

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES ■ Thursday, September 2, 2021

<p><u>Members Present</u> Gane Brooking, BHAB, Committee Co-Chair Michael Rodriguez, BHAB Ratan Bhavnani, BHAB Carol Thomas, BHAB Mary Haffner, Community advocate Scott Walker, VCPD CIT Elizabeth R. Stone, Peer advocate Liz Warren, Client Network Gray Wilking, VCAAA</p> <p><u>Others Present</u> Chris Tejada, BHAB Cheryl Heitmann, BHAB Carole Shelton, Parent advocate Roberta Griego, NAMI Nidia Vazquez, VCAAA Silvia Monge, VCAAA Sean Emerick, VCAAA</p>	<p><u>Others (continued)</u> Sheri Valley, Parent advocate Clarisa Cajian, Interpreter</p> <p><u>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Managers/Staff Present</u> Dr. John Schipper, Adult Division Chief Jessica Davis, Substance Use Treatment Services (SUSS) Susan White Wood, Behavioral Health Housing Manager Peter Schreiner; Older Adults Clinic Administrator Kayla Labrum, Adult Division Management Assistant Joanna Peterson, BHAB Assistant</p> <p>NEXT MEETING: Thursday, November 4, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87680728818?pwd=b3dCdjBNcGszRUJ4VzM2TXY1cJlJQT09 Meeting ID: 876 8072 8818 Password: 156974 Dial-in: 669-900-9128</p>
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Note: The committee has not yet approved these minutes. There may be additions/deletions or corrections before the minutes are accepted in final form.

	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
I.	Call to Order Co-Chair Gane Brooking called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.		
II.	Roll Call Ms. Brooking called roll and determined a quorum was present.		
III.	Approval of the Agenda Ms. Brooking asked the committee to review and approve the agenda. Elizabeth R. Stone moved to approve the agenda as written. Ratan Bhavnani seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.	The agenda was approved as written.	
IV.	Approval of the May 6, 2021 Minutes Ms. Brooking asked the committee to review and approve the minutes of the May 2021 meeting. Mr. Bhavnani moved to approve and Carol Thomas seconded. The May 2021 minutes were approved unanimously.	The minutes were approved as written.	
V.	Approval of the July 1, 2021 Minutes Ms. Brooking asked the committee to review and approve the minutes of the July 2021 meeting. Gray Wilking moved to approve and Mr. Bhavnani seconded. The July 2021 minutes were approved unanimously.	The minutes were approved as written.	
VI.	Welcome and Introductions Ms. Brooking welcomed everyone and asked for introductions. Cheryl Heitmann indicated she would like to become a committee member and was advised she would become eligible after attending three meetings.		
VII.	Public Comments Liz Warren inquired on behalf of the public if there was only the one opportunity for public comments. Both Ms. Brooking and Mr. Bhavnani indicated that the service committee meeting were less formal than the General Meeting and the opportunity to make public comments was more open. Mary Haffner announced her role as part of an advocacy group who along with NAMI will be hosting a town hall regarding mental health services in Ventura County September 8 th 6:30 – 8:30pm.		

VIII.	Chair Announcements None.		
IX.	Member and Participant Comments Ms. Stone expanded on the issue of public comments which she expressed as a concern about the “silencing of peer voices”. She called attention to MHASOC’s method of handling of public comments. Michael Rodriguez, as the BHAB Chair, stated he welcomes meeting participation and a goal for the General BHAB meeting is to shorten agenda items to give more time for public comments.		
X.	Contracts Review None.		
XI.	Update and Discussion: A. Presentation: Peter Schreiner, Clinic Administrator for the Older Adults Program Peter Schreiner provided a brief overview of the Older Adults Program and an update of COVID impacts/adjustments. The program is a full-service partnership (FSP) and funded by MHSA. Client served meet specialty mental health criteria (i.e., serious mental illness/significant functional impairment) and are typically 60+ years old with health and mobility issues. A multi-disciplinary staff provide “wrap around” services for a current caseload of 94. Community partners include: Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA), Adult Protective Services (APS), Housing Authority (HA), Social Security Administration (SSA), Ambulatory Care, and Public Guardian (PG). COVID impacts and program developments have been observed in four broad categories: (1) nature/extent of client contact (i.e., number of contacts, mostly via phone increased, and duration shortened); (2) transportation (i.e., addition of a wheelchair accessible van and barriers to decrease exposure); (3) basic needs (i.e., support, expanded to include meals, books, arts & crafts, etc.); and (4) creative efforts to stay connected (i.e., gifts bags, holiday portfolio, etc.). Ms. Stone inquired with concern duplication. Mr. Schreiner and Dr. Schipper spoke to the fact that specialty mental health services being provided by VCBH were available elsewhere. Mr. Bhavnani inquired about Rapid Response Team (RRT) and if they address issues for all clients or just the older adult population. Mr. Schreiner answered RRT is hosted by APS for older adults and dependent adults. Ms. Heitmann inquired why the program is limited to serving 90 individuals. Mr. Schreiner attributed this to the 15:1 client to staff ratio of FSP services. Dr. Schipper added to increase availability of FSP would require increase of staff in order to preserve the fidelity to the model. Liz Warren asked if any COVID reassigned staff had been assigned to Older Adults to assist with outreach. Mr. Schreiner answered no. B. Use of Jail safety rooms – issues or concerns All noted the time constraints. Chris Tejada spoke to jail information/statistics forwarded to the members/attendees by Ms. Borchard. Ms. Heitmann and Ms. Warren both noted having several questions and expressed desire for the topic to be covered in the next meeting.		
XII.	VCBH Updates: a. Adult Operations Time did not permit. b. Substance Use Services Time did not permit.		
XIII.	Items for Next Meeting Agenda Ms. Heitmann, Warren, and Haffner suggested use of jail safety rooms – issues or concerns be continued to the following meeting’s agenda. Ms. Stone expressed an interest in hearing about Ventura County’s innovation project to bolster communication sharing with the Sheriff’s Office.		
XIV.	Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.		



VENTURA COUNTY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
A Department of Ventura County Healthcare Agency

September 2nd, 2021

OLDER ADULT PROGRAM UPDATE: SURVIVING COVID-19

MEETING OF THE ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE BHAB

Peter Schreiner, LCSW Clinic Administrator

Older Adults Program

The Older Adults Program provides mental health services to unserved and underserved seriously mentally ill individuals ages 60+ in Ventura County

- As a result of serious mental illness, compounded by medical issues often facing the elderly, the Older Adult clients often have a reduction in personal or community functioning and may face mobility challenges.
- Special priority is given to those with persistent mental illness and to those who are homebound, homeless and/or in crisis and who require the intensive services of a Full-Service Partnership (FSP). This population is often unable to access more traditional outpatient services.

Older Adults Program

Older Adult Staffing:

- BH Manager, Mike Rodriguez, PsyD
- BH Clinic Administrator, Peter Schreiner, LCSW
- BH Licensed Clinicians (3)
- Registered Nurses (2)
- Licensed Psych Technicians (2)
- Psychiatrists (30 hours, between 2 providers)
- Case Managers (3) (2 Spanish Speaking)
- Office Assistant (1)

Older Adults Program

Current Census: 94

- Program Capacity - 90 clients.
- FSP provides intensive services; staff has a lower caseload, average caseload of 15 clients (1:15).
- Utilizes a team approach with clients: often served by more than one staff, resembling wrap-around approach.
- 65 clients served by the West County Team (Ralston).
- 29 clients served by the East County Team (Conejo).
- Program has 7 vehicles to transport clients to medical appointments with additional resources available through county Motor Pool Program.

Older Adults Program

The Older Adults Population:

- In addition to mental health impairments, the clients in this program are often significantly impacted by medical challenges.
- These are compounded by a lack of transportation resources to access services.
- Challenges with mobility.
- Medical crises often preempt other needs.
- The Older Adults staff are committed to addressing the whole person, and often assist our clients in accessing multiple resources.

Older Adults Program

Community Partnerships

- Partners include the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA), Adult Protective Services (APS), Residential Care Facilities for Elderly (RCFE), Public Guardian, Housing Authority, Human Service Agency (HSA), Social Security and ambulatory care.
- The Rapid Response Team meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. This team includes staff from the District Attorney's Office, Area Agency on Aging, Adult Protective Services, Senior Ombudsman, Public Guardian's Office, Public Health, the Sheriff's Department and Tri Counties. The purpose of this team is to respond to clients' needs in a collaborative and time-sensitive manner. This Clinic Administrator attends as BH representative.

Older Adults Program

The COVID-19 Pandemic started for our program
on March 19th, 2020.

Initially, staffing was reduced to essential staff, stay at home orders were in place, initially doctor appointments were cancelled, and clients of the Older Adult Program mostly stayed home.

Services impacted by the pandemic are evaluated in these areas:

- **Nature/Extent of Client Contact**
- **Transportation**
- **Basic Needs Supports**
- **Creative Efforts to stay Connected with Clients**

Older Adults Program

Nature/Extent of Client Contact

As might have been expected, the overall number of contacts (including phone contacts) increased significantly as a result of outreach by staff to address the challenges brought on by the pandemic.

As was observed with all the VCBH clinics/programs, the Older Adults teams tended to have more frequent, shorter contacts with clients as compared to prior to the pandemic. That said, Older Adults maintained a good deal of field work.

Of note, to date there have not been any instances of COVID-19 transmission during the provision of BH services by Older Adult staff.

Older Adults Program

Transportation

There were two significant developments that improved the ability for Older Adults Program to safely and appropriately transport clients to much needed doctor appointments:

- The acquisition of a wheelchair-accessible van.
- The installation of plastic barriers between the driver and passenger of all vans.

Older Adults Program

Transportation

Some Older Adult clients use electric wheelchairs.

Prior to acquisition of wheelchair-accessible van, Older Adults Program had to contract with outside providers for their transportation.



Older Adults Program

Transportation

The CDC advised early in the pandemic that COVID-19 is transmitted through aerosolized droplets. As a safety precaution, the General Service Agency outfitted all county vehicles with plastic barriers, thereby protecting both passenger and driver.

The Older Adult Program began transporting clients to doctor appointments as soon as May of 2020. Despite multiple statewide COVID-19 surges, transportation to much needed medical appointments increased as 2020 progressed.

Additionally, three older vehicles used by the Older Adult Program have been replaced by new vans outfitted with protective barriers.

Older Adults Program

Basic Needs

Basic Needs Funds are an integral component of the vision and mission of MHSA services, supporting the “Whatever It Takes” philosophy through which our public mental health system is being transformed. These funds are restricted to Full-Service Partnership (FSP) clients and provide essential supports, not typically found on the menu of traditional mental health services.

Basic-need supports not only increased during the pandemic, but our definition of what is “essential” expanded clients were forced to stay indoors.

- Meals/food delivered to doorsteps
- Phones to help with communication
- Books as the libraries were closed
- Art and craft supplies

Older Adults Program

Creative ways of Connecting with Clients

Perhaps the most difficult during the pandemic: our inability to safely assemble, share a meal together and socially interact with each other. As the holidays approached, a sadness that we would not be getting together for an event spread throughout our clients. Some had even stated they were forgetting what we looked like as so many communications were just over the phone.

Staff came together and developed gift bags that contained fun activities such as word search books (large print!) and featured a portfolio that included pictures of all staff with personal quotes from each, comic pages, resource pages and a letter to our clients. These bags were delivered to every client of Older Adults Program.

Older Adults Program

An excerpt from the introduction to Holiday Portfolio...

What a strange COVID-19 year it has been!

We went from seeing each other on a regular basis to seeing our phones and listening to each other.

We went from our doctors making house call to our doctors calling your house.

We went from driving to medical appointments to telehealth.

**We did all this to keep you safe;
we did this because we care about you.**

You have been amazing!

You understood and stayed flexible. You adapted to this very difficult situation and have done it with dignity and strength.

We at Older Adults appreciate you!

We miss you! We miss seeing you!

Older Adults Program

Questions or comments?