

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD  
**ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING**  
**MINUTES ■ Thursday, March 4, 2021**

<p><b><u>Members Present</u></b>  Nancy Borchard, Committee Co-Chair  Jerry Harris, BHAB  Ratan Bhavnani, BHAB  Carol Thomas, BHAB  Mary Haffner, BHAB  Scott Walker, VCSO CIT  Adele Montijo, Family member, NAMI  Roberta Griego, NAMI  Gray Wilking, VCAAA</p> <p><b><u>Others Present</u></b>  Clarisa Cajiau, Spanish-language interpreter</p>	<p><b><u>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Managers/Staff Present</u></b>  Dr. John Schipper, Adult Division Chief  Jessica Davis, Substance Use Treatment Services (SUSS)  Susan White Wood, Behavioral Health Housing Manager  Joanna Peterson, BHAB Assistant</p> <p><b>NEXT MEETING:</b>  <b>No Special Meetings scheduled</b></p> <p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)  1911 Williams Drive, second floor, Oxnard</p>
<p>Note: The committee has not yet approved these minutes. There may be additions/deletions or corrections before the minutes are accepted in final form.</p>	

	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
I.	<b>Call to Order</b> Co-Chair Nancy Borchard called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.		
II.	<b>Finalize FY2019-20 Annual Report-ACTION</b> Ms. Borchard asked the committee to review and approve the FY2019-20 Annual Report. Jerry Harris moved to approve, Ratan Bhavnani seconded. The motion carried unanimously through roll call.	The report was approved as written. <b>M/S/C</b>	
III.	<b>Public Comments</b> Adele Montijo asked if the recordings of the committee meetings were available for public review. It was noted recording of the committee meetings were available for public review, but there was uncertainty about committee meetings	Follow-up with Vickie Poliquin and/or Courtney Lubell	Joanna Peterson
IV.	<b>Adjourn</b> The meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.		

**COUNTY OF VENTURA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD  
ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT**

Submitted by Nancy Borchard and Gane Brooking, Co-Chairs

**Committee Members:**

Gane Brooking, Committee Co-Chair  
Nancy Borchard, Committee Co-Chair  
Ratan Bhavnani, BHAB  
Sheri Valley, BHAB  
Mark Schumacher, Turning Point Foundation  
Dana Secor, Turning Point Foundation  
Gray Wilking Area Agency on Aging  
Elizabeth R. Stone MHSOAC-CFLC  
Stuart Fiedler, Client Network  
Jerry Harris, BHAB  
Scott Walker, Crisis Intervention Team  
Barbara Keller, Housing Authority City of San Buenaventura  
Michael Rodriguez, BHAB  
Roberta Griego, Nami Ventura County  
Shirley Brandon, Nami Ventura County  
Lynn Gibbs, community member

**Mission**

The BHAB Adult Services Committee advocates for continuum of care in the development and expansion of mental health and addiction services that support the stabilization and recovery of adult and older adult clients.

The committee's monthly meetings provide a forum for discussion of current department activities regarding Adult Services as well as an

opportunity for collaboration with community-based providers and stakeholders. We seek to ensure integrated services for clients seeking mental health and substance abuse services. By educating ourselves and the community, the stigma associated with mental health and substance abuse will be reduced.

## **Introduction**

The BHAB Adult Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Ventura County Behavioral Health Administration Building in Oxnard. Attendance, participation and membership are open to individuals who receive mental health and /or substance use services through Ventura County Behavioral Health, family members of consumers, service providers, BHAB members, and anyone with an interest in the adult and older adult population. The Adult Committee reviews the needs, programs and services for this population and reports on these matters to the BHAB at the monthly General Meeting

The Adult BHAB committee attempts to go deeper into subjects concerning clients and the ways they receive service. Things such as access to services and housing, new programs and how they function as well as review of current practices affecting adults and older adults. We try to integrate what is going on in the broader community regarding mental health services and needs. We invite outside providers to explain what sort of work they do and always seek ways in which we can advocate to spread the news that help is available to those within and outside the VCBH Department.

## **Goals and Objectives**

1. Advocate for the expansion of the Crisis Stabilization Unit at the Hillmont Psychiatric Hospital to the maximum approved number of chairs (12) including the capability of conducting medical clearance examinations on-site and the ability to receive people in mental health crisis directly from law enforcement officers.

2. Advocate for the reactivation of the 12 inpatients beds at the Hillmont Psychiatric Hospital currently not in use.
3. Advocate for the Crisis Residential Treatment (CRT) facility to be used for both a crisis prevention unit to avoid hospitalizations and as a step-down from Hillmont Psychiatric Hospital or other intensive service.
4. Advocate for access to increased inpatient, community-based and in-home services to the older adult population.
5. Advocate for the development of a CSU supported by community hospitals in Ventura County.
6. Participate in all efforts to establish affordable and supportive housing for individuals who live with mental health and or substance use disorder challenges that includes additional VCBH staff to provide supportive services associated with NO Place Like Home or other potential supportive housing developments.
7. Advocate to have in-County services available for those seeking and needing substance use disorder and mental health services to avoid having Ventura County residents sent out of county when they need services.

### **Advocacy Issues Results:**

The Crisis Stabilization Unit at Hillmont Psychiatric Hospital will be increasing the number of chairs from 4 to 8. The decision was made but not implemented to date.

The reactivation of 8 inpatient beds at Hillmont Psychiatric Hospital has been approved but not made operational at this time.

Approval of a new program, Pearls, for Older Adults to help them in their own homes, funded by MHSA. This is a friendly outreach with the goals of helping clients be more involved in the community thereby reducing depression and anxiety often experienced by this population. The suicide rate in this population is higher than average for other age groups.

St. John's Regional Medical Center in Oxnard has developed plans to provide Empath (CSU – like) services in the Oxnard community. Finalizing a MOU with Ventura County Behavioral Health regarding billing capacity. Will be operated by Vista del Mar Psychiatric Hospital.

Dr. Schipper reported that in July changes were made on the way data is collected from clients and staff. VCBH is looking into creating a portal for clients to access their own records.

The Arch at Ventura opened a year-round shelter for adults in February, a long sought and worked for dream to help those who are homeless.

The Spirit of Santa Paula opened a homeless shelter in Santa Paula and collaborates with VCBH to secure services and help to transition to permanent housing. This was started by a former BHAB member, Kay Wilson Bolton and the opening was attended by several BHAB members.

**Presentation:**

November 2019

Dr. Sandra Caldera who was appointed to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. This council is tasked with identifying and ensuring the availability of appropriate services for those with intellectual disabilities and mental illness. The organization is trying to partner with behavioral health services to set up collaborations to provide comprehensive services treating all needs. This subject has come before our BHAB many times. How to treat both DD and Mental Illness. An updated MOU between VCBH and the Regional Center is pending at this time.

UCLA/VA Veterans Family Wellness Center – Gabi Alejos, Resilience Trainer. Ms. Alejos described the grant funded program offered for Veterans and their families who have experienced trauma. This is a

free program which offers holistic healing regardless of discharge status and all information is confidential. This is an outgrowth of Focus a project established in 2004 by Patricia Lester to help veterans and families.

#### December 2019

Crisis Residential Treatment operated by Golden State contractor. This is a short-term inpatient program that is unlocked. Average stay is 7-10 days. Focus is symptom reduction and relapse prevention. Referrals come mainly from Hillmont Psychiatric Hospital or Vista Del Mar Psychiatric Hospital. Between June 1 and December 4, 2019, 164 clients were served. Since inception, this facility was also meant as a stable place to prevent hospitalization. On-site medical clearance would facilitate immediate acceptance if provided.

#### February 2020

Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (HACSB) – Denise Wise CEO and Karen Flock Deputy Director Real Estate Development  
This agency has two primary functions. 1. Public Housing – HACSB manages funds provided by HUD as operating subsidy and capital funds used mostly for maintenance and improvements. 2. Section 8 or housing choice voucher program. In both programs, tenants do not pay more than 30% of their income for rent. In 2013 HUD started a Renter Assistance Demonstration Program. HACSB has made over \$200 million in improvements to the housing stock which is now over 1,000 units. HACSB tries to work with APS, Crisis Intervention Team and VCBH to help those in danger of being evicted due to behavioral issues that are problematic. HACSB contracts with VC Area Agency on Aging for mental health service with good results in the past 5 years. This agency houses over 2,500 people and has a wait list of over 10,000.

#### **Challenges:**

Desperate need for supportive housing beds and facilities for placing clients with mental health issues as well as substance use issues.

We hear repeatedly that finding placement for people who need time to recover is most difficult in Ventura County especially with our high housing costs. Regarding special licensed homes or facilities, there needs to be an improvement in licensing regulations and rules that are less complex than they are now and to be consistent throughout the State.

Develop programs to use peers who are certified. Peer support was cut from several programs in past budget cuts and should be restored as a proven “best practice”.

Support of the IMD Waiver so more beds can be made available for larger facilities.

Need to increase spending within MHSA whose focus is now on treatment for incarcerated, homelessness and drug treatment for K-12 students.

Some MHSA programs may need to be sunset.