

Director's Report

November 15, 2017



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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

Behavioral Wellness supports the Veteran's Stand Down in Santa Maria: On Saturday, October 21, Behavioral Wellness staff [Jon Amate](#), [Garrett Bakke](#), [Katie McBain](#) and [Vanessa Holtgrave](#) were on site at the Santa Maria Fairgrounds providing support for the Veteran's Stand Down community event. This was the 6th annual Veteran's Stand Down in Santa Barbara County and is modeled after other communities that have successfully served homeless and at-risk veterans for years. Behavioral Wellness served 51 veterans during this event and was among multiple community resources present. **Thank you Jon, Garrett, Katie and Vanessa!**

Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program Update: The Department of Behavioral Wellness launched the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) pilot program in January of 2017, and hired a private research company to conduct an external evaluation of the early implementation and initial outcomes. Key findings have been identified from the first two quarters of program implementation (January – June, 2017). 30 people were referred to the AOT program during this period, averaging 5 referrals per week. 63% of the referrals came from the South County, 27% from North County and 10% from Mid County. Half of the referrals came from family members. 70% of those referred were under the age of 45, 80% had a co-occurring substance abuse and mental health diagnosis and 57% were homeless. On average, AOT reached out to those referred to the program, 2 times per week. 31% of individuals referred, voluntarily accepted treatment within the first 3 weeks. Data shows that the AOT engagement efforts are reducing the number of negative life events for participants. Notably, none of the AOT referrals has resulted in any legal process for pilot participants. Based in the initial number of referrals, we expect that referrals will continue to rise with the likelihood that referrals will exceed slots funded through the pilot project. **Thank you to all of the Behavioral Wellness AOT team members!**

Tina Wooton awarded the Words to Deeds XI Paradigm Award - State Champion Category: Congratulations to [Tina Wooton](#) who was selected to receive the Words to Deeds XI Paradigm Award in the State Champion category. The annual Words to Deeds Paradigm Awards recognize leaders in criminal justice and mental health who champion efforts to end criminalization of individuals with mental illness by supporting proven strategies that promote early intervention, access to effective treatments, a planned re-entry, and the preservation of public safety. Tina's selection was described for her outstanding leadership and commitment and passion as an advocate for consumers and family members at the local, state, and federal levels. The Paradigm Award presentation took place at the Words to Deeds XI Conference on November 8 at the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) in Sacramento.

Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R.E.D.) Grant Findings: The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Federal Formula Grants program awarded Santa Barbara County a grant in 2014 to combat racial and ethnic disproportionalities in the juvenile justice system. The purpose of the Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R.E.D) grant is to decrease the overrepresentation of youth of color who are involved in the juvenile justice system. Thank you to **Yaneri Muñiz** who is an active participant on the R.E.D. committee and assisted the research efforts of UCSB in the investigation into racial and ethnic disparities in mental health services for children and adolescents of color in Santa Barbara County. Appreciations also to **Dr. Arlene Altobelli, Thelma Macias-Guerra, Sara Bazan, and their respective teams** for staff input in focus groups and coordinating client and family participation. Results from this examination revealed disparities in referrals, diagnoses, treatment, and outcomes for youth of color. These results will be incorporated in the Behavioral Wellness Cultural Competency Plan, and will ultimately play a critical role in assisting with the facilitation of important changes within the Department in respect to racial and ethnic disparities in mental health services for youth.

Santa Barbara Southern Region All Staff Meeting: On November 1st, an All Staff meeting was held for South County. The meeting planning and facilitation was a team effort comprised of Santa Barbara managers including **Veronica Heinzelmann, Tammy Summers, John Lewis and John Winckler**. The meeting was well attended by over 50 staff members across multiple programs including the Calle Real Adult Clinic, Children’s Clinic, Crisis Triage, Mobile Crisis, Crisis Stabilization Unit and the Psychiatric Health Facility. The agenda included regional specific updates on the relocation of Crisis Services to the Administration Campus as well as the Crisis Triage grant and associated planning. Everyone participated in the planned team building activity which focused on four main topics (by “The Four Practices of The Fish! Philosophy):

The four main topics (which have been identified as “the four principles that help foster a great life at work”) include:

Play – “What can you do to make your job more fun?”

Make Their Day – “Think of a time when someone made your day or made you smile. What changed your mood?”

Be There – “How are you ‘present’ at work? How are you “being there” on the job?”

Choose Your Attitude – “How did you start your day”? What state of mind did you choose? How will you start tomorrow?”

Some comments made by participants related to the application of the above simple practices we can work on as a system, were: “improve communication and trust, deliver memorable customer service, ignite creativity, increase staff engagement and commitment, celebrate and appreciate each other and strengthen leadership.”

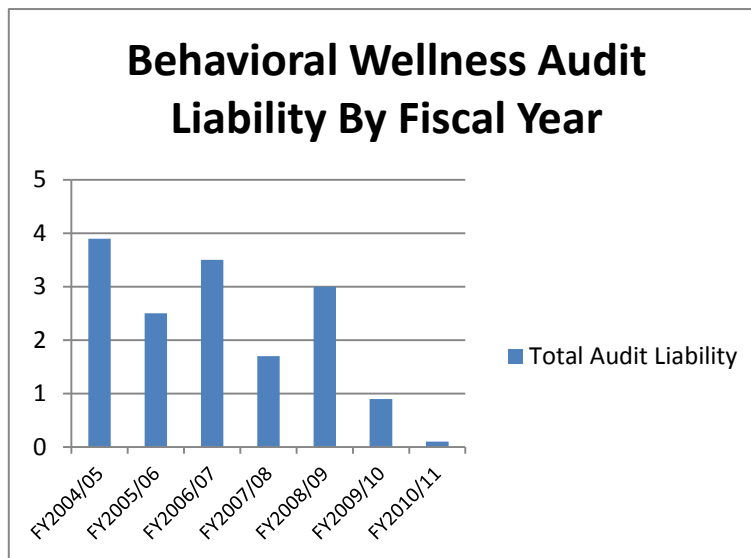
Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center Director to Retire: Having dedicated nearly the last 40 years to the Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center (SMVYFC), Judi Nishimori, MFT is scheduled to retire in the end of December. Earlier this month during a community celebration held by SMVYFC, Judi received a proclamation from the City of Santa Maria for her many years of service. Judi began her work with SMVYFC in 1978 as a counselor and over the years has served as the Associated Executive Director and most recently, Executive Director. We wish Judi the very best in her new adventures and extend tremendous thanks for her many, many years of collaboration, leadership and service within the community.

Medi-Cal Beneficiary Booklet Revised: Important revisions to the Medi-Cal Beneficiary Booklet (also known as the Guide to Medi-Cal Mental Health Services) have recently been made. Per the Mental Health Plan (MHP), all Medi-Cal beneficiaries receiving specialty mental health services must be provided a copy of this booklet at admission. The booklet includes important information regarding benefits relating to specialty mental health services, how and where to access these services, overview of services available, procedures for obtaining services, how to access urgent or emergency care after hours, access to network providers, process for changing a provider, problem resolution process, how to exercise an advance directive, how to access auxiliary aids and services, translation and alternative format materials, 24/7 Access Line phone number and how to report suspected fraud or abuse. The beneficiary booklet is available in English and Spanish and in regular or large print. The booklet can be found on the behavioral wellness website [here](#).

New and Revised Policies Approved: Behavioral Wellness frequently updates policies to reflect enhancements and changes to programs and practices. The following policies were recently approved and are available on the Behavioral Wellness website at <http://countyofsb.org/behavioral-wellness/policies>. Click “View Only RECENT Policies” to see policies approved within the last 6 months, or search by keyword or policy name.

- 1) **Client Problem Resolution Process (REVISED)** – This policy updates the procedures for responding to client complaints and grievances, appeals and expedited appeals. **Revision: The policy was revised to comply with Managed Care Final Rule requirements, clarify complaints logging, and ensure compliance with Drug Medi-Cal (DMC) facility complaints requirements.**
- 2) **Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Provider Monitoring and Documentation Review (REVISED)** – The Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP) is responsible for monitoring and evaluating SUD service providers to ensure compliance with contractual obligations. The policy outlines procedures for administrative, programmatic/documentation, clinical and fiscal performance reviews of community-based organizations (CBOs) providing SUD services, including site visit frequency, Corrective Action Plan (CAP) requirements, and recoupment/disallowance processes. **Revision: Providers must maintain policies and procedures regarding client wait times and access to appointments, including a resolution process for when problems or complaints arise.**
- 3) **Reporting Breaches and Security Incidents Involving PHI, PII and PI** – The Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Security Rule requires the implementation of policies that protect consumer health information. This policy sets procedures for reporting breaches and security incidents related to Protected Health Information (PHI), Personally Identifying Information (PII) and Personal Information (PI).
- 4) **System Risk Assessment/Security Review** – HIPAA requires security risk assessments to identify system vulnerabilities and threats to consumer health information. This policy discusses risk assessment of critical systems such as Clinician’s Gateway.
- 5) **Data Backup Plan** – HIPAA requires policies that place technical safeguards for the PHI. This policy sets procedures for safe data backup systems that keep this information secured.

Significant Reduction in Audit Liabilities: The Department’s cost report is audited annually by State DHCS to evaluate whether costs are allowable and whether federal funding was appropriately disbursed. Audits typically occur 5-7 years in arrears. In prior years, these audits resulted in Behavioral Wellness owing millions of dollars back to the State. Fiscal controls and improvements were implemented beginning in fiscal year 2009/10 and Behavioral Wellness is finally seeing a reduction in audit liabilities. As demonstrated in the below table, cost report audit liabilities have decreased from a high of \$3.9M in fiscal year 2004/05 to a low of \$66K in fiscal year 2010/11, a 98% reduction. The decrease in audit liabilities is a significant change from prior years and we hope that this trend continues into future years.



Kudos to the Community Action Commission: On October 4, 2017 Behavioral Wellness held their FY 17-18 Annual CBO Contract Kickoff Meeting with all Community Based Organizations. Items discussed included updates for the Organized Delivery System, Prevention services, Request for Proposals, Contract Renewals, the Mental Health Services Act, and new Clinician’s Gateway features. During one of the initial collaborative contract meetings with Behavioral Wellness, the Community Action Commission (CAC) shared an array of programmatic data which illustrated successes in their Head Start Mental Health and Rehabilitation Specialists Services Programs. Highlights included that in FY 16-17 the Head Start Mental Health Program served 133 consumers and 100% had stable/permanent housing and were attending preschool. That trend continued into the first Quarter of FY 17-18. During a recent parent meeting, a mother expressed that her child was receiving “good notes” from teachers every day and the child’s behavior and morale had improved, CAC’s Rehabilitation Specialist Program served 188 clients in FY 16-17. Through this program, over 90% of consumers successfully attended school, worked, and volunteered. A middle-schooler with dysthymic disorder that was depressed nearly every day with minimal family support is now attending school and reporting to have good days, going to the Boys and Girls Club and has made new friends. Kudos goes to CAC for providing such valuable services. Behavioral Wellness is looking forward to upcoming November to January meetings, including site visits, with our CBO Partners!

Annual 5150 Training Complete: The last scheduled 5150 training for the year took place in the end of October. 96% of all clinical staff has completed this annual training requirement amidst busy work schedules. Thank you to all staff who participated in this training!

Nurturing Hope Conference: The Nurturing Hope Conference, organized by Casa Pacifica, will take place from January 15-18, 2018 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ventura. This conference aims to explore, restore, and promote hope for those involved in strengthening families around the world. Conference keynotes and workshops as well as optional pre-conference and networking opportunities will equip and refresh participants in their personal and professional work with children, youth, and families. More information can be found on the Casa Pacifica website by clicking [here](#).

Director of CALM Community Based Services to Retire: Anita Fernandez-Low, Director of Community Based Services, will be leaving CALM on December 19th, 2017. Anita started working at CALM as a therapist in January 1999 and quickly moved into the Whatever It Takes (WIT) team. There she found her niche, and was promoted into a Director position in 2008. She is described by her peers as overseeing this team and department with skill, tenacity, passion and dedication for the last 18 years. When asked about her plans after retirement from CALM, Anita shares that she plans to edit a book written by her father who passed away prior to completing this task. She plans to spend more time with her children and grandchildren, time in the garden, hiking, biking, reading and traveling. Thank you Anita, for your many years of dedicated service within our community!

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Partnerships between Public Health and Behavioral Health Move Self-Management: The National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD) and the National Association for Rural Mental Health (NARMH) recently released an article on this topic. They summarize the expectation of the next big advance for behavioral healthcare will be the addition of population health management to traditional clinic interventions. Such a transition would permit us not only to treat disease while promoting self-determination and self-management, but also to move upstream to undertake the equally arduous task of preventing disease. On November 5, the Carter Center Behavioral Health Program and the American Public Health Association Mental Health Section hosted a joint event to dialogue on the practice of public health and behavioral health working together on population health management. Discussions centered on how behavioral health can incorporate public health interventions and practices, and how public health can add clinical interventions long-used by behavioral health.

Strategies to Address the Opioid Epidemic: The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) recently released a letter announcing a new direction in how CMS would like to work with states on section 1115(a) demonstrations to improve access to and quality of treatment for Medicaid beneficiaries as part of a Department-wide effort to combat the ongoing opioid crisis. This revised policy will take the place of the initiative announced in the State Medicaid Directors' letter issued on July 27, 2015. CMS is now offering a more flexible, streamlined approach to accelerate states' ability to respond to the national opioid crisis while enhancing states' monitoring and reporting of the impact of any changes implemented through these demonstrations. As the opioid crisis continues to

raise alarm and highlight the need for better access to high quality, evidence-based treatment, CMS would like to partner with states to support ways to progressively improve outcomes for Medicaid beneficiaries struggling with addiction in the context of 5-year demonstrations. In addition to these efforts, CMS will ensure states take significant steps to prevent inappropriate prescribing of opioids for Medicaid beneficiaries. A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

Walgreens Stocks Naloxone in Pharmacies Nationwide: Drug store chain Walgreens has announced that it will be stocking overdose-reversal drug naloxone (specifically, the FDA-approved nasal spray Narcan®) in all its U.S. pharmacy locations. “By stocking Narcan in all our pharmacies, we are making it easier for families and caregivers to help their loved ones by having it on hand in case it is needed,” said Rick Gates, Walgreens group vice president of pharmacy. Walgreens’ pharmacists will also educate customers about naloxone when they dispense certain controlled substances at doses that could pose an overdose risk. Naloxone will be available without a prescription in 45 states that have allowed over-the-counter sales.

President Trump Declares Opioid Crisis a Public Health Emergency: President Trump last Thursday fulfilled his pledge to make an emergency declaration in response to the U.S. opioid crisis. The President has formally declared the opioid epidemic a public health emergency, a designation distinct from a state of national emergency. The New York Times reports that the public health directive alone does not release any additional funds for addressing the crisis, although aides said the President will make such a request in the future. The President also noted his Administration’s plans for “really tough, really big, really great advertising” meant to dissuade Americans from trying opioids.

Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Waiver Training Project: Under contract with the California Department of Health Care Services, CIBHS provides training to counties and providers implementing the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Waiver. In 2017, the primary emphasis will be in a number of topic areas including DMC-ODS Waiver Assessment of Modality Services, American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Criteria, Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), Continuum of Care, Selective Contracting, and Quality Assurance Programs. Training will be provided by UCLA and CIBHS Staff and consultants. DHCS will entertain requests for supplemental training or technical assistance on related topics on a case by case basis.

The DMC-ODS Waiver establishes the framework for a series of fundamental changes in the SUD treatment service delivery system in California. Counties and providers will be transitioning to a new set of business and clinical models, new regulatory requirements and new relationships within counties and with external entities. CIBHS is honored to be a partner with DHCS is helping to make the DMC-ODS Waiver a success for counties, providers, and patients. More information and registration information can be found [here](#).

SYSTEMS CHANGE CALENDAR

- **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 and the Santa Maria Clinic Conference Room. Questions: Karen Campos, kcampos@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

- **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; Lompoc Conference Room, ACT, upstairs, 401 E. Cypress and Large conference room, 500 West Foster Road, Santa Maria. Questions: Nathan Post, npost@sbcbswell.org.
- **Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** Meetings occur every other month on the third Tuesday. The next meeting is November 21, 3:30-4:30 at 301 N. R Street. Questions: Nicole Becker, nbecker@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: Arlene Altobelli, aaltobe@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: Elodie Patarias, epatari@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or Geoff Bernard, gbernard@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, Lompoc B St. Adult Clinic Conference Room, and Santa Maria Annex via videoconference. Contact Yaneris Muñiz, ymuniz@sbcbswell.org.
- **The Peer Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the Month from 2 – 4:00 pm. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Santa Barbara Conference Room 261, Lompoc Children’s New Port Room the Santa Maria Annex Room via videoconference. Contact Tina Wooton, twooton@sbcbswell.org, regarding the location.
- **The Crisis Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the month, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Santa Barbara Children’s large conference room 119. Contact John Winckler, jwinckler@sbcbswell.org.

- **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 Ana Vicuña, avicuna@sbcbswell.org
- **The Forensic Action Team** will be meeting on November 29 from 3:15 – 4:45. The meeting is available through video conference in SB Room 261, Lompoc B St Conf Room and the SM Annex. For questions, please contact Celeste Andersen, candersen@co.santa-barbara.ca.us