

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD  
**ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES ■ Thursday, September 3, 2020**

<p><b>Members Present</b>  Nancy Borchard, Committee Co-Chair  Gane Brooking, Committee Co-Chair  Jerry Harris, BHAB  Ratan Bhavnani, BHAB  Sheri Valley, BHAB  Gray Wilking, Area Agency on Aging  Dana Secor, BHAB, Turning Point Foundation</p> <p><b>Others Present</b>  Lara Buckley, Telecare  Denise Nogueira, Ventura County Area Agency on Aging  Lindsay Cunningham, Horizon View  Casey Wake, Telecare  Stephen Kass, Ventura Housing Authority  “Commander”</p>	<p><b>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Managers/Staff Present</b>  Dr. John Schipper, Adult Services Division Chief  Anita Catapusan, Substance Use Services  Clara Barron, MHSA Programs Operational Manager  Mike Rodriguez, Behavioral Health Manager  Kayla Fisher, Adult Division Management Assistant  Joanna Peterson, VCBH Management Assistant</p> <p><b>NEXT MEETING:</b>  <b>Thursday, November 5, 2020, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 pm</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 10:05 a.m.		
II.	<b>Approval of the Agenda</b> Ms. Borchard asked the committee to review and approve today’s agenda. Ratan Bhavnani moved to approve, Sheri Valley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.	The agenda was approved as written. <b>M/S/C</b>	
III.	<b>Approval of the Minutes</b> Ms. Brooking asked the committee to review and approve the minutes of the July meeting. Jerry Harris moved to approve, Mr. Bhavnani seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Sherri Valley abstained.	The minutes were approved as written. <b>M/S/C</b>	
IV.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> Ms. Brooking welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.		
V.	<b>Public Comments</b> None.		
VI.	<b>Chair Announcements</b> Ms. Borchard noted in order to become a BHAB Committee member, participants must attend meetings consistently; commonly three meetings.  No Place Like Home update expected at November meeting. STAR Assessment not completely finished, report expected next meeting.  Ms. Brooking did not have any announcements.		
VII.	<b>Members and Participants Comments</b> Telecare had no comment.  Gary Wilking (Area Agency on Aging), in response to a question from Nancy Borchard about Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives (PEARLS) described the program primarily intended for person 60+ years of age that is community-based (making “porch visits” during COVID). She described screening for depression and making referral to VCBH when more serious symptoms appear to warrant.  Lindsay Cunningham (Telecare), in response to a question from Elizabeth R. Stone about COVID impact to Horizon View reported minimal impact to their census.		
VIII.	<b>Update and Discussion</b> Presentation: Mental Health Diversion (MHD)		

Mike Rodriguez, VCBH Behavioral Health Manager, provided the following information:

1. MHD allows for individuals with a qualifying behavioral health diagnosis to opt into treatment instead of moving forward with adjudication.
2. Crimes of Murder and Rape are excluded.
3. Participants must not pose a significant risk of violence to the community.
4. A medical professional must state there is a good chance of positive treatment response.
5. Probation terms that are specific to each case (for community supervision & reporting)
6. Treatment plan that is specific to client's needs.
7. Regular court hearings to check on progress of participants.
8. VCBH has clients active in MHD from all clinics and programs.
9. Outcomes so far: 4 successful terminations (1 felony, 3 misd); 3 unsuccessful terminations (1 felony, 2 misd)
10. VCBH is learning to speak the same language (treatment plans, reports, etc.)
11. VCBH is weighing the long-term impacts for our clients
12. VCBH continues to be "Client-Centered" and including input from our clients from the beginning of the process

Questions:

Mary Haffner asked three questions: (1) if MHD is modeled after sequential intercept model? Dr. Schipper responded it is not. (2) if housing is provided as part of the program? Dr. Rodriguez described housing/placement varying from case-to-case. He described the placements ranging from sober living to Hillmont House (unlocked mental health rehabilitation center). He also described the use of Crisis Residential Treatment (CRT) as a common step down from jail to facilitate further clinical evaluation ahead of more permanent placement. (3) the biggest challenges in keeping people out of the criminal justice system? Dr. Rodriguez cited three things in response: availability of positive living situations, developing an effective, viable peer support staff, and developing the preparedness and acceptance among clients and legal staff that there will be setbacks (i.e., relapse, decompensation, etc.) and not be discouraged.

Elizabeth R. Stone asked two questions: (1) if people electing to leave the program did do so as a result of co-occurring substance use problems? Dr. Rodriguez confirmed this was a common reason and was seen as people not being quite "ready". He stressed "unsuccessful termination" was a court term and by contrast, some clinical benefit, might still be achieved by those who do not graduate. (2) if the \$2.4M grant funding might provide for peer support? Dr. Rodriguez acknowledged the benefit of peers, especially in a MHD program, but noted a peer employment program was a broader issue the department needed to develop.

Dana Secor (Turning Point Foundation) noted the similarity between their population and that of MHD. Spoke of conducting group via Zoom and doing outreach via phone as a result of current COVID concerns.

Adele Montijo (parent) inquired how to potentially connect her son to MHD. Dr. Rodriguez explained most referrals come via defense counsel and agreed to be a resource outside of the meeting in providing more specific information.

Nancy Borchard asked for a distinction from the Mental Health Court (MHC) program. Dr. Rodriguez explained MHC participation followed a guilty plea with legal eligibility being determined by the DA's office and clinical suitability by VCBH and successful completion of the program allowing for fines/fees to be waived. He noted MHC was seeing a resurgence of referrals following a dip when the pre-plea MHD was being established. As a result, the DA's office now appears more inclined to make MHC referral on a broader range of cases including some felonies.

Elizabeth R. Stone inquired about the budget associated with MHC's dedicated staff. Dr. Rodriguez noted the information was not readily available.

<p><b>IX.</b></p>	<p><b>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Updates</b></p> <p>Dr. John Schipper presented updates for the Adult Division and noted: (1) the successful completion of the State triennial audit. Formal results/finding were said to pending, but it was noted the audit was concluded early with positive informal feedback having been received. (2) The MHSA “desk audit” was noted to be pending and Clara Barron clarified the Department of Health Care Services would be conducting it. (3) VCBH staff noted to be working remotely to a large extent secondary to COVID concerns.</p> <p>Nancy Borchard asked about the status of the MID waiver and Elizabeth R. Stone noted these considerations have been postponed for a year.</p> <p>Ratan Bhavnani asked about the status of MHSA funding and plans for replacing Kiran Sahota who recently retired. Dr. Schipper noted the general perception that immediate funding is secure, but there is a lack of information and certainty about the next 2-4 years due to the impact of COVID. Efforts to hire a new manager to oversee MHSA were said to have begun.</p> <p>Dr. Schipper added VCBH staff is meeting every two weeks with Dignity/St. John’s staff for the purpose of planning/developing a crisis stabilization unit (CSU) in Oxnard with the goal being to become operational in Feb 2021. Similarly, he reported ongoing discussions with Alvarado Parkway Institute (API) around the development of a crisis residential treatment program in Santa Paula and a combination CSU/psychiatric health facility in east county.</p> <p>Anita Catapusan presented updates for the Substance Use Services (SUS) and noted: (1) calls into the 24/7 access line have returned to 1,000+ a month (in June, July, and August) after an apparent COVID-related downturn. (2) She described SUS services and treatment (including medication assisted treatment) as continuing after adapting to phone and zoom usage.</p> <p>Elizabeth R. Stone asked if people appeared prompted to pursued treatment as a result of a need for housing? Ms. Catapusan reported that this scenario sometimes appears to be the case and when it does SUS makes referrals to either residential treatment or informally to recovery housing (i.e., contracts pending) when/where appropriate.</p> <p>Jerry Harris asked about outreach efforts. Ms. Catapusan described Prevention efforts that utilize social media and other outlets for messaging. Mr. Harris clarified he was asking about direct outreach to individual clients (i.e., parks, etc.). Ms. Catapusan reported SUS does not currently perform this type of outreach.</p> <p>Nancy Borchard asked about the SUS response to concerned family members calling in reference to others in need of services and treatment. Ms. Catapusan described the nature of voluntary services and efforts to engage prospective clients during “windows of opportunities.”</p>		
<p><b>X.</b></p>	<p><b>Item for Next Meeting Agenda</b> Results from the outside STAR evaluation and No Place Like Home update</p>		
<p><b>XI.</b></p>	<p><b>Adjourn</b> The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.</p>		