



County of San Diego

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April 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 – May 2021

ACTION ITEM: REPORT BACK ON COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY SUBSTANCE USE HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY

On January 26, 2021 (13), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) voted to find prior Board direction opposing harm reduction programs, including the December 9, 1997 resolution entitled "Resolution to Oppose Needle Exchange Programs," to no longer be in effect. The BOS further directed the Chief Administrative Officer to: The BOS further directed the Chief Administrative Officer to:

- Create an Action Plan to realize a Syringe Services Program to meet the needs of San Diego County's population, including identification of necessary resources, and program partnerships; and in accordance with findings and recommendations in the January 14, 2021, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) memo and accompanied the Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS) and San Diego State University's Institute for Public Health (IPH) study, *Environmental Assessment on People Who Inject Drugs*, and report back to the Board with regular updates; and
- Return within 90 days to the BOS with a comprehensive County Substance Use Harm Reduction Strategy including immediate, intermediate, and long-term actions that broadens the existing "Opioid and Prescription Drug Misuse" strategy to bring a harm reduction approach to all substance use interventions across the County.

On June 8, 2021, Behavioral Health Services and Public Health Services will return to the BOS with a recommendation to receive the report back on this direction, noting that the Syringe Services Action Plan is a component of the Harm Reduction Strategy.

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

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

On Saturday, April 24, 2021, several locations throughout the county participated in the DEA's semi-annual National Prescription Drug Take Back Day which provides a safe way to dispose of expired, unused, or unwanted prescription drugs safely and anonymously.

This year's event also encouraged the community to consider disposing of unused animal medications. District Attorney Summer Stephan spoke at a media event on April 19, 2021 to encourage the community to safeguard animal medications and dispose of them safely when no longer needed.

May Is Mental Health Month 2021

Since 1949, there has been a national movement in May to raise awareness on mental health and provide resources to the community with the goal of reducing stigma for those experiencing mental health conditions. This year's theme, "Hope for Change", draws our attention to the present moment, allows us to reflect on the growth we've experienced, and move toward the future. The County of San Diego, along with the larger community who support loved ones with mental health conditions, will once again focus on raising awareness, offering support, and sharing local resources.

To maintain safety and comply with public health orders, all events this year will continue to be virtual. Many activities will be on social media where participants can all meaningfully connect. Visit the BHS May Is Mental Health Month (MIMHM) webpage (www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mimhm_resources) for activity ideas, resources, and a calendar that includes information on community events. Providers and community organizations are encouraged to submit planned activities in recognition of MIMHM for inclusion on the events calendar. Submissions can be sent to Nancy Page (nancy.page@sdcounty.ca.gov).

Children and Youth Mental Health Awareness Day Celebration - May 7, 2021

The BHS Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) System of Care unit is partnering with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) San Diego to recognize the importance of children and youth

mental health with a special virtual gathering that will use art to engage children and youth who are living with serious challenges and their families. This event is to serve as a reminder that we can be physically distanced and remain socially connected.

For registration and other information on the event, visit the BHS May Is Mental Health Month webpage (www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mimhm_resources) and click on the calendar.

UPDATES FROM THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL (SDCPH)

Medical Leadership Excellence

Dr. Ariana Nesbit-Bartsch: In December 2020, San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital welcomed Dr. Ariana Nesbit-Bartsch as the new Medical Director. Dr. Nesbit-Bartsch attended the University of Vermont College of Medicine, where she won awards for her research and outstanding academic achievement and was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. After medical school, Dr. Nesbit-Bartsch completed a psychiatry residency at Harvard Medical School's Cambridge Health Alliance Program, where she spent her third year working at an integrated specialty clinic for individuals with serious and persistent mental illness. During residency, she also graduated from Harvard Medical School's Master of Bioethics program and was named a Rapoport Fellow by the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law. She then received specialty fellowship training in forensic psychiatry at the University of California, Davis.

Dr. Nesbit-Bartsch has co-authored multiple textbook chapters on psychiatric ethics and forensic psychiatry. She has also written about and presented on a variety of topics including involuntary psychiatric treatment, antisocial personality disorder, schizophrenia, violence risk assessment, and malingering. She has historically worked at multiple correctional facilities and as a Forensic Psychiatric Consultant at Napa State Hospital. She is a Councilor of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL) and co-chairs AAPL's Early Career Development and Peer Review of Psychiatric Testimony Committees. Additionally, Dr. Nesbit-Bartsch is a consulting member of the ethics committee of the American Psychiatric Association.

Dr. David Folsom: SDCPH is delighted to host Dr. David Folsom, the prior Medical and Training Director of St. Vincent DePaul's Federally Qualified Health Center, and prior Clinical Director for UCSD's Department of Psychiatry. In his role at SDCPH, Dr. Folsom has been working on the front lines in the Emergency Psychiatric Unit (EPU), Crisis Recovery Unit (CRU), and attending SDCPH clinical leadership activities. SDCPH has benefited immensely from Dr. Folsom's wealth of expertise and experience, and he has been instrumental in bolstering connections to the University of California San Diego (UCSD) clinical services for SDCPH patients in need.

Psychiatric Management of Patients in a Pandemic

The length and severity of the pandemic has required SDCPH to be creative and flexible with an ongoing approach to combine effective infection control and active psychiatric treatment. In December, as COVID-19 cases were increasing in our community and in the hospital, SDCPH

pivoted to dedicate one of the units at the hospital to specifically treat COVID-19 positive patients. This afforded many clinical benefits, including opportunities for outdoor programming including meetings with patient treatment teams, reduced isolation among COVID-19 positive patients, and better infection control.

Additionally, aware of our mission as community partner and as a public safety net hospital, SDCPH has played a critical role in serving as a resource to our partners and thereby reducing pressures on local hospital systems as they experienced the impacts of COVID-19.

Over the past month, SDCPH has been working with our partners at County Public Health Services to provide COVID-19 vaccines to patients in our hospital. SDCPH nurses have been trained on how to administer these vaccines, which has helped support efforts to offer vaccines to our longer-term patients.

Enhanced Care Coordination

SDCPH, in collaboration with BHS Case Management and NAMI Next Steps, is excited to launch a new pilot project for enhanced care coordination. Informed by the Whole Person Wellness, the goal is to identify clients at the hospital who are experiencing cumulative clinical and social difficulty due to mixed behavioral health and primary/specialty care needs, compounded by homelessness. A new enhanced care coordination team will begin working with these clients to connect them to the various clinical resources and community supports needed for improved outcomes. IT infrastructure will be developed to assist with tracking client outcomes and the advanced clinical oversight. This pilot will then inform broader efforts to transition patients from Whole Person Wellness into the new CalAIM structure, which will include Enhanced Care Management.

UPDATES FROM EDGEMOOR DISTINCT PART SKILLED NURSING FACILITY (Edgemoor)

COVID-19 Update

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be at the forefront of operations at Edgemoor. Edgemoor continues to follow and implement the guidance of various local, state, and federal health organizations. Some of the precautions implemented include visitor restrictions; residents quarantined to the facility and connecting patios; entrance screenings which include temperature checks; masking; on-going staff education; communication with resident and families/responsible representatives; and testing of residents, staff, and contractors.

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Edgemoor partnered with CVS Pharmacy to administer COVID-19 vaccinations on-site as part of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Pharmacy Partnership Program for skilled nursing facilities. Vaccination clinics were held on January 4, January 5, January 25, January 26, February 15, and February 16. During these clinics, Edgemoor was able to fully vaccinate approximately 74% of staff and 94% of residents with the Pfizer vaccine.

Facility Improvements

Edgemoor's solar installation project is complete and the facility is currently partially powered by solar energy.

UPDATE FROM THE ADULT AND OLDER ADULT (AOA) SYSTEM OF CARE

Vista Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU)

On March 26, 2019, the BOS approved a recommendation to enhance the existing Walk-in Urgent Center in the city of Vista, which is operated by Exodus Recovery Inc., to provide specialized community-based, crisis stabilization services.

On November 17, 2020, the BOS approved the execution of an agreement between the County of San Diego, the City of Vista, and Exodus Recovery, Inc. which upon agreement of all parties, grants Exodus a special use permit to operationalize a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) in the city of Vista.

The CSU is a community-based urgent care center for psychiatric emergency services with a length of stay under 24-hours. The CSU provides crisis intervention, psychiatric assessments, medication services, care coordination and peer support with the goal of stabilizing clients in the community. The CSU will collaborate with law enforcement in the region, as appropriate. Services at the Vista CSU are anticipated to begin by summer 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



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Behavioral Health Services

cc: Nick Macchione, Agency Director
Cecily Thornton-Stearns, Assistant Director and Chief Program Officer
Aurora Kiviat, Assistant Director and Chief Operations Officer