- Screened 941 children and youth through Quarter 2 (Q2) with a diversion rate of 70.9%.
- Current Q2 diversion rate is in line with pre-pandemic norms and year to date (YTD) represents an 11.2% increase in diversion compared to FY 2020-21.
- Based on Q2 outcomes, ESU is projected to serve approximately 1,882 children and youth for FY 2021-22 representing an overall increase in utilization of 11% when compared to the prior fiscal year, as well as 12% increase in crisis stabilization services, and a 4% increase in direct admissions.
- These increases are in comparison to FY 2020-21 where a decrease was experienced due COVID-19 pandemic impacts.

The following table provides a summary of the data including the variance from FY 2019-20 to FY 2020-21, and FY 2020-21 to FY 2021-22 through Q2, with anticipated projections through Quarter 4 (Q4) of FY 2021-22.

The ESU is located at 4309 Third Ave, San Diego, 92103. The phone number is 619-876-4502.

	FY 19-20*	FY 20-21**	Variance from FY 19-20 to FY20-21	Q2 FYTD 21-22	FY 21-22 Projection	Projected Variance from FY 20-21 to FY21-22	Projected Variance from FY 19-20 to FY21-22
Crisis Services Admissions	1558	1489	-4%	832	1664	12%	7%
Direct Admissions	223	210	-6%	109	218	4%	-2%
Total Admissions	1781	1699	-5%	941	1882	11%	6%
Diversion Rate	68%	59.7%	4.1%	70.9%	70.9%	11.2%	2.9%
*FY 2019-20 COVID March-June **FY 2020-21 COVID July-June							

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIAL EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 focus of this conference is to raise awareness of the most current and relevant issues facing youth today. The topics to be addressed 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 social distancing guidelines. Additional conference information and registration can be found at: <https://cicamh.com/>

May Is Mental Health Month 2022

May Is Mental Health Month (MIMHM) raises awareness of, and supports those living with, mental health conditions. Across the county, BHS and many providers will be hosting events to bring greater understanding and open conversations around issues related to mental illness.

BHS staff are currently planning for this year's MIMHM activities. Throughout the month of May, activities (both virtual and in-person) will take place with a focus on celebrating this year's theme of "Take Action for Mental Health". The NAMI Walk/Run and HHS Wellness Expo will kick off the month's activities on Saturday, April 30, 2022 (details below). Plans also include a MIMHM webpage on the BHS website, with an event calendar, activity ideas, and many other resources.

Providers and community- or faith-based organizations are encouraged to submit planned activities in recognition of the month to Dawn Hull (dawn.hull@sdcounty.ca.gov) for inclusion on the MIMHM calendar. More information about MIMHM will be shared leading up to May.

NAMI Walk / HHS Wellness Expo

BHS and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) San Diego are hosting a 5K Walk/Run and a HHS Wellness Expo (resource fair) to kick-off MIMHM activities. This annual event will return to an in-person setting this year, and will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2022, at Liberty Station. The event is designed to raise awareness of, and de-stigmatize, mental health conditions. For more information and to register for the 5k Walk/Run, please visit: www.namiwalks.org.

Youth Mental Health Well-Being Virtual Celebration

The BHS Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) System of Care unit is joining forces with NAMI San Diego to recognize and celebrate the importance of children's mental health with a special celebration on May 6, 2022. The Youth Mental Health Well-Being Virtual Celebration event will use art, in many forms, to engage youth and families who are living with serious mental health challenges. The virtual gathering setting is a reminder that we can be physically distanced and still remain socially connected.

This event is free of charge and open to the public; BHAB members are encouraged to attend. On May 6, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. the event will kick-off with a virtual resource fair, followed by the live virtual celebration event starting at 5:00 p.m. The Youth and Families Support Partners subcommittee is diligently working on creating a meaningful event for all attendees. Visit [May 2021 - Child, Youth, & Families Liaison \(namisandiego.org\)](http://www.namisandiego.org) to view last year's event and artwork. More information will be shared prior to the event.

Respectfully submitted,



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