

# Director's Report

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Pam Fisher, Psy.D, Interim Director  
Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness  
(805) 681-5220 ◊ <http://countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness>

## DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

**Behavioral Wellness Deputy Director of Administration and Operations Assumes Role with County Executive Office:** Lindsay Walter, former Deputy Director of Administration and Operations has begun a new role with the Santa Barbara County Executive Office as a Principal Management Analyst, effective August 9. Her new role includes the management of a broad array of policy and operational projects and programs, with a focus on the Health and Human Services within the County. Lindsay began her role with Behavioral Wellness in 2006. Lindsay was hired at the County in 2006 and has served in progressively responsible roles at Behavioral Wellness. She has had many successes including:

- Leading the Mental Health Service Act Innovations and system change process,
- Overseeing BeWell homeless grant activities and facility development,
- Establishing critical relationships with community-based organizations,
- Spearheading compliance with multiple Medi-Cal programs, and
- Ensuring that more than 400 annual contracts were managed, while developing contract monitoring and program outcomes protocols.

Behavioral Wellness thanks Lindsay for her many years of hard work and dedicated service and wishes her the very best in her new role. Planning is currently underway for assignment of her current Behavioral Wellness duties and filling the Mental Health Services Act role.

**Cannabis Prevention Programming in Local Schools:** Grant funding for youth cannabis use prevention, made available through Proposition 64, is taking shape and will be used to begin services next month. The grant funding will fund staff to provide outreach, educational and early intervention services within the Santa Maria Joint Unified High School District. Behavioral Wellness Alcohol and Drug Service Specialists (ADSS) will work on site at school campuses alongside school staff and School Resource Officers (SROs) to identify and provide intervention for students who are misusing cannabis. The ADSS will utilize evidence-based strategies including the Brief Risk Reduction Interview and Intervention Model (BRRIM) in conjunction with Student Assistance Programs (SAP). Program goals include serving students in school settings to address early problems associated with cannabis use and improve overall wellness, including academics and social supports.

**Overdose Awareness Day:** August 31 is International Overdose (OD) Awareness Day. The Santa Barbara Opioid Safety Coalition has created an opioid safety website, serving all of Santa Barbara County, with local and national data and resources supporting the current opioid epidemic. As part of the OD Awareness Day, the Santa Barbara Opioid Safety Coalition will issue a press release launching the website. In the meantime, the website can be viewed [here](#).

**September is Recovery Awareness Month and Suicide Awareness Month:** Stay tuned for information on events and activities surrounding both Recovery and Suicide Awareness.

**Santa Barbara Regional Partnership Meetings:** The Santa Barbara **Adult** Regional Partnership meeting took place on July 19<sup>th</sup>. During this meeting, Erica Bottoff from the Santa Barbara County Public Defender's office presented on the Holistic Defense Program. The program model is used to focus on addressing underlying challenges, such as substance abuse, addictive disorders, mental illness, trauma, family and cultural dynamics, housing, and poverty. The Holistic Defense program utilizes an interdisciplinary team which consists of a criminal defense lawyer, advocates, investigators, and civil attorneys. The team collaborates to support clients throughout their case and gain access to appropriate treatment.

The Santa Barbara **Children's** Regional Partnership meeting took place on July 15<sup>th</sup>. An update was provided on Hope Refuge. Hope Refuge is a local short-term residential therapeutic program (STRTP), now certified by the State. The program has a psychiatrist on site and provides medical services, assessments and medication management. Behavioral Wellness continues to support as needed, including note review and documentation guidance. Any out of county youth placed in this program are also followed by Behavioral Wellness. An update was also provided on the Family Urgent Response System (FURS) which provides immediate support to current and former foster youth and caregivers. Supportive services are personalized and provided by phone or in person. Services include de-escalation, stabilization, conflict resolution, case management, and linkage to local resources. Calls made to the 24/7 statewide hotline are dispatched to the appropriate county for local support. Communications determined to be urgent have a response time of 1-3 hours, non-urgent encounters will be contacted within 24 hours. Call or text: [1-833-939-FURS](tel:1-833-939-FURS), email: [www.cal-furs.org](mailto:www.cal-furs.org). Lastly, gender related service resources were shared with the group, including:

- [www.sbtan.org/](http://www.sbtan.org/)
- [www.thetrevorproject.org/](http://www.thetrevorproject.org/) (*not local*)
- [www.pacificpridefoundation.org/](http://www.pacificpridefoundation.org/)

**Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** The Lompoc Regional Partnership meeting took place on July 20 and reviewed the current efforts of partners in addressing COVID testing, vaccinations and the impact on services within the community. The Public Health Department reported an increase in requests for vaccines as more community members are opting to get vaccinated. Efforts to improve community education on the benefits was discussed with an emphasis on the Latino, Mixtec and African American community members. All mental health providers, including Behavioral Wellness, reported an increase in utilization of services throughout the community. As schools are planning to re-open in person instruction

in August, there was a continued need to raise awareness to encourage parents to have their students receive the COVID vaccine. The next meeting is scheduled for September 21.

**Santa Maria Regional Partnership Meeting:** At the **Adult** meeting, Coraline Robinson from Balance Treatment Center provided a presentation on services offered which include a full continuum of care for privately insured adolescents and their families, including military families, offering daily treatment. Other program participants were able to provide general program updates. Dignity Health reported on their Crisis Stabilization Unit which is now in the process of development. Good Samaritan Shelter shared of the referral process to Hedges House of Hope in Isla Vista, who serves individuals living in the Isla Vista Goleta area.

The **Children's** meeting began with announcing the new clinic walk in hours which are Monday-Wednesday from 9-11 and 1-3. Other updates were provided from participant agencies. Family Resource Center shared of referrals provided to Family Service Agency for families in need of help with Medi-Cal, Cal-Fresh, Cash Aid, and Energy Assistance. Transitional Mental Health shared of a current Youth Empowerment Survey which they are hoping to receive input on new ways to get information and resources to community youth. The survey can be accessed here: [www.sbceo.org/survey](http://www.sbceo.org/survey). Lastly, Fighting Back and Casa Pacifica shared of staffing updates and staff openings within their respective organizations.

**Change Agents:** The Change Agent meeting was held on July 28. On behalf of **John Winckler, Division Chief**, the meeting was facilitated by **Patricia Gonzalez, QCM Research/Evaluation Manager** and **Natalia Alamilla, AOP**, provided meeting support. The meeting highlighted several Behavioral Wellness programs that have active PDSA's focused on improving client care and clinic care settings.

At the Santa Barbara Children's Clinic, the Change Agent team has implemented client centered support groups and are focused on improving client attendance. Currently, a Gratitude group, for ages 11-13, has shown good client attendance. In June, a new group based on client diagnosis and impairment was implemented and client attendance has been consistent. During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, an increase in client deaths have been observed locally and nationally. Recognizing the emerging need for Advance Directives, John Winckler has approved for the Santa Maria Adult Clinic, to implement a PDSA to increase the number of MIOA clients with Advanced Directives on file and notarized. The intervention strategy will utilize service coordinators to support clients in completing the Advance Directive process. The Change Agent team plan to partner with the Patient Rights team. The Santa Barbara ACT program are considering developing a PDSA to support staff well-being by implementing positive messaging (e.g., staff board with positive messages, quotes, staff recognition, etc.). The Change Agent team are exploring ways to assess staff wellness before and after implementing their PDSA intervention strategies.

**Childrens System of Care (CSOC) Action Team:** The Children's System of Care Action Team took place on July 22 with a focus on identifying priorities from stakeholders for the upcoming fiscal year. This past year, CSOC members participated in robust discussions on four key areas including a) Criteria of Services b) Safety Resiliency c) Access & Engagement and d) Youth of Color. The focus of areas identified by the group will guide the continued leadership of the CSOC to address these issues during throughout the

year. An action plan and “next steps” will be reviewed in the August CSOC meeting. The next meeting will take place on August 26.

**Consumer and Family Member Action Team (CFMAT):** The Consumer and Family Member Action Team (CFMAT) met on July 15, 2021 via Zoom. **Enrique Bautista, Patient Rights Advocate**, presented on the Behavioral Wellness Patient’s Rights Advocacy program. The Help@Hand project members provided an update on current projects they are working on, such as piloting the Headspace application in preparation for rolling out 5,000 headspace licenses. They provided CFMAT members with a demonstration of the Headspace mobile application, shared the benefits of using headspace and enrolled those members who were interested. **Maria Arteaga, Peer Empowerment Manager**, gave an update on Peer Certification: Legislation, Senate Bill 803. The Pool of Champion Subcommittee reported they are working on next year’s Peer Empowerment Conference and a recognition for Catherine Birtalan. Jan Winter shared that the Behavioral Health Commission is moving forward with the addition of new TAY members to the commission. Lastly, Bridget Hochman shared of her work on the Fall newsletter and encouraged members to send in articles, artwork and/or poems to be included in the newsletter. CFMAT meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month from 1PM to 2:30PM.

**Crisis Action Team:** **John Winckler, Division Chief of Clinical Operations**, facilitated the meeting and began with updates. The South County has reinstated the morning triage call between the Cottage Hospital Emergency Department and South County Crisis Services allowing both teams to coordinate with shared cases of clients in the Emergency Department. In addition, an E-Fax solution was developed which provides Cottage Hospital with a single number for facsimile correspondence to Behavioral Wellness which is then received by staff directly in email inboxes. It is anticipated that this E-Fax solution will improve timely communication, assure receipt of all communications, allow for staff to address LPS packets from remote locations and not require staff to be in the clinic to receive information and then forward to the PHF. clinic to receive them and forward them to the PHF.

Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC) staff were present in the meeting and plan to have a representative attend monthly. Recent State changes list Autism as an included diagnosis for Behavioral Wellness services. Behavioral Wellness looks forward to training staff on assessment and treatment of individuals with Autism as well as providing crisis evaluations to the population. The challenges of trying to place individuals with Autism into inpatient psychiatric facilities was discussed. TCRC staff gave a presentation on crisis support services they provide for their beneficiaries.

WellPath, the jail’s medical and mental health provider, were also in attendance, allowing brainstorming on ways to improve the availability of, and access to, medications for inmates being discharged.

**Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT):** The CCDAT meeting took place on July 9, 2021 via Zoom. Special guests, Megan Riker-Rheinschild and Marguerite Charles, of the District Attorney’s office, provided a presentation on the Victim Witness Program and Hate Crimes. The presentation contained valuable information on defining what a hate crime is and explained that these crimes committed are in whole or in part because of one or more of the following actual or perceived characteristics of the victim: Disability, Gender, Nationality, Race/Ethnicity, Religion, Sexual Orientation. Examples were given on investigations of hate crimes, and how victims can report a hate crime and receive

assistance. Following this presentation, [Nicole Llamas, LMFT, Santa Barbara Child and Family Services](#), gave an update on the Asian and American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Community Subcommittee. They have had two meetings and are conducting outreach to expand participation in meetings which will occur the last Friday of each month. The Help@Hand Project team shared the beginning of a pilot project of the Headspace mobile application, with a small target population. The project is currently meeting with community members to gain stakeholder feedback, including feedback from the Psychiatric Health Facility, Crisis Residential Treatment Facilities and Recovery Learning Centers.

**Forensic Action Team:** The Forensic Action Team Meeting 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 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays @ 1:30-3:00 pm (via Zoom). For the July meeting, a variety of jail discharge planners joined to share the integrated processes of offering and linking inmates to community resources, in addition to exploring ways to improve warm hand-offs and reintegration approaches to prevent recidivism. Behavioral Wellness' Prop 47 Program Manager, [Serena Cyr, PsyD](#), and Research and Program Evaluation, [Caitlin Lepore, PhD, LCSW](#) presented on the countywide efforts and outcomes of *CREDO47 (Community Response Engagement Diversion and Outreach)*.

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**

**State Funding Opportunity for Expansion of Mobile Crisis Services:** The State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has released a request for application (RFA) for Crisis Care Mobile Unit expansion. Counties that apply for the funding will receive a \$500,000 base allocation and can apply for up to \$1 million dollars per Crisis Care Mobile Unit. The initial \$500,000 must support \$375,000 for infrastructure with \$125,000 for direct services. Counties must focus on transitional-aged youth (12-25), although if an applicant has a robust youth crisis program, then funding can also help support adults. Behavioral Wellness will be applying for the funding which is due August 23. Stay tuned!

**Behavioral Wellness Applies for State CRRSA and ARPA Funding:** On August 16, Behavioral Wellness submitted six applications for CRRSAA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act) and ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding through the State Department of Health Care Services, under the Mental Health Block Grant. Funding will provide Peer Recovery Assistants, Early Intervention support and an AOP for the First Episode Psychosis program while also supporting Crisis Services in addition to Long-Term Care programs. CRSSA funding runs from July 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022 while ARPA funding starts September 1, 2021 and goes through June 30, 2025.

## 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: Kristine Haugh at [khaugh@sbcbswell.org](mailto:khaugh@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: Natalia Alamilla, [nalamilla@sbcbswell.org](mailto:nalamilla@sbcbswell.org)
- **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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us).
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 10 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Danielle Martinez at [dmartinez@sbcbswell.org](mailto:dmartinez@sbcbswell.org)
- **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: Danielle Martinez at [dmartinez@sbcbswell.org](mailto:dmartinez@sbcbswell.org)
- **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](mailto: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](mailto:marteaga@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)

or Anthony Hollenback at 805-737-6610 or [ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:ahollenback@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) or Celeste Andersen at [candersen@sbcbswell.org](mailto:candersen@sbcbswell.org)