

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

General Meeting

Monday, April 17th, 2023, 1:00PM – 3:30 PM

Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)
1911 Williams Drive, Training Room (first floor) • Oxnard, CA 93036

IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

Zoom Participation

The following information referenced below and at the end of the agenda is provided to you in support of your attending the upcoming BHAB General Meeting via Zoom:

Join the Zoom meeting in the following way:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83332714732?pwd=bE43OUJqRHhHa0ExSIR5L1VLMWMyQT09>

Meeting ID: 833 3271 4732

Password: 149553

Dial-In: 669-900-9128

Under AB 2449 New Teleconferencing Rules:

The Ventura County Behavioral Health Advisory Board General Committee may take action at the beginning of the meeting regarding requests for “Just Cause” or “Emergency” allowances provided that related Brown Act guidelines are met. (Guidelines are listed on the last page of this agenda.)

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call to Determine Physical Quorum
- III. Roll Call of Members with Just Cause
 - a. State others present in the room over the age of 18
- IV. Welcome and Introductions
- V. Approval of the Agenda – **ACTION** (Roll Call)
- VI. Approval of the February 27, 2023 Minutes – **ACTION** (Roll Call)
- VII. Public Comments (3 min. per speaker)
- VIII. Presentation: Independent Needs Assessment Quarterly Update – Kristen Donovan, Dustin Anderson, & Rae Hanstad (20 min.)
- IX. Recognition of Jerry Harris, Former Behavioral Health Advisory Board Member—Chris Tejeda (20 min.)
- X. Chair Comments (10 min.)
- XI. Director’s Report – Scott Gilman (10 min.)
- XII. Board Member Comments and Announcements (10 min.)
- XIII. Secretary’s Report / Announcements – Janis Gardner (10 min.)
- XIV. BHAB Committee Reports (5 min each)
 - A. Adult Services Committee (March 2) – Gane Brooking & Chris Tejeda, Co-Chairs
 - B. Disparities Reduction Committee (March 7) – Marlen Torres, Chair
 - C. Prevention Committee (March 14) – Janis Gardner, Chair

- D. Youth & Family Committee (April 12) – Kevin Clerici, Chair
- XV. Old Business
 - A. Ombudsman Workgroup Report – Liz Warren (20 min.)
 - B. Site Visits Resumption – Announcement/Request for site visits – Michael Rodriguez, Chair (10 min.)
- XVI. New Business
 - A. Officially Announce Opening of 30-Day Public Comment Period on the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Annual Update Fiscal Year 2022-23 (April 17 – May 15) – Hilary Carson, MHSA -Sr. Program Administrator
 - B. Appointment of Nominating Committee – Michael Rodriguez, Chair – **ACTION** (Roll Call) (5 min.)
 - C. Annual Report Workgroup
 - D. Presentation Requests
 - E. Recognition Award Recommendations
- XVII. Contracts
 - Board of Supervisors Approved Agreements – March 14, 2023
 - 1. Agreement with Idea Engineering, Inc. for Digital, Social, and Media Marketing Services.
- XVIII. Public Comments (3 min. per speaker)
- XIX. Adjourn

Next Meeting: Monday, May 15th, 2023

All agenda reports and supporting data, including those filed in accordance with Government Code Section 54957.5 (b) (1) and (2) are available from the Behavioral Health Advisory Board Assistant at bhadmin@ventura.org or in person at Ventura County Behavioral Health, 2nd Floor, 1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, California. The same materials will be available and attached with each associated agenda item, when received, at the following website: www.vcbh.org/en/behavioral-health-advisory-board-meetings.

Welcome to the meeting of the Behavioral Health Advisory Board of the County of Ventura. The following information is provided to help you understand, follow, and participate in the Board meeting:

Join the Zoom meeting by clicking the link provided on the agenda at the scheduled time and date. Zoom will initially start with a **waiting room** — you will be admitted into the meeting room when the meeting starts. All participants are muted upon entry to minimize any unintended disruption of background sounds. Please keep yourself on mute unless you are speaking.

Note: The meeting is recorded.

Public Comments

- The Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) welcomes comments from the community, consumers, and family members.
- The BHAB operates under the Brown Act. This requires that all meetings be open meetings, with the agenda and minutes posted. A public comment period will be provided on all meeting agendas.
- Due to confidentiality laws, the Board is unable to respond directly to a public comment or to discuss client-specific issues without proper releases from the individuals concerned.
- At all BHAB meetings, the BHAB Assistant provides a Grievance Form for individuals who have concerns. The form is reviewed promptly by VCBH Quality Management. Individuals can also contact the BHAB Assistant to request a VCBH Grievance Form outside a BHAB meeting or call 1-888-567-2122.
- Individuals who have further concerns are welcome to return to the BHAB for assistance.

Public comments may be provided using one of the following options:

1. Email or Mail Public Comment in Advance of the Meeting

To make a written public comment, you must send an email to bhabadmin@ventura.org, with the specific agenda item or topic, if a general comment, by no later than 10:00 AM on the day of the BHAB meeting. Your written public comment may also be mailed to the following address and must be received by the BHAB Assistant no later than 10 AM on the day of the meeting:

BHAB Assistant, 1911 Williams Drive, Suite 200, Oxnard, CA 93036

Please indicate in the subject line the agenda item number (e.g., Item No. 9) on which you are commenting. Your written public comment sent via email or regular mail will be distributed to the BHAB Members and placed into the item's record of the meeting.

Or

2. In-Person Public Comment

If you are attending in-person, you may provide public comment when the Chair invites public comment.

Or

3. Video Public Comment using Zoom

You may use the raise hand feature when the Chair invites public comments in the following ways:

If you are running an older version of Zoom, you can raise your hand by clicking on the Participant button at the bottom of the Zoom screen and then click on the raise hand feature in that participant window.

If you are running the most current version of Zoom (5.4.9 and above) you can raise your hand by clicking on the Reactions button and then clicking on raise hand feature. Your hand will appear in the upper left-hand corner of your individual Zoom window as well as the participant window.

Call-In Public Comment using Zoom

If you are joining the meeting by telephone only, you can join the comment queue by pressing *9. When it is your turn to make your comment, press *6 to unmute and then again to mute yourself after speaking.

Note: Your raised hand will appear TO THE HOST in the order it was received.

Comments are taken in the order they are received in the queue/participant window. When it is your turn to make a comment, you will be asked to unmute yourself. **Public comments on agenda items can be made prior to or during**

Public comments on agenda items can be made prior to or during consideration of agenda items and are limited to 3 minutes per speaker. Public comment periods are limited to no more than (20) minutes total for all speakers. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Behavioral Health Administration at (805) 981-6830. Reasonable advance notification of the need for accommodation prior to the meeting (48 hours advance notice is preferable) will enable us to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

consideration of agenda items and are limited to 3 minutes per speaker. Public comment periods are limited to no more than (20) minutes total for all speakers. The assigned timekeeper will track each public comment time. When your time is up, the timekeeper will interrupt to let you know that you have reached the 3-minute maximum. At the end of the three minutes, the next person in the comment queue will be invited to speak.

REMINDER: In order to minimize distractions during public meetings, all personal communication devices should be turned off or put in a non-audible mode.

Brown Act “Just Cause” or “Member Emergency” Allowance Guidelines for Board Members:

Requirements: A local board/commission member may participate remotely without posting their physical location on the agenda if all the following requirements are met:

1. Quorum at Physical Location - At least a quorum of the members of the board/commission participates in person from a singular physical location clearly identified in the agenda.
2. Public Access - (Both Remote and In-Person) The public may access the meeting through:
 - A two-way audiovisual platform or
 - A two-way telephonic service and a live webcasting of the meeting
 - In-Person Public Access to the physical location.

Circumstances: One of the following circumstances applies:

1. **“Just Cause”** - The member notifies the legislative body at the earliest opportunity possible, including at the start of a regular meeting, of their need to participate remotely for just cause, including a general description of the circumstances relating to their need to appear remotely at the given meeting. The provisions of this clause shall not be used by any member of the legislative body for more than two meetings per calendar year. **or**
2. **“Emergency Circumstances”** - The member requests to participate in the meeting remotely due to emergency circumstances and the board/commission takes action to approve the request. The board/commission shall request a general description of the circumstances relating to the member’s need to appear remotely at the given meeting. A general description of an item generally need not exceed 20 words and shall not require the member to disclose any medical diagnosis or disability, or any personal medical information.

Procedures:

1. **Member Request** - A member shall make a request to participate remotely at a meeting pursuant to this clause as soon as possible. The member shall make a separate request for each meeting in which they seek to participate remotely.
2. **Board/Commission Response** - The board/commission may take action on a request to participate remotely at the earliest opportunity. If the request does not allow sufficient time to place proposed action on such a request on the posted agenda for the meeting for which the request is made, the legislative body may take action at the beginning of the meeting.
3. **Disclosure** - The member shall publicly disclose at the meeting before any action is taken, whether any other individuals 18 years of age or older are present in the room at the remote location with the member, and the general nature of the member’s relationship with any such individuals.

4. BOTH Audio & Visual Participation - The member shall participate through both audio and visual technology.
5. Limits to Remote Participation - The provisions of this subdivision [of the Brown Act] shall not serve as a means for any member of a legislative body to participate in meetings of the legislative body solely by teleconference from a remote location for a period of more than three consecutive months or 20 percent of the regular meetings for the local agency within a calendar year, or more than two meetings if the legislative body regularly meets fewer than 10 times per calendar year.

DEFINITIONS:

“Emergency circumstances”: A physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending in person.

“Just cause” means any of the following:

1. A childcare or caregiving need (for a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner) that requires the member to participate remotely.
2. A contagious illness prevents the member from attending the meeting in person.
3. A need related to defined physical or mental disability that is not otherwise accommodated for.
4. Traveling while on official business of the Brown Act Bode or another state or local agency.
5. Just Cause is limited to two instances per calendar year.

For additional information, see pages 4+ of the Brown Act Guide: calbhbc.org/brown-act

Director's Update

BHAB General Meeting 4.17.2023

General Updates:

April has the following days of significance to highlight:

Alcohol Awareness Month
Earth Day – April 22, 2023
National Alcohol Screening Day – April 6, 2023
Sexual Assault Awareness Month
Stress Awareness Month
World Health Day – April 7, 2023

Access and Outreach Division:

- We welcome Ken Gailey, LMFT, who recently joined our Access & Outreach Division as the new Behavioral Health Manager to oversee many of our programs within our division. We also welcomed Ria Dougherty, LMFT, who accepted the promotion as our new Clinic Administrator for our Access Team. Our Access Team oversees and processes requests for services and MH referrals coming into our centralized entry way for Ventura County Behavioral Health services. Access team supports and directs individuals/families to the appropriate delivery system of care and resources.
- We are growing our leadership team – to best support each program within the Division and ensuring we are maximizing resources and streamline processes – to best support those wanting to access services through Ventura County Behavioral Health.

Adult Services Division:

- May is Mental Health Awareness Month and there are three MHSA-sponsored events coming up:
 1. Empower up! An annual youth event focused on mental health and well-being will take place on May 4th at Cal Lutheran University. This year's event is focused on highschoolers, grades 9-12th but is open to all residents of age. Please contact your local high school to register. (See attached)
 2. VCBH is partnering with LULAC-La Colonia, Rio School District, trainers for Community Change, Oxnard School District, Fuerza Latina Health Community Group, and Padres Juntos Promoviendo la Education to produce a suicide prevention conference taking place on Saturday May 13th at Lemonwood Elementary School in Oxnard. (See attached)

3. An inspirational workshop for women will take place in Santa Paula on May 30th. Dr. Dulce Lopez will be giving a presentation on Metamorphosis, the transformation of women towards their inner light. The presentation's focus is on providing positive coping skills that might assist individuals on their life journey toward self-empowerment, healing, and well-being. It will be on May 30th at the Casa del Mexicano in Santa Paula. It will start at 5:30 pm. There will be dinner provided and resources tables. If you would like to join, please register at MHSA.org or by calling 805-981-5447.
- The MHSA 3-year Plan 2023-26 and Annual Update FY 22-23 will be posted to the vcbh.org website for the 30-day public review period. Comments can be sent through the website or to MHSA@ventura.org. The public hearing is scheduled for May 15, 2023, at 1pm.
 - Community Care Expansion Preservation Program: The California Department of Social Services has awarded VCBH with \$1.6M in Capital Project funds and \$1.1M in Operating Subsidy Payment funds. This one-time, non-competitive funding is intended to improve the physical plants of licensed board and cares and to better support the clients they serve.
 - Behavioral Health Bridge Housing: DHCS has made available \$13,325,088 for Ventura County to provide supportive housing and temporary shelter beds over 3 years. There is an emphasis on a rapid rollout, using existing resources. Housing Manager, Susan White, has been working with an array of partners (e.g., Continuum of Care, Area Housing Authorities, Interface, Spirit of Santa Paula, etc.) to develop a plan that, in part, proposes funding motel rooms, additional shelter beds, site specific rental assistance and supportive services for both individuals and families. As part of the stakeholder process, a listening session for unhoused persons with mental illness will be held April 18th at 4pm at the Wellness Center at the Center Point Mall. This application is due May 1, 2023. (See attached)
 - Department of State Hospitals-Felony Incompetent to Stand Trial Project: VCBH is working with an existing partner to leverage DSH grant funds to redevelop an existing housing unit into a community-based restoration program. This would be a multi-agency effort and letters of support have been received from the Superior Court, the Public Defender and District Attorney Offices, the Sheriff, Probation, and the CEO. The intensive services would be directed at persons who otherwise would be admitted to the state hospital. The proposed number of people served with this grant is projected to be between 15-30. This proposal is due April 28, 2023.

Youth and Family (Y&F) Services Division:

Division Highlights

- Y&F Management participated in the Interagency Leadership Team and Wellness System Steering Committee joint study session on March 22. The AB2083 partners discussed and Wellness system priority tenets of shared finances, information sharing and data Integration, Integrated Core Practice Model and Capacity Building.

Initiatives and Progress

- On March 30th, Y&F Management met with school counselors and social workers at Vista Real Charter Schools, to provide information about VCBH, who are the youth served, and how to refer and subsequently coordinate care with the clinic teams. We discussed overlap in care of mostly youth with MediCal or no insurance coverage, how to address barriers in accessing care and how to best coordinate services for our youth.
- On April 6th, our Clinical Coordinators overseeing TBS and IHBS referrals met with our South Oxnard Youth and Family clinic staff, to review what these services are, how to refer a youth, as well as how to coordinate care with TBS/IHBS providers. Scheduling is ongoing for all other Y&F programs and EPSDT contractors. The goal is for teams to increase utilization of these adjunct services, improve quality of referrals to reduce wait time for authorization, as well as increase appropriate coordination of care.
- Y&F Full-Service Partnership Clinic Administrator, Jena Cameron, is beginning to provide presentations to internal and agency partners for the Child FSP and Insights FSP. The efforts are meant to increase FSP services to Probation youth to reduce hospitalizations, reduce incarcerations and other out-of-home placements. FSP's provide clinical and additional necessary support for these most high-risk youth to be successful in their home and communities.

Collaborations

- CWS Clinic Administrator, Hayley Hodge in collaboration with Human Services Agency, judge, and attorneys, participated in the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Juvenile Dependency Panel on 3/23/23. The Juvenile Dependency Panel provides new CASA volunteers with an opportunity to learn about different agencies' roles and services available to families while youth are in dependency.

Training & Conferences

- Clinic Administrator Raudel Flores is now one of VCBH staff that is certified as a trainer to provide CPI nonviolent crisis intervention. He will begin to co-facilitate ongoing CPI Training for VCBH staff.

Other

- Y&F and MHSA leadership met with VCOE to discuss ongoing support and collaboration for School Wellness Centers across the county. VCOE reviewed BeNice, an evidence-based school-wide strategy to reduce stigma and enhance overall student mental wellbeing. VCOE will be working with districts to assess the level of readiness regarding possible implementation.

Substance Use Services (SUS) Division:

Prevention:

- **National Fentanyl Awareness Day May 9th**
 - In collaboration with the Ventura County Sheriff's Office, the County Office of Education, local school districts, and multiple community-based organizations, Prevention Services is hosting and producing a Fentanyl education event called "Fake Pills, Real Danger" for all secondary schools and shared in classrooms county-wide on this date.
 - To encourage MAT prescribing in both VCBH and primary care settings after the X-waiver requirement was lifted, Dr. Vlaskovits is spearheading a series of provider information sessions.
 - The first floor of the Hall of Administration will feature a fentanyl awareness display encouraging visitors and employees alike to learn about the risks and prevent tragedy.

- **Opioid & Illicit Drug Workgroup met on March 22nd**
 - There was excellent collaboration and information sharing in the meeting, including the background of the original RX Workgroup and some great updates from our Chief Medical Examiner, Sheriff's Office, and others. We reviewed some of the original goals of the group, focusing in part on supporting safe prescribing. We saw that setting markers for goals and objectives aids stakeholder-driven efforts and can have a tremendous impact on a community-focused issue such as the current opioid crisis, which today includes fentanyl analogs and the more recent introduction of xylazine into the drug supply.

- **Fentanyl test strip distribution pilot**
 - VCBH Prevention Services have partnered with local NTP providers Aegis and Western Pacific to distribute Fentanyl Test Strips to clients at the programs and are also available to the community. Four Aegis and one Western Pacific location will operate as test strip distribution sites and anyone wanting to access the strips may do so at any of the locations. Consumers will be given five test strips at a time and to get a refill they need to complete a survey about their use of the strips including what drugs were tested and if it impacted their decision to use or not.

Treatment Services:

- Department of Health Care Services conducting annual monitoring of VCBH Substance Use Services – DMC-ODS and SABG March 23rd, 2023. We fared well and all follow-up documents were submitted April 4th. The results will be available in a few weeks and while we expect a corrective action plan (CAP) for both DMC-ODS and SABG, we are confident that we can resolve the deficiencies.

- SUD youth clinical staff attended training on adolescent Seeking Safety on March 28th. Seeking Safety is a present focused, coping skills therapy to help people attain safety from trauma and/or substance abuse.

- SUS and Prevention management team is attending the annual RX and Illicit drug summit is April 10-13th. It is the largest national collaboration of professionals from local, state, and federal agencies, business, academia, treatment providers, and allied communities impacted by prescription drug misuse and illicit drug use. It is *the* event for decision-makers and allied professionals working to address this public health emergency.
- SUTS clinics have been trained to use a new toxicology testing process with Millennium Health. This service is free for medical beneficiaries and staff plan to do either an oral or a urine screen with each client at intake to get a baseline of their substance use. The specimens are sent to the lab for free and processed within 24 hours. The lab will give VCBH the ability to access reports on what clients are using as an opportunity as well to see if there are substances showing up that clients may be aware they are using, i.e., cocaine cut with Fentanyl.

Quality Division:

Quality Assurance:

- Supports both MH and DMC-ODS providers with compliance efforts through the establishment of Monthly QA Office Hours. QA team began process improvement effort with provider NPI number and verification of appropriate Taxonomy codes. Some team members are assigned as SmartCare Superusers to be prepared for the EHR transition scheduled for July 2023. QA reviews SUS Treatment Authorization Requests for approval. Provides support to Medical Records Team related to requests received/records maintained. Grievances and appeals from beneficiaries are being addressed, resolved, and tracked for quality improvement effort.
- **VCBH Policy Office:** Policy Office has continued to support the Standardized Screening and Transition tool implementation, working on finalizing operational guidelines and supporting documents to be included with associated policies and trainings. Additionally, Policy Office has completed its review and drafted initial revisions of all Billing Policies in preparation for the Payment Reform roll out effective July 1st, 2023. Policy Office continues its review and standardization of policy archives, while concurrently implementing a fully electronic policy approval and archive management system. Finally, in collaboration with the Office of Health Equity and Cultural Diversity, Policy Office has been working on an operational guideline for use of language and public-facing documents to create more accessible and equitable policies and materials in support of Behavioral Health integration. Policy Office has worked with the GSA Mail Center to mail the *Beneficiary Handbook Notice* to Clients in English and Spanish, informing that the Beneficiary Handbook is available on the internet. DHCS gave a deadline of March 31, 2023, and on March 29, 2023, 14,776 informing materials were mailed to all active beneficiaries.
- **Utilization Review:** The UR team transitioned to the Concurrent Chart Reviews process. However, approximately 5% of out-of-county hospitals still need to transition to the Concurrent Review process. UR maintains the quarterly chart reviews of non-hospital programs, and an administrative exit feedback meeting is held to address compliance issues findings and reinforce CalAIM implementation. UR collaborates with the CalAIM team, QA staff, VCBH leadership, and CBOs to resolve identified CalAIM compliance, quality of patient care, or utilization of services issues. The UR team is in the process of transitioning to CalMHSA UR Tools.

- **Training:** On March 7-8, 19 VCBH Staff, representing all Divisions, attended a 2 Day Conference funded by our Southern California Regional Partnership. The conference focused on Strategies for Addressing Trauma. Topics included: generational trauma, crisis management, traumatic stress, informed approaches when working with justice related youth and immigrant communities, CBT for Psychosis; Peer Partners' role in healing from trauma; and compassion fatigue. In addition, much gratitude to the VCBH Overdose Prevention Team for their presentation on the VCBH Overdose Prevention Program's efforts, community collaboration and successes to prevent death by overdose.
- Continued efforts to collaborate with local Educational Partners to support 32 students (graduate and undergraduate) in the 23-23 Academic Year – application process is open, and Training and Personnel staff will be attending 6 Educational Partners Job and Career Fairs (between February and April) to recruit students for educational practicum and graduates to apply for county employment. VCBH has proudly been awarded acceptance to be awarded funding for Year 2 of the Mentored Internship Program grant. Continuing to identify Round 2 recipients of SCRIP funded Loan Repayment awards to 13 staff in various job categories (clinical and non-clinical).

Quality Improvement:

- **Audits & Reviews:** The QI team will be leading all audits and reviews for the department, transitioning the work from the QA team. We just completed the annual DHCS DMC-ODS and SABG review to monitor Substance Use Services. We are beginning to prepare for the DHCS MHP Triennial Audit, scheduled for August 2023, as well as the MHSA Program Review, scheduled for September 2023.
- **Quality Improvement Committee:** We are working on developing a new/revised structure for ongoing quality management monitoring and use of data-driven decision making across the department. In doing so, we will be modifying the Quality Management Action Committee (QMAC) to be more focused on the voice and needs of the community, including representation of individuals in care, and ensure a process of continuous quality improvement. More information will be forthcoming.
- **EQRO:** The final reports for the FY 2022-23 Mental Health and DMC-ODS external quality reviews that happened November 8th-10th have been received. They are posted on the vcbh.org website under "Reports & Performance." We are now focusing on improvement efforts based on the opportunity areas and formal recommendations.
- **PIPS:** QI now has 5 performance improvement projects (PIPs) that address various areas for improvement. We are working on interventions for 3 new PIPs specific to CalAIM-related shifts in measuring specific items to follow-up after an emergency room visit and adherence to Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). In addition, we are in the process of developing a new MH PIP to support VCPOP and a SUS PIP on engagement in services continues.
- **Performance Metric Tracking:** QI is building out ongoing tracking and reporting of key performance metrics and is working with VC-Information Technology Services to design a public-

facing data dashboard. The initial phase of development will be completed soon, with further metrics added in the future.

- **Strategic Plan:** To support VCBH Strategic Plan efforts, QI prepared baseline and year 1 data summaries that demonstrate current state and/or progress towards the goals and objectives.

Electronic Health Record:

- **CalMHSA EHR SmartCare:** The EHR team is actively engaged in the data migration/conversion phase of the project. SuperUsers are actively engaged in training and workflows. CalMHSA provides weekly meetings on specific topics and separate ones focused on data conversion topics.
- **Data Gaps Analysis:** Staff are working with CalMHSA and Operations to address data that will not transition to SmartCare as of July 1 or data that won't ever transition over to develop interim systems and/or longer-term processes to support our department's needs.
- **CalAIM Documentation Reform:** All Three Standardized Screening tools have been installed in Avatar LIVE environment and they are ready for use. Training videos have been created in addition to Spanish translations embedded into the tools.
- **FSP Client Key Event Tracking:** The MHSA Data Coordination Project implementation continues. Law Enforcement Arrest import is scheduled to begin 4/3/2023. The goal of this initiative is to provide timely notice to clinicians treating the FSP client community regarding client interactions with in-scope Key Event Incidents.

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal:

- VCBH's CalAIM unit (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal) continues to coordinate CalAIM efforts across the department. The CalAIM team's support includes providing technical support in a variety of ways to both staff and contracted providers; and ongoing communication and collaboration with contracted county partners and the local managed care health plan continue to help facilitate a smooth implementation experience.
- VCBH released county-specific training on the Standardized screening and Transition of Care tools on March 16, 2023. The Standardized Screening and Transition of Care tools have now been fully implemented as of March 27, 2023. The QM team will be supporting implementation by hosting office hours on April 6, 2023.
- Payment Reform efforts continue. VCBH held Q& A sessions on March 30, 2023, for county direct line staff and contracted providers that included a brief presentation on upcoming changes. VCBH will begin to meet with individual contracted providers in April to review rates. As a reminder, CalMHSA's provider-level training is expected to be released June 1, 2023. In addition, VCBH is working on developing internal practitioner-type training for staff to focus on the specific implications of each provider type/taxonomy.

- The VCBH EHR team is working diligently to prepare for the transition to a new Electronic Health Record system (Streamline/SmartCare) on July 1, 2023. VCBH has established a superuser group made up of identified county staff and contracted providers. Superusers are staff members trained to move through the electronic health record (EHR) system quickly and can share helpful hints, tips, and techniques. Our EHR superusers will provide internal training to office staff and clinicians. The CalAIM team continues to attend weekly CalMHSA’s Semi-Statewide Shared EHR presentations and workgroups for the counties participating in the “Phase I” implementation phase, as well as collaboratively working alongside a CalMHSA EHR project manager to ensure a smooth transition.

FREE EVENT

empower up!

your mental wellness

Featuring:

- Engaging activities and workshops
- Inspiring talks by local youth leaders

A day where young people will come together in one space to empower one another to elevate mental well-being.

For grades 9-12

Lunch and giveaways will be provided.

**Thursday
May 4, 2023**

10AM – 2PM

**Cal Lutheran
University**

Save the Date!

To register, contact:
MHSA@ventura.org

Brought to you by
Ventura County Behavioral Health,
Ventura County Office of Education,
BRITE

Spanish and ASL interpreters will be available.

Funding is made through Ventura County Behavioral Health, Mental Health Services Act.



VENTURA COUNTY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency

PUBLIC LISTENING EVENT & ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

**DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS OR IDEAS ABOUT HOUSING OPTIONS
FOR PEOPLE STRUGGLING WITH SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS?**

**VCBH WOULD APPRECIATE HEARING FROM YOU ABOUT CURRENT
PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL HOUSING SOLUTIONS.**

WHEN: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 - 4 to 6 pm

**WHERE: The Wellness Center
Center Point Mall (Next to Public Health)
2697 Saviers Road
Oxnard, CA 93033**

**Light snacks & beverages will be served. Participants will receive
complimentary gift for participating (supplies limited).**

Please RSVP to The Wellness Center (805) 653-5045

We invite you to our conference

BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES

Where we will play the following topics:
suicide prevention and the impact of abuse
emotional in families

Keynote Speaker- Dr. Luis Garcia
Internationally recognized psychologist

Saturday, May 13, 2023

8:00AM-4:00PM

Lemonwood Elementary School
(2200 Carnegie St. Oxnard, CA 93033)



Free event
Breakfast and lunch
included
Limited space.

Register Now!

http://bit.ly/Familias_Saludables

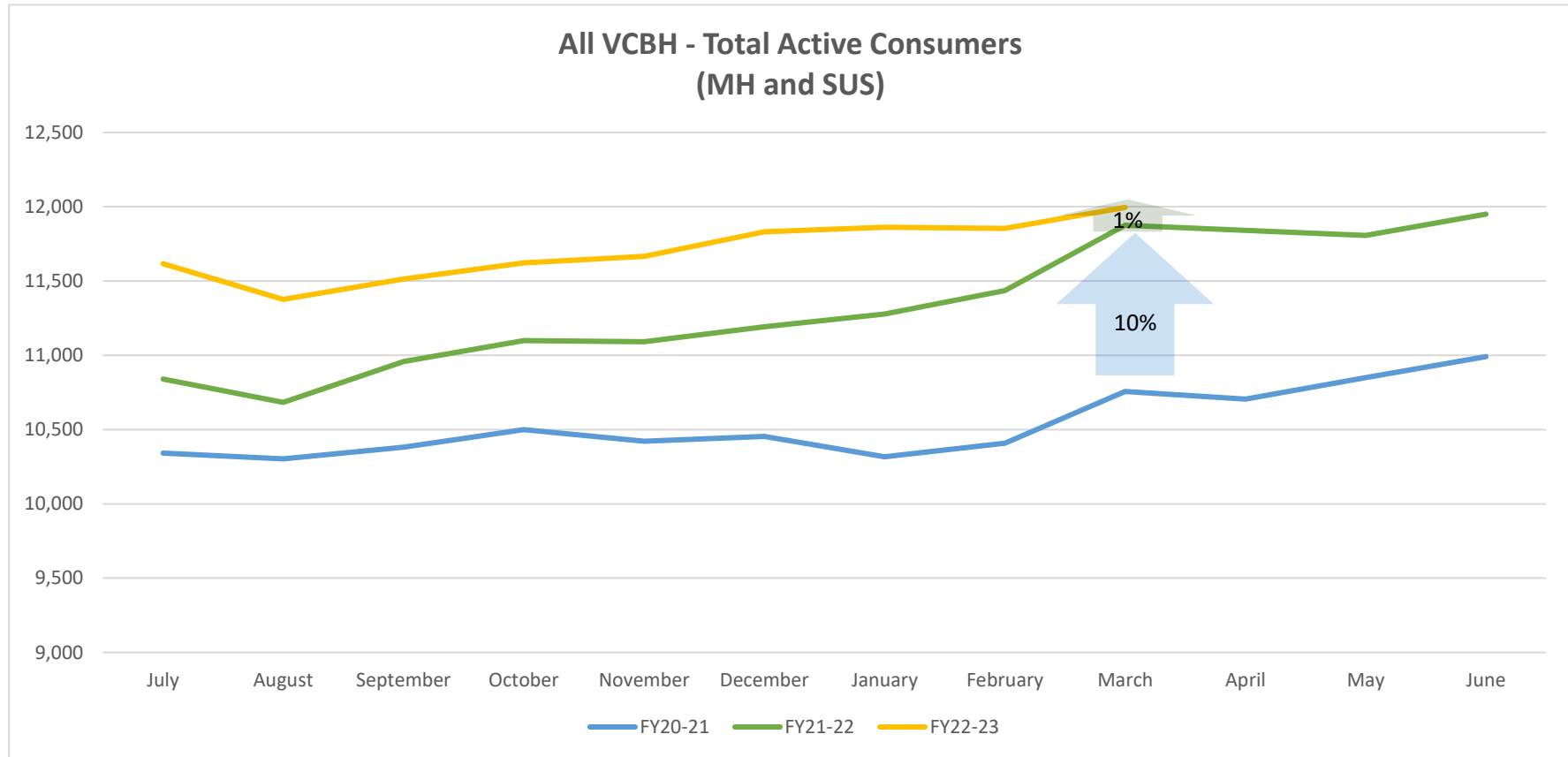
Sponsored by the Ventura County Department of Mental Health
in collaboration with-Trainers for Community Change/GRR;
Oxnard School District; El Rio School District; LULAC-The
Colony; Fuerza Latina Health Community Group, and Padres
Juntos Promoting Education.

VENTURA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Total Active Consumers In The Month Of March

Open episodes in March 2023 with billing activity in prior 12 months

As of 4/4/2023



**Percent change compares FY to previous FY (e.g., FY21-22 and FY22-23 had a percent change of 4%)*

VENTURA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Total Active Consumers In The Month Of March

Open episodes in March 2023 with billing activity in prior 12 months

As of 4/4/2023

| | |
|---|--|
| All VCBH SUS - County & Contractor MH Adult - County & Contractor MH Y&F - County & Contractor VCBH STAR Adult Crisis | VCBH Treatment Programs County & Contractor Includes outpatient and residential |
|---|--|

| | VCBH Program Group | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | All VCBH | SUS | MH Adult | MH Youth and Family | VCBH STAR | VCBH Crisis |
| Total Consumers With Open Episode | 11,995 | 1,022 | 6,129 | 4,235 | 1,040 | 399 |

| Total Consumers With Open Episode Age Group * | VCBH Program Group | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | All VCBH | SUS | MH Adult | MH Youth and Family | VCBH STAR | VCBH Crisis |
| 0-15 | 2,944 | 35 | | 2,706 | 321 | 34 |
| 16-25 | 2,527 | 196 | 884 | 1,385 | 216 | 80 |
| 26-59 | 5,139 | 739 | 3,993 | 144 | 440 | 220 |
| 60+ | 1,385 | 52 | 1,252 | | 63 | 65 |
| Not Reported | | | | | | |
| Grand Total | 11,995 | 1,022 | 6,129 | 4,235 | 1,040 | 399 |

| Total Consumers With Open Episode | VCBH Program Group | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | All VCBH | SUS | MH Adult | MH Youth and Family | VCBH STAR | VCBH Crisis |
| Preferred Language | | | | | | |
| English | 9,927 | 943 | 5,120 | 3,418 | 807 | 331 |
| Spanish | 1,126 | 52 | 527 | 458 | 113 | 25 |
| Mixteco | 8 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 2 | |
| Non-Threshold Language | 80 | 2 | 62 | 9 | 6 | 2 |
| Not Reported | 854 | 24 | 419 | 344 | 112 | 41 |
| Grand Total | 11,995 | 1,022 | 6,129 | 4,235 | 1,040 | 399 |

| Total Consumers With Open Episode | VCBH Program Group | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | All VCBH | SUS | MH Adult | MH Youth and Family | VCBH STAR | VCBH Crisis |
| Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| Latinx | 6,222 | 588 | 2,784 | 2,681 | 528 | 137 |
| Non-Latinx | 4,066 | 356 | 2,760 | 814 | 237 | 140 |
| Not Reported | 1,696 | 77 | 581 | 736 | 273 | 120 |
| Declined to State | 11 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Grand Total | 11,995 | 1,022 | 6,129 | 4,235 | 1,040 | 399 |

| Total Active Consumers At Each Location *** | VCBH Program Group | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | All VCBH | SUS | MH Adult | MH Youth and Family | VCBH STAR | VCBH Crisis |
| Program Service Location | | | | | | |
| CAMARILLO | 479 | | 99 | 380 | | |
| FILLMORE | 189 | 33 | | 161 | | |
| MOORPARK | 2 | | | 2 | | |
| OXNARD | 6,431 | 760 | 2,788 | 1,960 | 1,040 | 399 |
| SANTA PAULA | 874 | | 600 | 274 | | |
| SIMI VALLEY | 1,369 | 90 | 766 | 531 | | |
| THOUSAND OAKS | 1,282 | 64 | 923 | 318 | | |
| VENTURA | 2,302 | 91 | 1,222 | 1,015 | | |
| Outside Ventura County (Contractor) | 152 | 130 | 22 | | | |
| Grand Total | 13,080 | 1,168 | 6,420 | 4,641 | 1,040 | 399 |

*** Consumers may be counted under multiple locations

| Total Consumers With Open Episode Residence Region - City | VCBH Program Group | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | All VCBH | SUS | MH Adult | MH Youth and Family | VCBH STAR | VCBH Crisis |
| Conejo Valley | 979 | 86 | 562 | 251 | 88 | 56 |
| Conejo Valley-Newbury Park | 254 | 29 | 140 | 65 | 28 | 13 |
| Conejo Valley-Oak Park | 37 | 3 | 12 | 18 | 3 | 3 |
| Conejo Valley-Thousand Oaks | 635 | 51 | 382 | 159 | 52 | 32 |
| Conejo Valley-Westlake Village | 53 | 3 | 28 | 9 | 5 | 8 |
| Moorpark | 346 | 18 | 136 | 171 | 29 | 8 |
| Moorpark | 346 | 18 | 136 | 171 | 29 | 8 |
| Ojai | 219 | 24 | 110 | 76 | 15 | 6 |
| Ojai | 161 | 20 | 88 | 51 | 8 | 5 |
| Ojai-Oak View | 58 | 4 | 22 | 25 | 7 | 1 |
| Oxnard Plains | 5,372 | 459 | 2,731 | 1,983 | 479 | 140 |
| Oxnard Plains-Camarillo | 786 | 57 | 461 | 255 | 47 | 18 |
| Oxnard Plains-Oxnard | 4,158 | 373 | 2,080 | 1,551 | 383 | 106 |
| Oxnard Plains-Port Hueneme | 405 | 27 | 180 | 167 | 46 | 16 |
| Oxnard Plains-Somis | 23 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 3 | |
| Santa Clara Valley | 1,219 | 73 | 507 | 556 | 112 | 49 |
| Santa Clara Valley-Fillmore | 396 | 36 | 144 | 181 | 52 | 16 |
| Santa Clara Valley-Piru | 45 | 3 | 16 | 23 | 3 | |
| Santa Clara Valley-Santa Paula | 778 | 34 | 347 | 352 | 57 | 33 |
| Simi Valley | 1,381 | 123 | 680 | 485 | 112 | 53 |
| Simi Valley | 1,381 | 123 | 680 | 485 | 112 | 53 |
| Ventura | 2,143 | 210 | 1,228 | 602 | 187 | 73 |
| Ventura | 2,143 | 210 | 1,228 | 602 | 187 | 73 |
| Not Reported / Out of County | 336 | 29 | 175 | 111 | 18 | 14 |
| Grand Total | 11,995 | 1,022 | 6,129 | 4,235 | 1,040 | 399 |

Residence cities do not reflect consumer service location.

BHAB Ombudsman Workgroup Report – February 27, 2023

Historical Context

The word “Ombudsman” evolved from the Swedish ombudsman signifying “the legal representative.” Initially, the Swedish legislature made the designation of the ombudsman in early 1800, with the translation of ombudsman as “the official investigator of citizen complaints.” This person was acknowledged as “the person of legal capabilities and superior virtue.”

The ombudsman is independent, unbiased and provides cost-free services. They investigate complaints when problems have been inappropriately managed, or individuals undergo unfair consequences, some situations like maladministration, included examples are inconsistent delay, negligence to follow procedures, bias, disrespect, presenting inadequate suggestions.

In order to receive and investigate complaints from aggrieved parties against a county agency or organizational entities in an impartial, independent, and confidential manner, an ombudsman can be used for different issues in several domains, some examples are below:

Seven Types of Ombudsmen

1. Organizational Ombudsman
2. Classic Ombudsman
3. Advocate Ombudsman
4. Hybrid Ombudsman
5. Legislative Ombudsman
6. Executive Ombudsman
7. Media Ombudsman

After reviewing the various types of ombudsmen, the workgroup identified the two types of ombudsmen they think best fit the needs of the community. The workgroup is recommending one of the following - the **Organizational Ombudsman**, or the **Advocate Ombudsman**. Descriptions of both ombudsmen options follow.

Organizational Ombudsman

While working in the private and public sector, an organizational ombudsman receives and investigates complaints made by an entity's members, employees, or contractors about its practices or policies. Serving as a designated unbiased individual in a particular organization, an organization ombudsman assists in dealing with the conflicts at an informal level for the organization with a wide range of procedures from conflict coaching to informal mediation. Only the ombudsman is responsible to respond to the concerns and disputes reported by individuals to the administrative office and can report trends, integral problems, and organizational issues to high-level officials and employees in a confidential manner. An organizational ombudsman is an informal resource, i.e., cannot engage in any formal administrative process related to the issues brought to their attention. An example of an organizational ombudsman is the university ombudsman. An organizational ombudsman could interrogate or operate with the informal processes described in an official agreement, and direct various inquiries legitimately and independently.

Advocate Ombudsman

An advocate ombudsman can be allocated in both the public and private sector for evaluating allegations, but it is also required to defend or advocate at the place of individuals or groups of people identified as persecuted. However, an advocate ombudsman is generally found in organizations such as long-term care amenities or agencies, and the organizations that specifically operate with juvenile offenders. An advocate ombudsman can represent the interests of constituents in terms of several policies, practiced by chartering entities, government agencies, or other organizations and can begin action when entitled in the judicial, administrative, or legislative forum.

California Department of Healthcare Services

Medi-Cal Managed Care and Mental Health Office of the Ombudsman

The Medi-Cal Managed Care and Mental Health Office of the Ombudsman helps solve problems from a neutral standpoint to ensure that our members receive all medically necessary covered services for which plans are contractually responsible. The Mental Health Ombudsman is designed to create a bridge between the Mental Health Plan system and individuals, family members and friends of individuals, in need of mental health services by providing information and assistance in navigating through the system. The Ombudsman will not automatically take sides in a complaint. We consider all sides in an impartial and objective way. It is our job to help develop fair solutions to health care access problems.

(From their website.)

D R A F T

Ventura County Behavioral Health Ombudsman (VCBHO)

Mission:

The Ventura County Behavioral Health Ombudsman (VCBHO) is designated neutral and works independently as an intermediary to assist any individual that interacts with Ventura County Behavioral Health with exploring and determining options to resolve conflicts, problematic issues, or concerns. The VCBHO provides a confidential avenue to address complaints and resolve issues at the lowest possible level. They propose policy and procedural changes when systemic issues are identified. The VCBHO's primary objective is to advocate for a fair process and fair administration of services.

Advantages of an Ombudsman:

- Cost-free services,
- An autonomous system, i.e., independent from the institution, the individual and organization,
- Reports are created (a record) while methodically addressing issues emerging under a county agency or while deploying a county program/service,
- Improper practices could be corrected, and
- An ombudsman of the county may provide reconciliation along with impartial investigation.

Disadvantages of an Ombudsman:

- An ombudsman is unable to render instantaneous solutions for very complicated problems,
- The individual with the complaint has no sway on the investigation, an ombudsman does not advocate for the individual or the county agency, or organization
- Specific decisions, made by an ombudsman, are not obligatory.

DRAFT

Ventura County Behavioral Health Ombudsman (VCBHO)

Role:

The VCBHO responds to inquiries from a variety of agencies and individuals. They may be contacted by a consumer, a family member, a community member, or staff from an agency. The VCBHO listens, answers questions, analyzes the situation and context of any complaint or issue, reviews the application of Ventura County Behavioral Health policies and procedures, advocates for the fairness of a process as opposed to advocating for an individual party, provides information and at times advice and develops options, suggests appropriate referrals, and recommends a possible resolution. The VCBHO appraises the Health Care Agency and Ventura County Behavioral Health of significant trends and may recommend changes in policies and procedures.

The VCBHO does not disclose and may not be required to disclose information provided in confidence, except to address an imminent risk of serious harm to an individual or others where there is no other responsible option. The VCBHO may disclose information relevant to the complaint when in possession of a signed release form and consent from the individual. There is no cost to receive services from the VCBHO.

The Ombudsman Workgroup recommends the Behavioral Health Advisory Board move forward again and request Ventura County Behavioral Health to create the position of an independent Ombudsman.

If the issue/complaint cannot be resolved by the VCBHO then the Ombudsman refers the individual(s) or agency staff to Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) to file a formal complaint and begin the formal state regulated grievance process.

Ventura County Behavioral Health Grievance Process

The Ventura County Behavioral Health Department's Grievance Process falls under VCBH Quality Assurance.

It has a phone line (888) 567-2122 with voicemail that is staffed by two or three clinicians; an MFT / LCSW. The staff will take incoming calls/complaints. The voicemail is monitored throughout the day. The call can be about anything and the staff gets the information from the call.

A letter is drafted acknowledging receipt of the complaint and mailed to the individual making the complaint within five days. The staff will then contact the appropriate entity, i.e., clinic to inform them of the complaint. **Under state regulations the complaint must be resolved within 90 days. The complaint is reported to the state.**

BHAB General Meeting Minutes October 19, 2020

VI. Public Comments

- Liz Warren commented on agenda item XIII.F. – Ombudsman/Peer Advocate for Assistance with Access of Services.
- Carole Shelton spoke regarding advocacy for services for a family member with mental health challenges and Intellectual/Development Disabilities (I/DD).
- Evelyn McGrath spoke regarding advocacy for services for a family member with mental health challenges and hardships.

XII New Business

F. Ombudsman / Peer Advocate Assistance with Access or Services Issues

Mr. Bhavnani suggested a motion to make a recommendation to VCBH to consider an Ombudsman or an equivalent position. He noted that this item was discussed at its August Executive Committee, was brought forward to the General meeting in September however was tabled due to lack of time. The idea would bring a formal process in place to directly assist families with resolving difficulties accessing services. Mr. Bhavnani moved to make a recommendation to VCBH to consider an Ombudsman or equivalent position to help resolve service issues; Dr. Cortese seconded. Ms. Gardner asked for additional information on how the position would be funded and implemented. Mr. Bhavnani advised that previous positions of this nature were funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Ms. Stone asked for Dr. Johnson's response on VCBH's support that was reported at a previous meeting. Dr. Johnson confirmed that discussions had taken place and that VCBH supports the concept to hire a staff member to assist with navigating the mental health system and that MHSA funding would be used. Mr. Bhavnani stressed the importance of ensuring that the person assists with health navigation and problems that may arise once services are received.

Liz Warren made a public comment regarding the wide array of work that VCBH's previous Community Liaison had done that included case management, problem solving and assisting people with housing, shelter, and food. Dr. Johnson welcomed input from Mr. Bhavnani, Liz Warren and others interested to collaborate with VCBH in writing the job description to ensure the essence of what is seen for the proposed position is captured.

Mr. Bhavnani restated the motion. The motion carried unanimously by roll call.

BHAB General Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2021

XIII Old Business

C. BHAB Ombudsman/Peer Advocate Hiring Update

Dr. Sevet Johnson noted that the position will be requested through the budget process and upon approval, VCBH will process the necessary paperwork to begin working on the job description and recruitment process.

April 26, 2022

Excerpts from April 26, 2022 (page 6 of 7) letter submitted by HCA Director Barry Zimmerman to the Ventura County Board of Supervisors requesting 55 additional positions (additions and deletions) for the Ventura County Behavioral Health Department at the request of Behavioral Health Director Dr. Sevet Johnson.

❖ Paragraph Four (page six of seven)

Access & Outreach Division

“One (1) Program Administrator III is requested to develop and work independently as the Ombudsman for VCBH and assist clients in navigating through services. This addition is offset by the deletion of one (1) Program Administrator I. One (1) Management Assistant II position is requested to support the new Access & Outreach Division Chief.”

❖ Paragraphs Three and Four (page seven of seven)

“In support of these critical behavioral health services, VCBH recommends that your Board adopt the attached resolution adding fifty-five new regular full-time equivalent positions and deleting two regular full time equivalent positions within VCBH, effective April 24, 2022, to meet the increasing caseload and program requirements described above. This Board Letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, Auditor-Controller's Office, County Counsel and Human Resources. If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact VCBH Assistant Director Loretta Denering or HCA Assistant Chief Financial Officer Narcisa Egan at (805) 981-1881.”

Ventura County Behavioral Health

Board Letter Summary of Contracts for March 2023

| Board Date | Contractor | Amount | Term | Description |
|------------|------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| 3/14/2023 | Idea Engineering, Inc. | \$552,000 | March 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 | Agreement with Idea Engineering, Inc. for Digital, Social, and Media Marketing Services. Over the last ten (10) years suicide has emerged as a major public health challenge, and the prevention of suicide has become a national, State, and local priority, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In California, prevention strategies include: (1) reducing access to lethal means among those at risk of suicide; (2) improving access and delivery for mental health care; and, importantly, (3) identifying and supporting people at risk through public awareness campaigns. Media campaigns are a key strategy to reach large numbers of people in order to help understand and effectively respond to the risk. Nearly two-thirds of those who have a diagnosable mental illness do not seek treatment because of fears about stigma and discrimination. Clear portrayals of the risk of suicide and how family members and loved ones can help to counter the effects of stigma and bring more people at risk closer to available care. VCBH is ramping up efforts to improve community awareness of suicide prevention, especially among higher-risk groups within the county. In collaboration with local stakeholders, VCBH proposes launching a prevention campaign that capitalizes on high-visibility media channels, including the electronic billboard at the Ventura Auto Center, local malls and shopping centers, mobile billboards, transit systems and radio stations. The STAY suicide prevention campaign is designed to reach several high-risk groups including military and first responders, LGBTQ+, teens middle-aged men and women, and older adults. In addition, the campaign will reframe the conversation around suicide in a way that is accessible to all viewers. By asking people to stay and reach out, it gives critical time for resources to be enacted and lives to be saved. The goal of the STAY campaign is for people to give themselves time, and find the support to end their pain, not their life. Source of Funding is Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act). |