

RIVERSIDE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 3, 2021 | 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND INTRODUCTIONS – Vice Chair, April Jones called the Behavioral Health Commission (BHC) meeting to order at 12:01 pm.

Commissioner attendance was taken by roll-call.

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS – Rick Gentillalli expressed his thanks to Ms. Jones for hosting the day's meeting as he is having some difficulty with his computer and internet connection.

Ms. Jones added that in their Legislative Committee meeting, they discussed the importance of Commissioners speaking up and sharing concerns from the community to ensure they provide appropriate input and feedback to the Department.

COMMISSION MEMBERS REMARKS – Dr. Walter Haessler expressed his interest in speaking to the grand jury regarding a personal matter and asked them to coordinate with the Liaison and provide them with their contact information.

Dr. Haessler shared a story in the news regarding Gabby Petito and Brian Laundrie – a social media couple documenting their “vanlife” journey through the United States. Their story gained national attention in August 2021, when Gabby Petito was reported missing and Brian Laundrie raised suspicions when he drove the van they shared back to his hometown in Florida and refused to share/discuss Ms. Petito's whereabouts.

Ms. Petito's remains were found on September 19, two days after Mr. Laundrie was also reported missing. After a month long manhunt, Mr. Laundrie's remains were found in a wooded park in Sarasota County. It was determined that Ms. Petito died due to manual strangulation and Mr. Laundrie died due to a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

Dr. Haessler shared this story to bring attention to “toxic relationships” and how they can severely impact an individual's mental health. Dr. Haessler stated that if Ms. Petito and Mr. Laundrie never met, they may very well still be alive. Dr. Haessler wondered if there was a way to include this issue in terms of outreach and our programs stating that at times, the issue is not with the individual, but the relationships they are in.

Jose Campos shared that he recently learned of DPSS having difficulty finding placement for youths and children detained from their families. Foster care placements are in short supply and some youths were placed in offices in the meantime. These cases are rare, however, not as rare as they used to be. Mr. Campos asked if there are mental health supports available for families that can't find placement. Mr. Campos also asked about vaccinations and if/when they will become available in our clinics.

Janine Moore responded to Mr. Campos' inquiry regarding home placements stating that there is indeed a growing struggle around finding appropriate short-term residential

placements and/or foster homes for youths, particularly youths with high-risk needs. They had a meeting with DPSS and discussed the topic in October and are continuing to work on finding a way to address the issue.

Dr. Chang responded to the vaccine inquiry and stated that RUHS-Public Health has not yet provided information regarding when and where vaccines will be available. They are currently working on contingencies when things become available and will provide more information as they come.

Greg Damewood and Brenda Scott shared they attended the grand opening of the Arlington Recovery Center (ARC). Ms. Scott stated that it's wonderful to have something like this in the Western Region and hopes that the Department will consider putting one in every region.

Ms. Scott shared that she attended the Hemet City Council meeting where they approved a \$1.5 million project to fund homeless outreach efforts. Ms. Scott stated that the Council discussed building some housing and assembling a homeless outreach team.

Ms. Scott shared that on November 5, there is a training through California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions. They will be discussing 988 and moving towards an effective Behavioral Health crisis care continuum.

Ms. Scott shared that at their Mid-County Regional Board meeting, they inquired about how to grow their membership and came up with a suggestion of placing ads on the paper. Ms. Scott asked the Liaison to see if this is something management will consider doing.

PUBLIC REMARKS – Julianne Stewart reported that Building Up Lives is NOT closed. There have been inquiries and Ms. Stewart explained that there was a short period of time that they had to close the foodbank because they were working with the landlord about the space they were using. They reopened the facility shortly after and are providing food, clothing, blankets, hygiene items, cleaning items, and more. Their hours are 12:00pm – 7:00pm and 2:00pm – 6:00pm for the foodbank. For essentials, they are open 24/7; individuals must send a text message to (951) 550-5466, approximately 5-10 minutes before arriving to have someone meet them for resources. Building Up Lives is located at 24-441 Sunnymead Boulevard in Moreno Valley.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as written.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Dr. Chang reported that the Arlington Recovery Center (ARC) and Sobering Center recently opened. A video was released for the opening that included a virtual tour from Marcus Canon and April Marier. A few dignitaries and officials also shared a few words in the video, explaining how the ARC and Sobering Center can help the community. Supervisor Chuck Washington and District Attorney, Mike Hestrin were among the officials included in the video. There were also some staff that shared their own personal experiences and how a program/facility like this could have helped them and how it will help others in the

future. Dr. Chang agreed with Ms. Scott about having more of these facilities in other regions throughout Riverside County. They recognize the need for these facilities and there are discussions around the expansion to other regions. Dr. Chang noted that the Riverside facility is remarkable and encouraged everyone to watch and share the video for more information.

Dr. Chang gave an update on the Behavioral Health infrastructure funding, which was included in the governor's May Revise Budget. They will be accepting applications for the first round of funding in January and our staff is working on a submission for their consideration. There have been a great deal of conversations surrounding competitive allocations and how best to bring more services, facilities, and structure to Riverside County.

Dr. Chang thanked the Desert Healthcare District for assembling a group that will begin studying the mental health/behavioral health issues in the desert for a much larger perspective (e.g. community perspectives, vocational training, workforce, etc.). They had their first steering committee meeting on Tuesday, November 2 and have formed some work groups to begin their research. Tori St. Johns and Bea Gonzalez are among the members of the group.

NEW BUSINESS

1. TRANSFORMING OUR PARTNERSHIP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (TOPSS) PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Janine Moore, Deputy Director of Children's and Transitional Age Youth Programs, gave a program overview presentation on the implementation of the Mental Health Student Services Act grant. Student mental health has always been a big topic of discussion and in 2019, Supervisor Perez and Supervisor Washington decided to convene a work group after receiving data related to youth suicide and self-harm.

In early 2020, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) released an RFP to expand school and county behavioral health partnerships. There was only enough funding for two awardees in the State and unfortunately, Riverside County was not one of the recipients. Ms. Moore explained that for several months after, the discussion and effort surrounding the implementation of student services in schools continued. Ms. Moore and her staff thoughtfully developed a system gathering feedback from students, parents, and school staff from every district. Dr. Chang shared the project idea with the Riverside Community Health Foundation and immediately received support by applying for two grants. This helped fund a parent partner position at West Valley High School in Hemet. Ms. Moore noted that both grant funders were physical health related agencies, which highlights the significant shift in recognizing the importance of youth mental health.

In the 2021 Budget Act, the governor included an additional \$205 million to fund additional awardees due to the growing awareness of the pandemic's impact on student mental health. With the increased allocation, Ms. Moore received a call from MHSOAC offering the TOPSS funding RUHS applied for last year, increasing the Department's ability to

provide mental health services to students. Every awardee of the TOPSS grant in the state has to address the following goals in some fashion: Preventing mental illnesses from becoming severe and disabling; Improving timely access to services for underserved populations; Providing outreach to families, employers, primary care healthcare providers, and others to recognize the early signs of potentially severe and disabling mental illnesses; Reducing the stigma associated with the diagnosis of a mental illness or seeking mental health services; Reducing discrimination against people with mental illness; and Preventing negative outcomes in targeted populations. In an effort not to deviate from the focus of the program, which can be fairly easy to do as other needs and concerns arise, the group agreed upon a Mission and Vision statements. Their Mission states, "Improving student and family wellness through collaborative behavioral health partnerships that increase access, reduce barriers, and coordinate care. The Vision of the program is to, "enhance and empower student well-being by transforming partnerships among providers, youth, and families."

The TOPSS Program Project goals are to: Expand the RUHS-BH direct service delivery and coordination of care for youth and families served in Hemet Unified School District, Riverside Unified School District (RUSD), and Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE); Improve the knowledge bases of behavioral health signs and symptoms, increase awareness of signs of suicide, and how to intervene and reduce stigma related to mental illness; and Improve access to behavioral health information and resources through technology. Steps being taken to achieve these goals are to: assemble an Executive Governance Group; assemble sub-committees under the Governance Group; and implement the Whole Person Health Score Tool.

The Executive Governance Group was actually established prior to the award of the TOPSS grant. All agencies involved wanted to move forward with the work even though there was no grant funding at the time. The role of the Executive Governance Group is to collaboratively oversee all aspects of the proposed plan in an ongoing way as well as utilize data to adjust services and support to students and families. The Governance Group has participation from each of the partner agencies – RUHS-BH, Hemet Unified, RUSD, and RCOE. Additionally, each district has also committed to identify one parent and one student that will join this group in an ongoing manner. The group has held strategic planning meetings in July and August and will continue to meet twice a month until January 2022, where they'll meet once a month. Ms. Moore noted that these meeting schedules are subject to change based on what the needs are and time of year. The group has also developed their own set of bylaws and have elected their group's officials to help lead and facilitate meetings and activities. Ms. Moore announced that BHC Vice Chair, April Jones, is serving as the President of the Executive Governance Group. Ms. Moore noted that the development of this group is powerful in that it allows for equity among all the partners, each with an equal footing in the decision-making and planning.

The assembly of subcommittees under the Executive Governance Group will be critical to

support program limitation and give opportunities for specific stakeholders to become involved in identifying and creating immediate resources for youth and families. The subcommittees will include representatives from the Executive Governance Group as well as key experts in available resources for youth and families and other community partners whose participation will facilitate the accomplishment and project rules. Examples of members identified thus far include healthcare providers, insurance providers (e.g. IEHP, Molina, etc.), DPSS, other local behavioral health agencies, contract providers, local faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations.

The last step to achieving their goal is the implementation of the Whole Person Health Score Tool. The Whole Person Health Score is a tool that was developed under the umbrella of RUHS and utilized for adults coming in for their primary care visits at the Community Health Center. The Whole Person Health Score is one way of looking at an individual's overall health. There are six letters in the Whole Person Health Score and each letter represents a different dimension of health. Each letter ranges from A - Z ("A" being the best and "Z" being the most concerning). They were able to develop a version of this tool that focuses on adolescence. Last year, Hemet Unified utilized this version for their high school students and sent them a link via email while their students were still in distance learning. Hemet Unified students will be participating again this year and will have two weeks to complete the form. Ms. Moore noted that this tool is designed to help drive engagement and identify needed services and supports for students and families. This helps provide a visual of areas that may be of concern and really engage in a conversation around what their strengths and needs are.

As they receive funding for the project, Ms. Moore stated that San Jacinto Clinic staff, along with a few new positions, will transition to become the TOPSS teams. The transition will happen slowly to make sure we do not lose any of our current consumers. TOPSS teams will consist of one clinical therapist, two parent partners, and one transition age youth peer. The teams will be embedded in each of the high schools in Hemet Unified School District. The grant funds one clinical therapist hired by RUSD for their newly established Wellness Center. The teams in Hemet will support students transitioning back to the Hemet Unified comprehensive high schools from the RCOE alternative education high school. School-based personnel will be provided a minimum of 24 hours of trainings per year including Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), SafeTALK, and Youth Mental Health First Aid. A minimum of 12 series of classes will be provided to parents/caregivers per year including SafeTALK, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Triple P Parenting, Nurturing Parenting and Educate, Equip, and Support (EES). A mobile app will be developed that is user friendly and customized for this project, allowing youth and parents/caregivers to access pertinent information regarding the services of care available and to normalize conversations around behavioral health and care access.

Daryl Terrell asked what the criteria were when choosing school districts and was concerned that Moreno Valley was neither mentioned nor included in the group of school

districts participating in TOPSS. Ms. Moore explained to Mr. Terrell that Patty Rucker and staff from Moreno Valley Unified School District attended the first few meetings for the project, however, they made a decision as a district not to continue. Ms. Moore explained that she was not given a reason in terms of why they made the decision to opt out. Mr. Terrell expressed his frustration and stated that this is why he continues to advocate for his district. Commissioners Ms. Jones and Ms. Gonzalez responded to Mr. Terrell in support of his efforts and stated that although things aren't moving as quickly or in the direction he would like, continuous and persistent advocacy is key. Ms. Jones and Ms. Gonzalez encouraged Mr. Terrell to continue advocating and that the Commission will continue to speak up and support him in this effort.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1.) MHSA UPDATE: Sheree Summers, Administrative Services Manager of Workforce Education and Training, presented this quarter's Employee Recognition Winners – Josie Hernandez and Steve Thompson. Ms. Summers shared a video featuring Elizabeth Del Rio, Mental Health Manager of CARES Line, who nominated Ms. Hernandez and Mr. Thompson for their ability to maintain their composure in the middle of a crisis and their excellent customer service. One day they received a call from a consumer who was feeling suicidal at work. The consumer had a weapon (knife) and called the CARES Line seeking support. They immediately coordinated an emergency plan and because there was a weapon involved, Ms. Hernandez contacted emergency services. Mr. Thompson was able to remain on the line with the client to make sure they remained calm as dispatch arrived. This particular call showed Ms. Hernandez and Mr. Thompson's ability to work as a team. Even though neither of them were therapists, they were able to remain calm and compassionate with the consumer through the whole ordeal. In the end, the situation was de-escalated and the consumer was taken care of. Ms. Del Rio expressed her gratitude and appreciation for her staff as they've managed to continue working through the pandemic and provide excellent customer service to our consumers.
- 2.) SAPT UPDATE: April Marier, Behavioral Health Services Administrator of Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program, shared that they recently finished their Red Ribbon Week. Ms. Marier thanked the Prevention Team and Friday Night Live for all the work they did and having another successful event. The theme of this year's Red Ribbon Week was "Drug Free Looks Like Me..." and was held the week of October 23 – 29. They organized 13 speaking engagements at a number of schools throughout Riverside County. They also coordinated daily school activities, which they held before and after school. They attended rallies, participated in a carnival and a Trunk or Treat.

Ms. Marier also shared about the opening of the Sobering Center. Their first consumer simply walked in from the street and inquired about services. Ms. Marier noted that the consumer was walking down the street and saw the "Sobering Center" sign and decided to walk in. The consumer was completely open to receiving services and has been working with staff to getting screened, stabilized, and placed into further treatment. The consumer

has a co-occurring disorder, so they were able to connect him to both substance use and mental health services. Ms. Marier stated that there was a small issue with the ARC license and are waiting for it to come through for the facility to open. This will make it much easier to transition people into residential treatment.

Ms. Marier reported that they have also been working with Riverside County Overdose Data to Action (RODA). SAPT staff have been providing monthly reports regarding overdose deaths within our county. They recently completed their first evaluation brief, which is available for review. The evaluation brief includes what they have accomplished in the last two years and what their goals are for next year. A notable milestone is the establishment of a multi-disciplinary overdose surveillance team, which includes the Coroner's Office. It's a robust surveillance reporting measure that assist them greatly with accurate data collection. Despite the significant challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, it did not slow them down in their efforts. This effort not only includes Public Health, but also Emergency Medical Services Agency, the County Sheriff Coroner's Bureau, and of course RUHS-BH. Ms. Marier noted that they are all working together to find areas they can grow, expand, educate, and provide prevention with regard to overdoses. Ms. Marier encouraged everyone to review the evaluation brief for more information and to contact her and staff for any questions or concerns.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

DESERT REGIONAL BOARD: Richard Divine reported that they had a meeting on October 12 and received a wonderful presentation on Riverside County's Suicide Prevention Coalition and Strategic Plan from Diana Gutierrez. Aurelio Sanchez was also present, to provide the military perspective on the topic. They adopted a family for the holiday season and announced the new slate of executive officers for 2022.

MID-COUNTY REGIONAL BOARD: Kim McElroy reported that they met on October 7 and Suzanne Juarez Williamson gave a presentation on the Full Service Partnership (FSP) Programming. Ms. McElroy noted that they were pleased to hear that services have increased and that they will continue to monitor the activities in FSP.

A new applicant, Dr. Jennifer Woodworth, recently completed her third meeting attendance requirement and hopes to appoint her to the Board soon. Lastly, they are holding their election for 2022 executive officers and will be presenting the new officers in January.

WESTERN REGIONAL BOARD: Greg Damewood reported that they continue to assist those with behavioral health issues in the western region. Minutes will be available for review after they are approved at their meeting later in the afternoon.

ADULT SYSTEM OF CARE: Brenda Scott reported that Shannon McCleerey gave a presentation on the Peer Recovery Center (PRC). The Recovery International Wellness Centers were closing and consumers are being transitioned to the PRCs. Ms. Scott noted that they will continue to

monitor the activities of PRC as consumers transition. There are 20 open peer positions, which they are currently hiring.

They received a brief update on ARC and Sobering Center. Venise Russ reported that the supervisors from Hemet and Lake Elsinore Clinics resigned and they are currently trying to recruit for locations. Desert staff reported that Supervisor Perez will be touring the Blythe Facility.

They are working on a couple of their goals – increasing membership and assembling an ambassador work group. Ms. Scott and Lisa Morris discussed how to continue the ambassador programs at some of the other FSPs.

CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE: Tori St. Johns reported that the group met on October 26 and they received presentations from Janine Moore and Vickie White. Their November meeting will be held on December 7 as the Thanksgiving Holiday falls on their usual meeting day.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE: Greg Damewood reported that their next meeting is on November 10. Minutes will be available for review and all are invited to attend.

HOUSING COMMITTEE: Ms. Scott reported that the group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 11:00 am. Marcus Cannon gave an update on No Place Like Home and CalAIM. They will have six services go live on January 1 and the group continues their discussion regarding a Room and Board Coalition.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Ms. Jones reported that they had a discussion regarding COVID vaccines and how divisive the topic has become. While we want to respect people's choice of "this is my body, I'll vaccinate if I choose to..." there is also the public pressure of flattening the curve. This dichotomy has created more separation, anxiety, and tension resulting in correlated violence and community interruptions. Ms. Jones noted that she and the group would like to learn if the county is able to address these issues.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: None

OLDER ADULT SYSTEM OF CARE COMMITTEE: Ms. Scott reported that the group meets on the second Tuesday of the month at noon and all are invited to attend. Ms. Scott stated that they would like to have people involved in the program to attend along with their family members, so they can learn about their personal experiences and gain feedback. They also had a presentation regarding PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives) from Jennifer Lopez.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE: Mr. Terrell reported that there are now 32 small kiosks set up in clinics throughout the county. After clients see their providers, they are guided by staff to the kiosk to answer five short questions in either English or Spanish. This gives the consumer the ability to provide feedback regarding services they received and the clinic's system of care.

VETERANS COMMITTEE: Rick Gentillalli reported that he also had some technical difficulty leading the Veterans Committee meeting. However, Mr. Gentillalli was able to manage with the assistance of the secretary. Minutes are available for review and their next meeting will be held on January 5 from 10:00 am – 11:30 am.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

ADJOURN: The Behavioral Health Commission meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm.

Tori St. Johns, BHC Secretary
Maria Roman, Recording Secretary

FY 2021/22 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION ATTENDANCE ROSTER

MEMBERS	JUL	SEP	OCT	NOV	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
Anindita Ganguly, District 2	✓	✓	✓	✓						
April Jones, District 3	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Beatriz Gonzalez, District 4	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Brenda Scott, District 3	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Carole Schaudt, District 4	✓	✓	✓	A						
Daryl Terrell, District 5	✓	A	✓	✓						
Debbie Rose, BOS Rep. Dist. 2	✓	✓	✓	A						
Greg Damewood, District 5	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Jose Campos, District 2	✓	✓	A	✓						
Paul Vallandigham, District 5	ML	ML	ML	✓						
Richard Divine, District 2 (<i>Redist. 4</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Rick Gentillalli, District 3	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Tim Barton, District 1	✓	✓	A	A						
Victoria St. Johns, District 4	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Dr. Walter Haessler, District 1	✓	✓	✓	✓						

Present = ✓ | Absent = A | Medical Leave = ML

Minutes and agendas of meetings are available upon request and online at www.rcdmh.org. To request copies, please contact the BHC Liaison at (951) 955-7141 or email at MYRoman@rcmhd.org.