

# Wellness Matters

Your Wellness ♦ Your Way ♦ Your Community

An E-Journal of San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services

January 2016

## A Year in Review: Behavioral Health & Recovery Services 2015 Highlights

### Share Your Housing Story

Are you a BHRS client with a story about how housing has impacted your health and well-being? Share your story with the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Commission and help address housing issues in San Mateo County!

February 3rd, 3-5 PM

San Mateo County Health System, 225 37th Avenue, Room 100, San Mateo.



See page 4 for more info.

As in previous years, we have identified ten highlights for 2015. Narrowing the list is never an easy task, however this list provides a snapshot of some of the new and continuing developments for BHRS in the past year. We would like to recognize all of the people—clients, family members, staff and community partners—whose passion, commitment and hard work everyday, transformed these ideas into action. **The following highlights are listed in no specific order of priority:**

### Be the One

The "Be the One" campaign works to eliminate the stigma and discrimination against people with mental health and substance use challenges through behavioral health education and awareness, story-sharing opportunities for people with lived experiences, and empowerment and community support. Since the relaunch of the Stigma Free San Mateo County as "Be the ONE" campaign in May, 305 have signed/shared a pledge (105 signed a pledge and 200 created a personal pledge – see the Be The ONE photo gallery [www.smcbhrrsblog.org/betheone](http://www.smcbhrrsblog.org/betheone) to help fight stigma.

*I will Be The ONE to...* "See

*the person first– the person with hopes and dreams, the person who lives and loves. No matter how big a problem I may have, as a person I am bigger than any problem. See me first, then my problem."*

- client

### Community Education Programs

The Parent Project® was created for individuals who care for a child or adolescent who engages in challenging behavior(s) to learn parenting skills and get information about resources and other available supports. In 2013, graduates of the Parent Project® requested more ways to get involved, build on the skills they had learned and give back to their community. This led to the creation of the **Health Ambassador Program**, which also recognizes the important role that community members serve in effectively reaching out to others. Since the inception of the Parent Project® in 2010, 516 parents have completed the 12 week program, with a graduation rate of 73%. Sixteen individuals have become Health Ambassadors, dedicating themselves to helping others, becoming a bridge between BHRS and our communities and continuing to reach their

personal goals of continued learning.

*"I am a single parent of two teenagers. When I thought my children's lives were at risk, I felt lonely with no answers to all the problems in our lives. I took the parent project class when my children were struggling, and I finally found hope. This class will help parents have a better relationship with their children, and help them succeed."* – Parent Project graduate

**Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** is a groundbreaking public education program that helps individuals identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. To date, over 2,000 individuals in San Mateo County have been certified in MHFA. At a six month follow-up with YMHA participants, more than three-quarters (77%) of school staff respondents reported having been in a situation at least once since their participation in the course, in which YMHA was relevant. And of these, 97% report that they applied Youth MHFA and 91% report that they felt they were effective.

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## Be In The Know

Visit the BHRS Blog: [www.smcbhrrsblog.org](http://www.smcbhrrsblog.org)

Get the latest news, information on events, trainings and more!

### From the Director's Desk - Stephen Kaplan, Director, BHRS

#### We Can and Must Be Better

With 2015 coming to an end and the days of 2016 yet to unfold I wonder what lies ahead. We have much to look forward to and I am cognizant of how fortunate we are in San Mateo County with the resources we have and the support from our elected officials, sister county departments, providers, and the general community. However, despite these advantages, I am greatly concerned about the seemingly endless string of senseless acts of mass murder that unthinkable is becoming our "new normal" that struck again in Paris and a few short weeks ago in San Bernardino. What differentiates the San Bernardino tragedy from the others is that the victims were our colleagues...fellow County employees, public servants. Our hearts, thoughts and prayers go to their families, friends and to their co-workers who will return to work with pain in their hearts but who will continue to devote themselves to helping others. I have extended our support to my counterpart and our colleagues in San Bernardino on behalf of our BHRS staff.

If the carnage and loss of life were not enough, these tragic events and horrific killings has precipitated a storm of vitriolic declarations, whipped up simmering prejudices and initiated calls for drastic measures in clear violation of our country's constitutional principles and guarantees. Scapegoating, targeting, isolating, and demonizing a single group of people, in this case people of Muslim faith regardless of whether they are an American citizen or not is reprehensible. Throughout history there are countless examples, Nazi Germany, South African apartheid, slavery in this country to name a few, of how this type of overt hostility travels a dangerous and slippery slope. It is appalling and disheartening that this is happening now in this country when tolerance and understanding is what is needed.

I send this message to you, my BHRS colleagues and to our stakeholders that as an organization and as individuals committed to public service and to the public good, we need to and will uphold our values honoring and respecting everyone regardless of



Stephen Kaplan

their religious beliefs. We have an ethical responsibility that we will uphold to be vigilant against any erosion of these values as we continue our work in these troublesome times. We will ensure that each and every one of our BHRS colleagues feels welcome and supportive in the workplace. And we must apply the same sensitivity and support to our clients and family members, as this might be a particularly difficult and confusing time for them.

I have great regard for you my BHRS colleagues and our providers and the ethics and values you bring to work every day. I am confident that individually and collectively we will demonstrate humility, inclusion and commitment to social justice for everyone. ☺

### Women In County Government Recognizes Corina Shortall-Enriquez

Service Connect is very proud of our Peer Support Worker Corina Shortall-Enriquez for being recognized for this year's Women in County Government (WICG) award for Public Service – The Extra Mile.

Corina was recognized for exemplifying excellent service while demonstrating reliability, flexibility and an unwavering commitment to the highest quality of support for her clients.

Corina's tireless work includes individualized case management/peer support, group facilitation, and public education/advocacy for our reentry population. She encourages clients to participate in family and community events which she helps to organize—such as an outing with their children, a concert in the park, or a trip to the gym. Corina is a skilled and thoughtful listener – and she not only promotes personal

recovery and rehabilitation, she continues to live them, working through Service Connect as both a graduate and permanent staff member.

Corina's selfless dedication to our reentry population has earned her the respect of her peers, heartfelt gratitude of her clients, and thoughtful recognition of the esteemed WICG committee. Bravo Corina! ☺

- Service Connect Team



Corina with husband Edward.

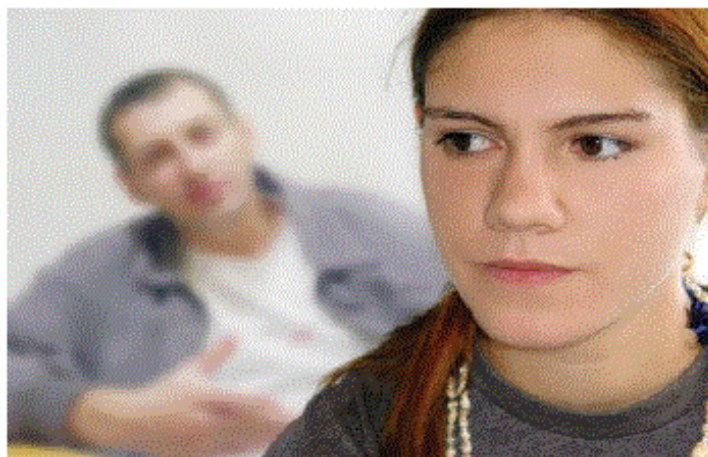
## Bipolar Disorder Early Assessment and Management Expands Eligibility

Since 2014, San Mateo County BHRS has partnered with the Felton Institute (formerly the Family Service Agency of San Francisco) to implement the Bipolar Disorder Early Assessment and Management (BEAM) Program. BEAM is designed to apply a model focused on severe mood disorders, paralleling that of the Felton Institute's Prevention and Recovery in Early Psychosis (PREP) Program that has successfully served San Mateo County residents since 2012. As such, BEAM provides an array of evidenced based practices, implemented to fidelity, that are recovery-focused and designed to move individuals toward their self-identified life-goals and the remission of their illness.

BEAM was originally developed to serve San Mateo County residents experiencing early symptoms of Bipolar I Disorder. In February 2015, the BEAM program eligibility criteria was expanded to include individuals diagnosed with Bipolar II Disorder, as its associated symptoms can often be a precursor to Bipolar I. With the goal of improving accessibility to services, BEAM is currently expanding the eligibility criteria to serve individuals diagnosed with all mood disorders with psychotic features (including Major Depressive Disorder with Psychotic Features and other Affective Psychoses), incorporating the expertise implemented at PREP for early identification and treatment of psychotic symptoms, with effective treatments for mood disorders.

As a result of its expanded criteria, BEAM expects to serve more San Mateo County residents, and has launched an intensive outreach and education cam-

paign targeted to individuals and organizations serving youth and young adults throughout the community in order to create an early detection and referral network. The materials presented reduce stigma by clarifying myths and facts about mental illness and provide tools to distinguish normal stress reactions from the early warning signs of bipolar and other severe mood disorders. The BEAM presentation can also be tailored for specific audi-



ences. Presentations and materials (e.g. tri-fold brochures) are readily available in English and Spanish, and brochures can be made available in a variety of commonly-spoken languages in our service area upon request.

Funded through Measure A, BEAM provides evidence-based interventions to all San Mateo County residents between the ages of 14 through 35, who are experiencing symptoms of Bipolar Disorder, Major Depression with Psychotic Features, or other severe mood disorders with psychotic features, within the first two years of onset and regardless of insurance or ability to pay. BEAM services include structured research-based diagnostic assessment, individual psychothera-

py (CBTp, CBT-BD), strength-based care management, medication support, educational and vocational support, family support groups, and Multifamily Psych educational Groups (MFG). Individuals and families are encouraged to engage in all phases of treatment, following the individual's lead, and to become strong partners in the wellness and recovery of their loved ones.

BEAM services are offered for up to two years, and

enrolled individuals experience significant reduction in number of psychiatric emergency visits and hospitalizations. Individuals are encouraged to engage in services and work towards meaningful goals developed in collaboration with their treatment team and graduations from BEAM are associated with improved functionality, symptom reduction, and the individual's readiness to move on from services.

For more information, to make a referral, or to schedule a presentation, call PREP/BEAM San Mateo at (650) 458-0026. Having a formal diagnosis is not required when making a referral to BEAM services. ♪

- Adriana Furuzawa,  
Division Director, PREP



**Mental Health Services Act Update** – Doris Estremera, Manager of Strategic Operations

**MHSA Annual Update**

The San Mateo County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission (MHSARC) held a Public Hearing on the MHSA Annual Update FY 2015-2016 on Wednesday, December 2, 2015. The public review/comment period ended Friday, December 4, 2015. The latest draft plan and presentation to the MHSARC can be downloaded from the MHSA website, [www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa](http://www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa).

**Innovation Projects**

We received ideas through the MHSA Three-Year Plan process, the Steering Committee prioritized projects for possible funding, and a Letter of Interest process further identified capacity and interest. The following projects are moving forward to a Request for Proposal (RFP):

- Health Ambassador Program for Youth (HAP-Y) - released December 15, 2015.
- LGBTQ coordinated services - expected release January 15 2016.

The RFP for these services can be viewed at and down-

loaded by going to [www.smhealth.org/bhrs/rfp](http://www.smhealth.org/bhrs/rfp), you can also sign up to receive email updates. If unable to download, paper copies of the RFP may be requested from Mary Vozikes via email – [mvozikes@smcgov.org](mailto:mvozikes@smcgov.org). All interested parties are invited to attend the non-mandatory proposers’ conference, see the appropriate RFP for details.

**New State Regulations for Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) and Innovations (INN)**

The State of California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC), adopted new PEI and INN Regulations, which identify new service categories and requirements for programming, new strategy areas to include as part of programming and expanded reporting and evaluation requirements. The full regulations text can be found at the MHSOAC website, [www.mhsoac.ca.gov](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov).

**MHSA Steering Committee**

The MHSA Steering Committee makes recommendations about the planning and services development process of

MHSA. As a group, the MHSA Steering Committee assure that MHSA planning reflects local diverse needs and priorities, contains the appropriate balance of services within available resources and meets the criteria and goals established. A current list of MHSA Steering Committee members and the Roles and Responsibilities document can be found on the MHSA website, [www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa](http://www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa).

The MHSA Steering Committee will meet twice a year in November and February during Implementation Phase: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2017. As we begin the Planning Phase, January 2017 – April 2017 for the next three years of MHSA services there may be one or two additional meetings to allow for more engagement in the CPP process and making recommendations. If you are interested in joining the Steering Committee please contact me, Doris Estremera at [mhsa@smcgov.org](mailto:mhsa@smcgov.org) or (650) 573-2889. ☺

**Special Meeting : Share Your Housing Story**



*How does housing impact your health and recovery?*

The San Mateo County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Commission (MHSARC) wants to hear from BHRS clients about how housing in San Mateo County can affect mental health and the recovery process.

Give your feedback and help address housing issues in San Mateo County! Clients, family members, providers and staff welcome to attend.

**Wednesday, February 3rd, 3:00 - 5:00 pm**

Health Services Building, 225 37th Ave., Room 100, San Mateo.

*Unable to attend and want to share your story?*

Send your story to Chantae Rochester:

[CRochester@smcgov.org](mailto:CRochester@smcgov.org) or BHRS, 225 37th Ave, San Mateo Questions? Call 650.573.2544.

## In Memory of George S. Culores

Resource advocate, compassionate responder, board member, mentor, brother, friend, gentleman...these are all "labels" to describe our constant supporter, George Steven Culores. Such a sharp dresser- a fedora, camel hair coat and dandy scarf, when the weather turned cold. We never knew whether he was coming from a special event, on his way to one or simply coming to see us.

George has been described by those who knew him well as kind, knowledgeable, patient, passionate, sincere, and always having an endless supply of peppermints for those who were fortunate enough to cross his path. He cared about his family, friends and greater community. As a resource advocate, George had an amazing knowledge of support services for those seeking assistance. As the Officer of Education and information for Heart and Soul, George

was excited about the prospects of taking center participants on shopping trips to the local supermarkets and showing them how to get the most out of their dollar, while making healthy choices. To help Heart and Soul's participants, he offered to show them how to reach our new location using public transportation.

As a regular attendee of Heart and Soul board meetings, NAMI general meetings, and San Mateo county's Mental Health & Substance Abuse Recovery Commission, George was always vocal about advocacy issues with regards to mental wellness. George had a spirit and compassion that will be missed in San Mateo County. At Heart and Soul, his presence will be missed as his spirit lives on in our dear memories. ♡

- Heart & Soul Staff



George S. Culores



*Note: At the January 6 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Commission meeting, members are expected to approve naming the Consumer Hall of Fame award in honor of George S. Culores.*

## Furry Friends Visit North County's Care Group

North County's Adult Care group had some very special visitors this month—Hunter, Sadie and Pasha from the Peninsula Humane Society! Participants of the Care group, a social rehabilitation group for individuals with significant functional impairments due to mental illness, had a chance to spend time with these therapy-trained dogs and their handlers. Members of the group were delighted by the visit and openly shared how animals, past loved pets, have helped them go through some of their darkest times. It's not unusual to read numerous literature on the benefits of pet-assisted therapy in decreasing anxiety, improving mood and promoting healthy

attachments. But it is quite an experience witnessing firsthand how the presence of a gentle animal brightens the faces of those who battle severe mental illness.

A special thanks to the Peninsula Humane Society/ SPCA, Hunter, Sadie and Pasha and their handlers, Bruce, Valerie and Andrew for their visit and to North's MSW intern, Jennifer Wyron for working hard to make this event happen. ♡

- Chummy Sevilla



Hunter and his handler, Valerie.

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission Meeting**

**Wednesday, January 6**

3:00 – 5:00 pm  
San Mateo County Health System  
225 W. 37th Avenue, Room 100, San Mateo

*Consumer Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony*

Commission meetings are open to the public and are generally held the first Wednesday of the month. For location or more information, call 650.573.2544 or visit: [www.smchealth.org/MHSARC](http://www.smchealth.org/MHSARC)



**Trainings**

**Grand Rounds February 23**  
12:15-1:30 pm  
“Bridging Spirituality within Clinical Practice”  
Dr. Barbara Weissman, Dr. Paul Yang, Dr. Farah Zaidi, Renee Prior-Johnson, William Kruse. 225 W. 37th St., Room 100, San Mateo.

**January 8**  
*Trans 102: Beyond the Basics* for clinical/direct service staff. Daly City. Register via LMS.

**January 14 & 15 or June 16 & 17**  
*ASIST: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills—2 Day Training* Daly City. Contact Emmy Naranjo-Cabatic at [enaranjo-cabatic@smcgov.org](mailto:enaranjo-cabatic@smcgov.org) for an application.

See Training Calendar for more info : [www.smcbhersblog.org/bhrs-calendar-staff-and-provider-trainings/](http://www.smcbhersblog.org/bhrs-calendar-staff-and-provider-trainings/)  
Questions about Trainings? See the training calendar linked below or contact Kimberly Westrick at [c\\_kwestrick@smcgov.org](mailto:c_kwestrick@smcgov.org) or 650-573-2565.

**Congratulations**

- **Alexandra Barcelo**, Interface, on passing her LMFT exam.
- **Medicated Assisted Treatment team** - for their STAR’s Award in the Program Performance category. The MAT initiative is earning accolades for partnering with the Emergency Department and others to bring new clients onto the path to successful recovery and health.
- **Coastside Clinic Staff** - for their STARS award in the Customer Service category for using technology to make psychiatry services available to Coastside residents to access.

**Employee Service Awards 10 Years**

- **Stella Chau**, AOD
- **Cristina Limin**, MIS
- **Glenda Masis**, Interface
- **Aurora Pena**, Youth Services Center
- **Mary Stavv**, EPA Community Counseling Center

**Welcome**

- **Jenifer Paraiso** - new Program Specialist at Canyon Oaks Youth Center, joining them from the school based team.

**Employee Spotlight**



**Stephen Kaplan**  
BHRS Director  
**Hometown:**  
Detroit, Michigan  
**Years at BHRS/SMC:**  
8 years/11 years

**What do you do?**  
I am responsible for the overall BHRS operation including clinical services, finance, and administration. My main day to day activities include plan-

ning, meeting with stakeholders (clients, family members, staff, providers), monitoring overall BHRS performance and liaising with the Department of Health Care Services.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Meeting with consumer/clients and family members to learn about their lived experiences, to hear of their incredible courage and resiliency; learning from staff and providers about their work and their challenges; knowing (and seeing) that we have great staff and providers doing tremendous work with amazing passion and commitment.

**Most rewarding/memorable experience:**

There have been many but to name a few of the more recent

ones I would include the conception and evolution of Voices of Recovery, the reorganization of Heart and Soul, the opening of the Clubhouse, the implementation of the Integrated Medication Assisted Treatment project, the Cordilleras rebuilding project, the Be The One campaign, and the progress of Service Connect.

**Favorite hobbies/activities:**

Playing golf, movies, walking with our dogs (Charlie the boxer and Zeke the pekinese) watching sports and doing "fix up" projects around the house.

**“If I weren’t in my current role, I’d be a...”**

Director of Athletics at the University of Michigan. ☺

**Q-Tip for Quality** - Holly Severson, RN MSN

**Onward and Upward**

Quality Management has had an eventful year! We thank everyone who has worked with us in 2015 to improve the services provided by Behavioral Health & Recovery Services. This includes BHRS staff, contractors, clients and family members, and community partners who support the vital work of our system.

We want to thank all of our QIC members and make special note that several System of Care (SOC) Contractors and

Lived Experience Client and Family Advocates have joined the Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) this year. We look forward to having your diverse perspectives inform the policy and system-level work of the QIC in the months ahead.

We appreciate the dedicated frontline work of our clinicians, contractors and staff to better document the quality services that BHRS delivers every day. We also appreciate the leadership of our directors, managers and supervisors— their

support provides the foundation upon which our system rests.

Thank you all for your efforts in 2015. QM looks forward to continuing our collaboration in 2016!

*QM always appreciates any feedback or ideas you'd like to share with us.*



**BHRS Year in Review**

*(Continued from page 1)*

tive in applying Youth MHFA.

*"I recently used my YMHA training to ask a middle school student whether she was thinking about suicide. Before the training, I thought I would be putting the idea into a young person's head. Because of the training, I felt like I could ask the question with confidence. She received crisis-level intervention and continues to receive treatment."*

- Elizabeth Gray, Assistant Principal, San Mateo Foster City School District

**Community Service Areas**

The Community Service Areas (CSA) have been working to establish local Field Crisis Teams to address the complex needs of individuals in the community who have come to the attention of community stakeholders. The teams work to identify possible resources and strategies to assist the person in need.

As an example, Central CSA's Field Crisis Team has been effective in engaging a number of individuals in need of services, serving as a consultative team on how to ap-

proach complex behavioral health and law enforcement issues and in identifying and addressing some significant community needs. Members of the Central CSA Field Crisis team, include Adult Resource Management, Central Adult, Aging and Adult Services, In-Vision Shelter Network, StarVista, First Chance Sobering Station, Mobile Support team, IMAT team, and police officers from local police departments.

**Laura's Law Adopted in San Mateo County**

The Board of Supervisors approved the implementation of Laura's Law in June 2015, which provides for an adult living with a serious mental illness to be referred to the court for consideration of a court order for Assisted Outpatient Treatment. Eligibility criteria includes: 1) unable to "survive safely" in the community without "supervision" 2) has a history of "lack of compliance with treatment" as evidenced by at least one of the following: a) been hospitalized/incarcerated two or more times in the last 36 months due to mental illness or b) demonstrated violent behavior towards self or oth-

ers in the last 48 months, 3) has been offered treatment on a voluntary basis and refused it, and 4) is "deteriorating." Terry Wilcox-Rittgers, Clinical Services Manager II has been selected to lead the development and implementation of "Laura's Law" with an expected start date in the spring.

**Medicated Assisted Treatment Expansion**

In 2012, BHRS launched a pilot to study the effectiveness of medication assisted treatment (MAT) using Vivitrol to treat individuals with alcohol disorders. This innovative approach resulted in a significant reduction in alcohol use among participants and a remarkable decrease in the utilization of high cost emergency hospital services. Subsequently, the Health Plan of San Mateo partnered with BHRS to implement and expand the Integrated Medication Assisted Treatment program with an emphasis on the San Mateo Medical Center's (SMMC) Emergency Department, Psychiatric Emergency Services, Primary Care and Adult Probation.

Case managers are embed-

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Next QIC Meeting:**

Wednesday

January 13, 2016

10:00 am–Noon

2000 Alameda de las

Pulgas, Suite 200, Room

201, San Mateo

**NAMI Basics Education Program**

*The Fundamentals of Caring for You, Your Family and Your Child with Mental Illness*

Free six week education course for parents and other family caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness taught by trained teachers who are also parents/caregivers of individuals who developed the symptoms of mental illness prior to age 13 years.

Classes begin:

**January 13**

6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

1650 Borel Place,

Suite 130, San

Mateo, CA 94402

Contact Claudia Saggese:

650.573.2189 or

NAMI Office:

650.638.0800

See flyer for info at

[www.smcbhrsblog.org](http://www.smcbhrsblog.org)



### BHRS Year in Review

(Continued from page 7)

ded with staff from the aforementioned sites to screen, assess and refer clients to IMAT and other behavioral health services. The IMAT clinic, opening in early January and operated by HealthRight-360 in downtown San Mateo, will also screen and clients but most importantly will be the main location for providing the medication assisted treatment.

*" It's been great, it's giving me the boost I needed. This program has saved my life. The care and follow through I receive from my case manager and team has been amazing." - client*

### Mental Health Services Act Housing Program

Established in May 2006, the program's goal is to create 10,000 additional units statewide of permanent supportive housing for individuals and their families who have a mental illness and are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. For San Mateo County, our housing program has provided funding for three supportive housing developments to-date: Cedar Street in Redwood City, El Camino Apartments in South San Francisco, and Delaware Pacific in San Mateo, for a total of 35 units.

Currently under development is the Waverly Place Apartments in North Fair Oaks located in Redwood City, which will create 15 additional units. The project is

expected to break ground March 2016 and open for occupancy before the end of the year.

### Psychiatric Emergency Response Team

The Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) is a partnership between the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office and BHRS. The pilot program launched in April 2015 and includes psychiatric social worker, Jason Albertson from BHRS and Detective James Coffman from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, who respond to mental health emergencies assisting first responders in de-escalating situations and in finding appropriate follow up services. Services include following up on 5150's initiated by the Sheriff's Office, case management, outreach and engagement, consultation and welfare checks. They also engage in law enforcement training and presentations around mental health issues.

### Same Day Assistance

Nearly two years ago, BHRS implemented Same Day Assistance (SDA) to increase timely access to care. Since then, the time to first appointment decreased from an average of 21 days or more, to less than 14 days, with one-third of people seen within seven days and one-fifth within one day. In 2016, work will focus on clarifying and streamlining the referral processes, impact on clinical workloads, and expanding access points.

### Serenity House (Crisis Residential)

The planning stage for Serenity House kicked off in August 2015. Located at 37th Avenue and Hacienda in San Mateo, the center will be operated by HealthRight360, and will offer individuals an alternative to involuntary emergency services and family members support and education to ensure that help is available for those with mental health issues in need of short-term support. Serenity House fills a critical gap in the County's system of care for people with mental illness and is expected to open in September 2016.

### Transforming Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services

On November 20th, BHRS submitted its implementation plan to the Department of Health Care Services to expand the types of substance use treatment and recovery supports available to Medi-Cal beneficiaries and for increased federal financial reimbursement. Medi-Cal beneficiaries will have access to a full continuum of services including: residential detox, residential treatment, intensive outpatient, outpatient, case management, recovery supports and more. We hope to begin delivering pilot services by mid-2016.

BHRS is optimistic that this new approach will strengthen and expand the substance use treatment provider network and will provide Medi-Cal beneficiaries with substance use issues greater opportunities to achieve wellness and recovery. ☺

To subscribe to *Wellness Matters* or to view previous issues, visit: [www.smchealth.org/wm](http://www.smchealth.org/wm) (To subscribe, click the red envelope at the top of the page.)  
Forward comments, suggestions or contributions for *Wellness Matters* to Diane Tom, Editor: [DiTom@smcgov.org](mailto:DiTom@smcgov.org)



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Blog: [www.smcbhblog.org](http://www.smcbhblog.org)  
[www.sanmateo.networkofcare.org/mh](http://www.sanmateo.networkofcare.org/mh)

## Family Assertive Support Team

Are you concerned about an adult family member who may be showing signs or symptoms of serious emotional distress and don't know what to do?

**Call FAST: (650) 368-3178**

**We Make a Difference AND We Come to You!**

Spanish and Mandarin speaking capacity are available. Other languages are available upon request. This is a free service made possible by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63).

