



# County of San Diego

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August 31, 2023

TO: Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)

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

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

### BHS HOUSING INITIATIVES

#### **BHS Housing Initiatives Over the Years**

Over the past 20 years, BHS has developed an array of treatment services and housing supports to serve persons with serious mental illness who are experiencing homelessness. Some of the major accomplishments during this period are noted below:

##### *Past 20 Years*

- BHS contracted with the Corporation for Supportive Housing for housing technical consultant services to assist in the development of an array of housing for persons with serious mental illness (SMI), and to assist with the development of the BHS Strategic Housing Plan.
- Integration of housing supports for persons experiencing homelessness in Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs.
- Funded 219 permanent supportive housing units through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).
- Opened the Uptown Safe Haven residential facility to provide transitional housing and supportive services to chronically homeless adults with moderate to severe mental health conditions.

##### *Past 10 Years*

- Upwards of 1,250 subsidies have been utilized through Project One for All, a partnership between BHS, the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), and the County of San Diego Housing and Community Development Services.
- Established the Special Needs Housing Program (SNHP) to provide 131 permanent supportive housing.
- Established ongoing funding for substance use recovery residences.

##### *Past Five Years*

- Increased the number of shelter beds and bridge housing services to 78.
- Began offering behavioral health support services (BHSS) in two permanent supportive housing developments.

- Operationalized No Place Like Home funds for the development of permanent supportive housing for persons with mental health conditions who are experiencing homelessness.
- Opened the County's first Community Harm Reduction Team (C-HRT) Midway Shelter and Safe Haven.

### **Assertive Community Treatment Services with Integrated Housing Supports**

A major accomplishment has been the establishment of 19 assertive community treatment (ACT) services contracts that provide intensive, community-based services for persons with an SMI who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and may have a co-occurring substance use disorder (SUD). In Fiscal Year 2022-23, approximately 3,286 clients received services, which included medication management, rehabilitation and recovery services, employment and education support, peer support, intensive case management, and connection to an array of supportive housing options. Treatment funding for these 19 ACT contractors is approximately \$62 million annually, with MHSA embedded housing support funding of approximately \$16 million.

The array of ACT housing options include:

- Short-term bridge and transitional housing.
- Permanent supportive housing inclusive of apartments, studios, and shared housing.
- Licensed board and care facilities.
- Independent living homes.
- Recovery residences.

As of June 2023, 81% percent of non-institutionalized enrolled clients are utilizing the available housing options during the treatment phase. The top six living arrangements reported are:

- House or apartment [31%].
- Independent living facilities [17%].
- Homeless with shelter (i.e., family, friends, motel, vehicle) [11%].
- Adult board and care [10%].
- Skilled nursing facility/institution for mental disease [7%].
- Other (i.e., SUD residential, recovery residence, correctional facility, acute care) [5%].

### **Short-Term Housing (Shelter)**

BHS, in partnership with the City of San Diego, has in recent years developed shelter capacity which includes the Rosecrans Shelter with a 150-bed capacity with co-located BHSS on site. Since opening in September 2022, the Rosecrans Shelter has sheltered approximately 650 unduplicated unhoused clients. BHSS offered on site include:

- A multi-disciplinary team consisting of a nurse practitioner, clinician, substance use counselor, and peer support specialist.
- Screening for mental health, substance use, and physical health issues.
- Linkage to treatment via a warm handoff.
- Coordination with BHS providers.
- Bridge medication support until clients are connected with outpatient treatment.

The Community Harm Reduction Team (C-HRT) Midway Shelter has a 44-bed capacity for dedicated C-HRT clients with chronic substance use who are resistant to receiving services and reside in the City of San Diego. The C-HRT Midway Shelter is a partnership with the City of San Diego and Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS) who provide outreach, engagement, and care coordination services to this population. Since its opening on July 1, 2022, the Midway Shelter has provided services to 193 unduplicated clients. As July 1, 2023, FHCS has outreached to approximately 2,000 individuals, with 300 individuals having engaged in services.

### **Bridge Housing Program**

In addition to shelter beds, BHS has bridge or transitional housing options that include the Uptown Safe Haven (19 beds) for persons who are experiencing homelessness with an SMI and are enrolled in ACT programs. The C-HRT program also provides a C-HRT Safe Haven with a capacity of 22 beds for individuals who have engaged with FHCSD. Additionally, BHS contracts for short-term bridge housing across the county for 78 beds for women, men, and transitional age youth (TAY) experiencing homelessness with an SMI.

### **BHSS in Permanent Housing Developments**

BHS has partnered with SDHC on two permanent housing developments where BHSS are co-located. Residents at these developments receive subsidies from SDHC. The Kearny Vista apartments house 161 residents and the Valley Vista apartments house 211 residents. BHS providers conduct light case management for all residents, with clinical case management as needed. BHSS include screening, care coordination, and connections to ongoing BHS services.

### **No Place Like Home**

In November 2018, voters approved Proposition 2, authorizing the sale of up to \$2 billion in revenue bonds and the use of a portion of Proposition 63 taxes for the MHSA No Place Like Home (NPLH) program for permanent supportive housing developments (PSH) to house clients who are experiencing homelessness and have a mental health condition. San Diego County's allocation was approximately \$115 million, and to date there are 133 leased units in four new PSH developments. There are 13 new housing developments planned to add another 255 units, which will bring the total NPLH units to 388.

### **Board and Care with Augmented Services Program**

Board and care (B&C) with Augmented Services Program (ASP) are board and care's that provide additional support to residents with an SMI to improve daily functioning so they can remain in the community and out of mental health institutions. These clients are often under conservatorship and are enrolled in ACT or strength-based case management programs. The goal of the ASP is to enhance and improve client functioning by augmenting the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) B&C payment by funding a "patch" for additional support services in order to maintain clients in the least restrictive setting. BHS contracts with eight B&C providers for a total of 242 beds, with a plan to continue expansion of capacity utilizing Behavioral Health Bridge Housing grant funds.

The ASP client criteria include:

- A score of 60+ on the ASP screening tool.
- Utilization of high-cost mental health services such as acute care, emergency departments, and long-term care.
- History of evictions from other residential care facilities for multiple problematic behaviors.
- High-risk factors within the past six months including danger to self or others, fire-setting behavior, or sexually dangerous behavior.

## **BHS SPECIAL EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **National Recovery Month Celebration Event August 26, 2023**

On Saturday, August 26, 2023, BHS kicked-off National Recovery Month with a celebratory event at County Waterfront Park. National Recovery Month has been observed during the month of September in the United States since 1989, this was the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual event hosted by the County.

Against the picturesque backdrop of the waterfront, the event embodied the theme "Celebrate the Tides of Hope," celebrating recovery as a continuous and evolving journey filled with resiliency and possibility. Over 70 exhibitors offered a diverse range of resources that engaged approximately 250 attendees in a variety of interactive activities designed to foster connections and healing, within a supportive

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environment. Attendees were grateful for the invaluable resources provided, including the 400 naloxone kits that were distributed, and for a deepened understanding of the recovery community that was fostered through this event. The County of San Diego's National Recovery Month Celebration Event will continue to be an annual event of support, unity, and renewed hope, echoing the resilience of all those on the path to recovery.

Special thanks to BHAB 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Serita Polinaire for emceeding the event, as well as to the exhibitors and all those who participated in the event program (referenced below).

### 2023 National Recovery Month Program:

- Event Emcee: Serita Polinaire
- Music by Resounding Joy
- Message from Luke Bergmann, BHS Director
- Shared Stories of Hope
  - Wendi Vierra, Neighborhood Healthcare
  - Nathan 'Narcen Nate' Smiddy, A New PATH
  - Reggie Washington, Project A.W.A.R.E.
- Polynesian Dance by Kaliloa O Kaleo'Onalani
- Recovery Countdown
- Yoga and Meditation Session by OG Yoga
- Tai Chi Session provided by the County's Aging and Independence Services (AIS) department

### **CARE Court Program**

The County of San Diego, along with other key partners involved in the process, will commence the CARE Court program on October 1, 2023, as one of the first phase counties. BHS continues planning efforts to support successful implementation of the program, including hiring new County staff to provide services. A new BHS CARE Court webpage provides general information and frequently asked questions and responses. The CARE Court webpage can be found at the following link: [https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/CARE\\_Court.html](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/CARE_Court.html).

Respectfully submitted,



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