

Director's Report

April 21, 2021



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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

Behavioral Wellness Director Announces Departure: The County of Santa Barbara Behavioral Wellness Director, Alice Gleghorn Ph.D., after leading the department for 6.5 years has announced that she will be leaving her position to accept the position of President and CEO of Phoenix Houses of California, Inc., a private nonprofit substance abuse treatment program based in Southern California. Dr. Gleghorn will continue with the department until mid-June.

The County will soon open a national search for a new Behavioral Wellness Director who will continue the legacy of strong leadership and effective performance with the department, while addressing the community's behavioral health needs including substance use disorder and mental health services.

"Since December 2014, it has been my great honor to work with an inspiring group of county staff and behavioral health professionals, including our contracted community-based organizations, county leaders in criminal justice, health, social services, and housing, peers, families and other community stakeholders, particularly our partners committed to addressing the impact of homelessness and racial equity on wellness," said Dr. Gleghorn.

"The County of Santa Barbara appreciates Dr. Gleghorn's many years of service and wishes her well in her new endeavor," stated Gregg Hart, Santa Barbara County Supervisor, Second District. "Under her leadership, the department has made tremendous progress in client care, quality of staff and program growth."

During Dr. Gleghorn's directorship, numerous accomplishments occurred. Some of these include the addition of 170 new beds throughout the county, consistently high performances in annual audits and reviews, the opening of the county's first mental health rehabilitation center for long term residential care, starting the first crisis stabilization unit in the county and expansion of the crisis service system to develop mental health co-response teams linked with police and sheriff, launching a community overdose prevention program which has documented more than a thousand overdose rescues since 2016, and developing a continuum of care which embraces and expands substance abuse treatment and specifically medication assistance treatment for those struggling with substance use disorders.

Assistant Director, Dr. Pam Fisher, has agreed to delay her retirement to assist the department until the recruitment for the next Behavioral Wellness Director is completed.

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget: For the third consecutive year, Behavioral Wellness was able to present to the board of supervisors a balanced budget without any service level or position reductions. The \$148M recommended fiscal year 2021/22 budget is approximately \$13M higher than the current year adopted budget. This increase is primarily due to additional grant funded programs. Continuing the strong Mental Health Medi-Cal and Drug Medi-Cal services revenue that we're seeing in the current year, as well as stable realignment and MHSA revenues are also key factors in sustaining the department's many programs and projects in spite of the financial uncertainties that COVID-19 has left with us.

Mental Health System EQRO: On March 23rd and 24th, Behavioral Wellness had its External Quality Review for the Mental Health Plan (MHP). EQRO reviews occur annually for both the MHP and the DMC-ODS. This year's review went exceedingly well. Thank you to everyone who submitted documents, met with reviewers, and worked to put into practice last year's recommendations. The reviewers highlighted many strengths including:

- Behavioral Wellness was able to continue services through the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only were services provided via telehealth, but Behavioral Wellness continued to provide onsite services in clinics and crisis services in a safe way. In addition, Behavioral Wellness was able to access and make available PPE to enable these services to be provided.
- Due to the extensive use of telehealth, services were mostly uninterrupted.
- Behavioral Wellness' integration of substance use disorder (SUD) services. Behavioral Wellness provides a wholistic view of providing services as shown in the Cultural Competency Plan and the Quality Improvement Committee Plan.
- The Documentation Empowerment Group has received positive feedback from staff and leadership. Staff have been able to receive support in improving their documentation in a positive and collaborative environment.
- Communication and collaboration with our Community Based Organizations (CBOs) has been effective. Specifically, Behavioral Wellness had regular communication with CBOs at the beginning of COVID that included sharing grant opportunities, PPE, etc. The increased communication prompted by COVID has continued.
- Prescribers feel empowered to provide good medical care.
- Behavioral Wellness' use of Tableau and Smartsheet helps visualize the data and identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Once we receive the final report, it will be posted on the department website.

Santa Barbara Regional Partnership Meeting: The **Adult** meeting took place on March 15th. Lynn Gibbs provided a presentation on NAMI during this meeting. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the nation's largest grass roots mental health organization. The affiliate is no longer referred to as NAMI Southern Santa Barbara County as it has now expanded into North County. Classes and programs are offered throughout the entire county. NAMI SBC is made up of volunteers and also receives support from the Mental Wellness Center (MWC). Due to the pandemic, all classes are held remotely via Zoom. NAMI is focused on education, support, and advocacy.

Education. Family-To-Family is a free psycho-educational course that educates families of persons living with a mental health disorder. Participants learn about disorders, treatments, support methods, coping skills, and gain a better understanding of the persons experiences. These courses are taught by NAMI certified family members with direct experience. At this time, courses are being held in North and South Counties. The next courses are scheduled to begin September 2021. English and Spanish courses are available.

Peer-To-Peer is a free 8-week course with a “recovery” focused model of care. The courses are for persons with a mental health diagnosis and are taught by certified individuals who also live with a mental health condition. Individuals learn about conditions, treatments, building strengths, and ways to improve recovery. Peer-To-Peer also teaches ways to build support networks, strengthen relationships, improve communication skills, relaxation techniques, and how to form recovery goals/strategies. Courses are available in English and Spanish.

Groups. Those who complete the Family-To-Family course often wish to stay connected and continue learning. Therefore, NAMI SBC created the Weekly Family Member Discussion Group. The group is led by NAMI board member, Tom Franklin, and explores various weekly topics of interest. The group has become very popular and usually has an attendance of 20+. Additionally there are family support groups are offered. Ramona Winner facilitates the Santa Barbara group in English. In partnership with Transitions-Mental Health America, English and Spanish groups are offered in North County. <https://www.t-mha.org/family-support.php>

The **Children’s** meeting took place on March 18th. Nancy Tille from The Santa Barbara Neighborhood clinics presented to the group regarding their expansion, programs and their mission. She shared that Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics (SBNC) was established in 1998 and provided an overview of the history and mission of the organization as well as their clinic types and locations. SBNC recently completed a campaign to raise 20 million dollars. A portion of these funds will be invested in a new fully integrated clinic on the Westside of Santa Barbara.

SBNC is adopting a system of integrated behavioral health. The program is being funded by the California Department of Health Care Services through CenCal Health. The clinics will adopt 2 tiers of behavioral health, such as traditional therapy services (long-term) and behavioral health providers working alongside medical providers (based on client need). For this program, SBNC must meet specific screening, intervention, and referral milestones. Additional Behavioral Health Coordinators will be hired to meet this need.

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) initiative has recently resumed after multiple delays. Infants, children and parents are screened for ACEs. If the infant, child, or parent meets criteria, the clients are invited to participate in a study. In partnership with UCSB and CALM, screenings and interventions are performed at the time of the Well-Child visit. SBNC is a member of ACEs Aware, developing adult provider training and the Pediatric Resiliency Steering Committee (PeRC). The clinics are also involved in the California Quality Improvement Collaborative (CalQIC).

Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting: The most recent meeting took place on March 16. The primary topic continues to be messaging and communication on the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and

the tremendous increase in the need for mental health services in the community. Behavioral Wellness, Public Health and all of the CBO's in attendance continue a strong collaboration to provide the support that is needed and explore ways to respond to the increase effectively. The next meeting will be held via Zoom on May 18.

Santa Maria Regional Partnership Meeting: Santa Maria Regional Partnership meetings are held the 3rd Monday of each month with the Childrens meeting occurring at 10 a.m. and the Adult meeting occurring at 11 a.m. Both of last month's meetings had robust attendance from both Behavioral Wellness mental health and substance use disorder staff as well as regional partners. In the Children's meeting, all programs in attendance provided introductions and updates. In both meetings, our Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP) Project Manager introduced the new Behavioral Wellness ADP Care Coordinators in each region and how they can be best utilized. ADP also announced a new Youth Opioid Grant they received to open a youth drop-in center in Lompoc for youth struggling with opioid addiction. In the Adult meeting, in addition to the ADP updates, Emily Allen from United Way provided updates on some of the active Coordinated Entry System and housing efforts. Dignity Health gave an update on their efforts to open an LPS designated Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) in Santa Maria.

Change Agents: The March Change Agent meeting had robust attendance and participation. The Santa Maria Adult Clinic is preparing to launch a video in their lobby to provide information to clients about community resources, which they anticipate will improve clients' familiarity with the variety of services available in our county. The Lompoc Adult Clinic is working to identify their Zoom-capable clients and support them in transitioning from phone telehealth sessions to video sessions. Several clinics continue to pursue interventions aimed at strengthening client and staff connectedness to combat social isolation during COVID. The next Change Agent meeting is Wednesday, April 28th 9-11am. We are grateful to **Pam Fisher, Behavioral Wellness Deputy Director**, for her leadership of the Change Agents over the past few years. She has passed the baton to **John Winckler, Division Chief of Clinical Operations**, who will lead this group starting in April. For questions related to Change Agent, please contact Janal Lopez at janlopez@sbcbswell.org.

Childrens System of Care (CSOC) Action Team: The Children's System of Care last met on March 25. **Lindsay Walter, the Deputy Director and MHSA Chief**, provided the group with a presentation on the impact of MHSA funding on programs, services and supports in Behavioral Wellness and the community. Stakeholders shared feedback on multiple needs identified including the significant increase in substance abuse in elementary/high school youth along with the need for an integrated care (dual diagnosis) model of care to effectively support them and their families. There was also a recommendation to explore ways to support youth in need of STRTP placements who need a greater level of care than current placements offer. The next meeting will be held April 22 via Zoom.

Consumer and Family Member Action Team (CFMAT): The Consumer Family Member Action Team met on March 18, 2021. After the sharing of two Welsh poems by Catherine Birtalan, **Vanessa Ramos, MHSA Innovations Help@Hand Project Manager**, followed by giving an update on Help@Hand. The team has been actively working on a project consisting of hosting two groups at the Psychiatric Health Facility and most recently have begun hosting sessions with clients who are receiving services at the Crisis

Residential Treatment center in Santa Maria. After, Martha Neary and John Bunyi began their presentation on One Mind PsyberGuide, which they explained is a non-profit project aimed to help people use technology to live a mentally healthier life. Through this project they identify credible apps free of bias and endorsements. Then, subcommittee updates were provided to members including the Spring 2021 CFMAT Newsletter and the Pool of Champions. Lastly, **Lindsay Walter, the Deputy Director and MHSa Chief of Behavioral Wellness**, provided a full presentation on the Mental Health Services Act (MHSa) Planning process. For the fiscal years, 2021-2022 Lindsay explained that a key focus is to help populations that are unserved, underserved and other key initiatives: Implementation of expanded Youth-Focused Care and Youth-Driven Initiatives, Increased utilization of Peer Services and integration of Peer Philosophies in the Department, Expansion of Housing Developments and Housing Support Services for those at risk, or experiencing, Homelessness, Integrating Whole Person Care philosophies throughout Outpatient services. CFMAT meets monthly on the third Thursday from 1 PM to 2:30 PM.

Crisis Action Team: The Crisis Action Team met in March. **Jeff Shannon, Crisis System Manager**, led this month's meeting. He announced his plans for resignation from the department with his last day being planned as April 16. **John Winckler, Division Chief for Clinical Operations** will be stepping back into Crisis Services as interim manager while recruitment efforts take place for a new crisis system manager. **John Doyle, Division Chief, ADP** announced a new Youth Opioid Response Grant that will fund a youth drop in center in Lompoc. **QCM Manager Josh Woody** reported on a positive EQRO report for our DMC-ODS. Josh also reviewed data from our Access Line and the improvements that have been made with the Access Line.

Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT): The Cultural Competency Diversity Action Team met on March 12, 2021 to discuss ongoing goals of MHSa Community Program Planning to help serve and engage communities of color. **Lindsay Walter, the Deputy Director and MHSa Chief of Behavioral Wellness** presented on some proposals for MHSa including: implementation of expanded Youth-focused care and Youth-driven initiatives, increased utilization of peer services and integration of Peer Philosophies in Department and Contract services, expansion of housing developments and housing support services for those at risk, or experiencing homelessness, and lastly integration of Whole Person Care philosophies throughout Outpatient services. The topic of recent violence against the Asian American community was brought up and the request to include the Asian American population in the MHSa plan was suggested. To this, Lindsey informed the team members that the MHSa plan was written before the recent violent attacks and that the plan could be reworked to add the Asian American population. Following this, **Anthony Hollenback, Lompoc Regional Manager**, and **Martin Huizar from the Lompoc Children's outpatient clinic**, presented on the Whole Person Care approach at Behavioral Wellness. They discussed how they launched a pilot healing circle group in December. They reported that feedback from clients with various backgrounds was extremely positive and encouraged others to learn more about this treatment option that involves the use of drums to facilitate communication and engagement with a client. Next, **Justice Patocs, Help@Hand Team member**, gave an update on Help@Hand project. The team are hosting a TAY Listening Session on June 4th from 6:00-7:30 pm to obtain feedback from the TAY population for the creation of Peer Support Curriculum and digital tools. Lastly, **Enrique Bautista, Patients' Rights Advocate**, presented on the Interpretation Services Guide for Behavioral Wellness staff. He emphasized that this guide is part of the Cultural Competency Organizational Needs Assessment recommendation to

ensure staff are aware of the interpretation resources available through Behavioral Wellness. CCDAT meets monthly on the second Friday from 10 AM to 11:30 AM.

Forensic Action Team: The Forensic Action Team seeks to connect a wide variety of leaders and stakeholders invested in cross-sector collaboration and ongoing systemic enhancements for services provided to criminal justice-involved juveniles and adults. Meetings occur monthly on the 4th Wednesdays @ 1:30-3:00 pm (via Zoom).

March's meeting included a guest presentation by Holly Benton, Division Chief – Field Services for Juvenile Probation – *An Overview of Probation's Strategic and Collaborative Approaches to Juvenile Justice*, which highlighted collaboration approaches to include establishing joint missions and sharing resources amongst partners. The next Forensic Action Team Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 24th @ 1:30-3:00 pm**. Please contact Shana Burns, LMFT, Forensics Services Manager, and Celeste Andersen, Chief of Compliance, with any questions, agenda suggestions, and/or if you would like to be added to the action team invite list.

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Increase in Deaths Related to Overdoses Paired with the Pandemic: More than 87,000 Americans died of drug overdoses over the 12-month period that ended in September, according to [preliminary data](#) from the Centers for Disease Control. This increase represents an increasingly urgent public health crisis that has not been as apparent given the world's focus on the COVID-19 pandemic. Overdose deaths were already on the rise and jumped even higher last April and May at a time when the stresses of the pandemic were at a high with job losses, lockdown in place and financial pressures. In addition, many treatment programs were closed at this time due to the safety regulations of COVID.

The preliminary data released Wednesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show a 29 percent rise in overdose deaths from October 2019 through September 2020. And unlike in the early years of the opioid epidemic, when deaths were more prominent among white Americans in rural and suburban areas, the current crisis is affecting Black Americans disproportionately.

Locally launched in 2016, Behavioral Wellness began an overdose prevention program targeting community member interventions using inter nasal naloxone overdose reversal kits, to revive individuals experiencing overdose. To date, 1,136 reversals have been documented, and the number of interventions has increased by roughly 100 per year since 2018 with over 400 rescues made during 2020. This increase over time suggests that opioid epidemic is getting worse in Santa Barbara County. The Santa Barbara County overdose intervention program is operated by the Pacific Pride Foundation who can be reached with questions by calling 805-963-3636 or by email at hello@pacificpridefoundation.org.

Behavioral Wellness 24/7 Crisis Access Line for Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health needs can be reached by calling 1-888-868-1649.

SYSTEMS CHANGE CALENDAR

Please Note: Due to COVID-19, to protect the health and safety of our staff and other partners, no Action Team meetings will be held in person for the foreseeable future. All will be held remotely.

- **Behavioral Wellness Commission:** The Behavioral Wellness Commission meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 3:00pm – 5:00pm. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic large conference room, Santa Maria Clinic Conference Room and the Lompoc Children’s Clinic Newport Harbor Room. Questions: Karen Campos at kcampos@sbcbswell.org
- **Change Agent Meeting:** Change agents meet the fourth Wednesday of every month 9 – 11 am except during quarterly in-person meetings, which are 9 am – 12 noon. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, Small conference room; and the Santa Maria Adult Clinic large conference room located at 500 West Foster Road, Santa Maria. Questions: Janal Lopez, janlopez@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** Meetings occur every other month on the third Tuesday at 301 N. R Street. Questions: Anthony Hollenback, ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Barbara Adult Regional Partnership:** meets every 3rd Monday of the month from 10:00 am – 11:00 am at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Barbara Children’s Regional Partnership:** 3th Thursday of the month from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3rd Monday of the month at 10 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Roberto Rodriguez at robertor@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Maria Adult Regional Partnership** occurs every 3rd Monday of the month at 11 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: John Winckler at jwinckler@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **The Housing, Empowerment, Action and Recovery Team (HEART)** meets the second Wednesday of every other month, 1:00-2:30 p.m. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Conference Room 261 and Santa Maria Annex via videoconference. Contact Laura Zeitz, lazeitz@sbcbswell.org
- **The Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT)** meets the second Friday of each month, 9:30-11:00 am, Locations: Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic Large Conference Room 119, Santa Maria Annex and Lompoc B St. Contact Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

or Anthony Hollenback at 805-737-6610 or ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us to get zoom log in information.

- **The Consumer and Family Member Action Team** meets the third Thursday of the Month from 1 – 2:30pm. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Santa Barbara Conference Room 261, Lompoc Children’s New Port Room the Santa Maria Annex Room via videoconference. Contact Maria Arteaga at 805-681-5208 or marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **The Crisis Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the month, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Santa Barbara Children’s large conference room. Questions: John Winckler at jwinckler@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **The Children’s System of Care Action Team** meets the 4th Thursday of the month, 10:30 am - 12:00 noon. SELPA Conference Room, 240 E. Hwy. 246, Suite 200, Buellton CA 93127. Contact Anthony Hollenback at ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4th Wednesday from 1:30 - 3. Meetings are held at the Behavioral Wellness Children’s Mental Health Services building, room 119, located at 429 N. San Antonio Rd in Santa Barbara. For questions or Zoom log in information, please contact Shana Burns at sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or Celeste Andersen at candersen@sbcbswell.org