



Wellness Matters

Your Wellness ♦ Your Way ♦ Your Community

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

July 2016

San Mateo County Celebrates Pride, by Lauren Szper, Pride Initiative Co-Chair

The San Mateo County PRIDE Initiative successfully held their fourth annual LGBTQI2S Pride Celebration at San Mateo Central Park on Saturday, June 4th. This year's theme was Pride without Borders: Embracing Culture and Diversity, which recognized and celebrated inclusion within the LGBTQI2S communities. The wide range of organizations tabling serving youth through seniors, the variety of entertainers, the vendors of local artisans and food trucks, along with the community who attended truly reflected this diversity. People of all ages, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and faiths came together to celebrate. Entertainment was geared towards everyone ranging from African drumming, salsa, and folk music to

hip hop and a queer fashion show. We are also proud to have this be a family friendly event with activities available for all ages including; a kid space with a bouncy house, crafts provided by Our Family Coalition, an opportunity to interact with animals through the Humane Society and activities for teens provided by Outlet Adolescent Counseling Services.

This event would not have been possible without the support of so many passionate people including but not limited to; BHRs's Office of Diversity and Equity, members the Pride Initiative, all of our generous sponsors, and the LGBTQ Commission who piloted their new survey examining the needs of San Mateo County's LGBTQ communities and provided a raffle for par-



ticipants. We were also honored to have Supervisors David Pine and Carol Groom, BHRs Director Steve Kaplan and Health System Chief, Louise Rogers, speak at our event. San Mateo County continues to truly embrace the diversity by supporting events like the pride celebration making every year a true success. For more info on the Pride Initiative, visit:

www.smchealth.org/pride.

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Coming Soon...

San Mateo County Health System and Medical Center will soon be launching a new and improved website. Continue to visit us at www.smchealth.org.



(Mock up of new site.)

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

IMAT Achieving Remarkable Results

Last Thursday morning, as I am accustomed to do, I checked my email when I first arrived at the office. Among the assorted emails was one from Mariana Rocha from our Primary Care Interface (PCI) team. She and her colleagues had put together short vignettes describing the progress of some of their clients referred by PCI to our Integrated Medication Assisted Treatment (IMAT) program. (In previous editions of Wellness Matters we have highlighted IMAT but to quickly summarize IMAT is designed to work with people who have had long histories of chronic alcohol use and have not been successfully connected to treatment and recovery. IMAT uses a medication called Naltrexone (oral) or Vivitrol (injectable) that works to reduce an individual's craving to drink. In addition to the medication IMAT provide intensive case management services.)

Now back to the most significant part of this article. Mariana and her team shared the stories of 19 clients and although there is not space to include all of them I am sharing below a few to give you a sense of the courage and commitment exhibited by each of the clients and of the great work done by our staff.

- **41 year male** with a 26 year history of alcohol abuse. Client was referred to PCI by

his primary care physician in March 2015. Client was drinking up to 3 bottles of wine/day to decrease his anxiety and depression. Longest sobriety time had been 1 month. Client was a high utilizer of emergency medical services at SMMC. Client had no contact with family and was not interested in AA groups. MAT oral medication compliance was poor. Client has recently received his 1st Vivitrol injection (6/15). He reports to currently being sober and to not having any urges to drink. Client is now employed and has reconnected with some family members. Client's frequent visits to the emergency department have decreased.

- **30 year old female** referred to PCI by her primary care physician. She has a long history of alcohol/drug abuse and mental health issues and is open to regional services. IMAT case managers have connected her to Healthright 360's MAT clinic. She has received two injections and her alcohol consumption has decreased. Her motivation is high towards her goal of sobriety.
- **37 year old male** with depression started drinking at age 13, heavily at 18, up to eighteen 12-oz beers/day. He was referred to co-occurring case management, therapy, a wellness



Stephen Kaplan

group and psychiatry services, and declined detox and substance use programs. He minimized use to six beers/day. He received his seventh Vivitrol injection last month and has been sober since September 2015. His relationships with his family have improved and he feels more positive and happy sober.

The IMAT team has received more than 1,250 referrals of which 117 individuals are receiving medications (67 Vivitrol and 50 oral) to help them achieve similar successes as those highlighted above.

I want to thank all of the members of the IMAT team for the tremendous work they are doing each day. I also want to thank Maya Altman, CEO of the Health Plan of San Mateo for her support that has allowed us to provide IMAT throughout the county to all who are in need of this intervention; and to all of the men and women striving towards their recovery we pledge our ongoing commitment and support. ☺

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission Meeting

**Wednesday,
September 7**

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

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



Be In The Know

Visit the BHRS Blog: www.smcbhrsblog.org

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

Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Unit Joins BHRS

As of July 1, the staff of the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention (CDIP) Unit from Family Health Services will be joining the BHRS Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Prevention Services unit. This move is envisioned by Health System Administration as an opportunity to consolidate the prevention efforts from the two divisions into one unit.

“We are hopeful that this organizational change will strengthen the place-based AOD prevention partnerships that BHRS has invested significantly in. And also leverage the framework and learnings that the Tobacco Education Coalition and the Tobacco staff have furthered to drive reductions in tobacco use in communities across SM County,” said Srija Srinivasan, Health System Interim Deputy Chief.

It’s exciting to bring the

strengths of both units together into a consolidated effort to promote health and prevent diseases. The AOD Prevention Unit has built partnerships in strategic areas of San Mateo County that provide all our efforts with a structure to effectively reach community members in a community-specific and culturally-appropriate manner. The CDIP programs have built county-wide coalitions to address tobacco, asthma, and physical activity promotion. By joining forces together, we intend to develop countywide initiatives with ground-level implementation infrastructure. This transition will also give us the opportunity to increase the number of Health System staff able to address the chronic disease and AOD prevention needs across San Mateo County.

We anticipate the consolidated program to be located



Clockwise from left: Edith Cabuslay, Shaunda Scruggs, Francesca Lomotan and Elaine Lo of the Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Unit will be joining Stella Chau and Kathy Reyes of the Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Unit.

at the Harbor Boulevard campus in Belmont in 2017. While the AOD offices undergo a long-awaited refresh, the CDIP staff will remain at their Alameda de las Pulgas campus. In the interim, staff will begin to hold joint meetings and develop a strategic plan to ensure a successful transition.

- Edith Cabuslay

Q-Tip for Quality - Holly Severson, RN MSN

Informational Resources for Clients

Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) is mandated by several oversight bodies to provide informative resources to clients. These materials include both written materials distributed via the admissions packet that must be provided to all new BHRS clients, as well as informational posters and brochures that must be posted in the lobby of all BHRS clinics and contracted agencies.

The lobby posters and brochures explain a client’s rights and how they or family members of youth can file grievances, appeals or state fair hear-

ings regarding the services they received.

Quality Management is currently working on updating these materials and translating them into several languages: Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese and Russian. Keep an eye out for the updated posters and brochures.

Updated Admissions Packet Policy

The BHRS policy regarding client admission packets has been updated. This policy now makes it clear that **field-based BHRS teams must provide admission packets to any new clients they see off-site**, as all clients should be given these resources.

Change of Provider Form and Policy Revision

The BHRS Change of Provider form was recently revised to make them easier for clients to use. Also, the staff and contractor policy regarding the provider change requests has been clarified with a firm two-week response time to clients regarding their requests. These forms are available at the website below or can be requested at any BHRS or BHRS contracted site.

QM always appreciates any feedback or ideas you’d like to share with us. ☺

Think Quality

Next QIC Meeting:

Wednesday

July 13, 2016

10:00 am—Noon

2000 Alameda de las Pulgas, Suite 200, Room 201, San Mateo

Assisted Outpatient Treatment Services Launched July 1st

Together Towards Recovery

Developed out of the County's adoption of Laura's Law (Assembly Bill 1421) in the summer of 2015, the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) is a program that reaches out to people with a severe mental illness who are not connected to services and are challenged with living safely and stably in our community.

The team works collaboratively with individuals, their family members and partners to provide the right care at the right place and right time. Our dedicated team helps decrease mental health crises, hospitalizations, incarceration and homelessness while helping people achieve and maintain their physical and mental health.

San Mateo County's AOT outreaches to people who are not connected to treatment and engages them in services provided by Caminar's Full Service Partnership (FSP), a community based program which provides intensive mental health services. The program includes 24/7 care and services such as intensive

case management, psychiatry, medication management, benefit and housing support, life skill development, as well as guidance and support to help people reach their recovery goals.

San Mateo County joins other Bay Area counties, including San Francisco and Contra Costa, and over a dozen other counties throughout the state in implementing Laura's Law and the AOT. Through this early implementation in other counties, Assisted Outpatient Treatment has been shown to:

- save lives
- reduce homelessness, hospitalizations, crime, arrests, and incarceration
- help families and reduce caregiver stress
- save money on arrests, incarcerations, and hospitalizations

Eligibility

A person must meet all of these conditions to be eligible for AOT:

- Have a history of not following through with treatment for their mental illness resulting in:

- * being hospitalized and/or incarcerated two or more times within the last 3 years.
 - * Or, having threatened or attempted a significantly dangerous behavior towards themselves or others at least one time in the past 2 years.
- Were previously offered treatment on a voluntary basis and refused it, and whose health is quickly declining.

Referrals

To make a referral, call 650-372-6125 or email

AOT@smcgov.org.

Learn more about San Mateo County's AOT process and team at:

www.smchealth.org/AOT. 

- Terry Wilcox-Rittgers



The graphic features five stylized human figures of diverse ethnicities and ages. Below them, the text reads: "1 IN 5 PEOPLE EXPERIENCE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION". Underneath that, it says "Learn more, share your story and spread the word." and "You can make a difference." To the right of the figures, the text "Learn more about National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month" is displayed in large, bold letters, with "Learn more about" in green and the rest in orange.

In 2008, the US House of Representatives established July as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. This observance aims to improve access to mental health treatment and services for multicultural communities through increased public awareness. Visit the National Alliance for Mental Illness' (NAMI) to learn more and to get resources to take part in raising awareness in your community at:

www.nami.org/Get-Involved/raise-awareness/awareness-events

Learning to Bridge Spirituality In Clinical Practice

On June 8th, the Spirituality Initiative provided the training “Bridging Spirituality in Clinical Practice” to Caminar’s employees. This four hour training organized by Bill Kruse, consultant with the BHRS Spirituality Initiative, was held at the Sobrato Center in Redwood City. There were five speakers including Bill Kruse (Consultant), Veronica Ochoa (Coastside Mental Health), Renee Pryor Johnson (Adult Resources Management) and Chase Montara (past co-chair), and Constance Rose (yoga instructor). The training included historical background, tools and

resources for assessment purposes, how to document interventions, case studies, review of photo voice and refreshing yoga exercises. After the training, individuals volunteered for a Q&A panel sharing how their spirituality helped them in their recovery. There were more than 60 people in attendance benefiting from learning how to take into consideration clients’ spiritual practices and beliefs as support in their recovery.

- Melinda Ricossa,
Spirituality Initiative Co-Chair



OYE Latino Youth Conference

I attended the OYE Conference and want to applaud the work of so many people who made this event possible. The Office of Supervisor Warren Slocum in partnership with Teri Chin, RWC 2020, North Fair Oaks Youth Initiative, and other community leaders hosted the 5th Annual OYE Latino Youth Conference on May 21 at Cañada College.

The conference gathered youth and parents for a day of inspiring speakers, workshops, performances, and networking. The conference focused on helping youth and young adults explore their identity, passions, and educational goals. The questions throughout the day were: **Who do I want to be? Where do I want to go?**

This year’s guest speakers were: Dr. Francisco Jimenez, educator author of *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* and Favianna Rodriguez, artist and commu-

nity activist.

One of the most powerful workshops was lead by Alicia Aguirre, former mayor of Redwood City and currently a City Council Member and teacher at Canada College. This workshop focused on the stories of mothers sharing their struggles and strengths. Many stories were full of violence, family separation, poverty, and immigration abuse by authorities. Other stories were of women who had “normal, happy lives” but for one reason or another ended in negative relationships, connected to drug trafficking and needing to leave their former lives in order to go into hiding to save their children’s lives. As difficult as it was to hear so much pain and grief, the common theme shared by every mother was their resiliency and desire to build a better life for their children in the “land of opportunity.” These women have persevered to go on despite struggling with poverty and not

having access to education and services in either country. Despite all the barriers, many mothers reported that their children were attending or have been accepted to UCLA, Santa Cruz University, Davis University, and San Francisco State University.

It was inspiring to hear and learn from others who have limited opportunities. The message was that everything is possible with honest work, perseverance, faith, and hope.

This conference was a reminder of the strength of people who may not have much, but in reality, can offer a lot. These children and young adults are lucky to have powerful women supporting them in their struggle to achieve an education and a better life in the land of opportunity.

- RosaMaria Ocegueda

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

MHSA Annual Update

MHSA Fiscal Year 2015-16 Annual Update, which included three new Innovation Project Plans was approved by our Board of Supervisors on May 24th. The Annual Update can be viewed and downloaded from the MHSA website, www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa.

Innovation Projects

Congratulations to StarVista for being awarded the administration of a Health Ambassador Program for Youth (HAP-Y). An RFP for the LGBTQ Behavioral Health Coordinated Services Center will be released this month. These two projects and the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT) expansion to adults will be presented for final approval to the State of California, Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission on July 28th. Visit the MHSA web-

site to learn more about these innovative projects.

MHSA Program Evaluation Contractor Opportunity

Help us get the word out! We are looking for a contractor to evaluate the three MHSA Innovation Projects. The contractor will 1) develop evaluation plans for each program, 2) provide technical assistance to the providers in evaluation implementation, and 3) conduct annual outcome analysis, and provide recommendations for changes/adjustments to the program plan, and draft a final evaluation report. To view the full announcement, visit the BHRM Request for Proposal site,

www.smchealth.org/bhrs/rfp.

MHSA Priority Expansions

The MHSA Three-Year Plan outlines Priority Expansions contingent on funding availa-

bility. We are excited to announce the latest approved expansion, Edgewood Drop-in Center in South County and addition of Full Service Partnership (FSP) slots. At the next MHSA Update, we will share about current services, outcomes to-date and provide details on the added services.

MHSA Steering Committee

The MHSA Steering Committee makes recommendations about the planning and services development process of MHSA. We will be updating the membership process and recruiting new members soon. If you are interested in joining please contact, Doris Estremera at mhsa@smcgov.org or (650) 573-2889. ☺

NMT Program Highlighted at International Conference

Our Child and Youth BHRM System was once again highlighted at the 2nd International Neurosequential Model Symposium on June 8-10.

Toni DeMarco and Mary Lynn Fitton, the Executive Director of The Art of Yoga Program, and long-time collaborative partner with BHRM and NMT training program, presented together at the Symposium. Their conference session "Keys of Creative Collaboration- expanding the therapeutic web through working relationships," focused on both the expansion of the county's NMT program, and how the intentional development of strong working partnerships through the support of Measure A funds, has strengthened the implemen-

tation of NMT within the county system and community.

This International Symposium which was attended by over 700 individuals from 12 countries, 9 Canadian Provinces, and 35 U.S. States, supports the networking and training of teams and organizations implementing NMT and its newer educational model NME, all over the world.

Toni was also asked by CTA (ChildTrauma Academy), to facilitate one of the weeks' Focus Dinners, and a subsequent meeting with delegates from the Netherlands, to discuss the implementation of NMT into adult service settings. BHRM is planning to begin a formal training program for adult clinicians later

this year, and will be one of the first sites anywhere to do so.

To date, our NMT program has trained over 40 clinicians in the NMT Metric assessment tool, 150 individuals in the 16 hour Core Strengths training, and completed over 350 assessments. The program also contracts with multiple community agencies for services and activities through the Measure A funds allocated for youth trauma interventions. ☺

- Toni DeMarco



Mary Lynn Fitton and Toni DeMarco.

Another successful year at the San Mateo County Fair

What perfect timing - just the day before this year's San Mateo County Fair, Governor Jerry Brown signed off on the historic State Senate Bill (SB) 10 that allows the State's own Covered CA program to ask for a waiver from the federal government to sell insurance plans to all Californians regardless of immigration status through its individual Health Insurance Marketplace.

The "Health4All" campaign, spearheaded by the California Endowment, finally reached its goal of increasing access for all Californians. So, the many "Health4All" giveaways the BHRS Health Insurance Outreach Team offered drew the attention of many fairgoers to their booth.

After nine long days under sometimes gruelingly hot and cold weather conditions, the outreach team consisting of Sara Arancibia, Winnie Chan, and Stefan Luesse held 176 conversations about health insurance options with fairgoers from near and as far as Virginia and Boston, Massachusetts. Assisted by Dr. Robert Stebbins from Life-Moves, the team also promoted the "Each Mind Matters" stigma reduction campaign for the first time by handing out giveaways and informational material, and including a multimedia display that equally drew curious fairgoers to in-

quire about mental health and substance use disorder services in San Mateo County.

This year, the demographics of consumers were distinctively younger and more affluent. Many consumers were in between employment, mostly from the tech sector, and in need of temporary public insurance. Others stopped by for the Medicare brochures as they approached retirement and weren't sure of their insurance options, or inquired about services for their family members who were about to arrive from a foreign country.

On Senior Day alone, the team spoke to 37 consumers

the fair alone. Overall, the team saw a 20% increase over last year in outreach contacts with multiple opportunities to engage the public in the first steps of applying for benefits and troubleshoot complex insurance scenarios crossing over multiple programs.

With the extension of the AB82 DHCS Medi-Cal Outreach & Enrollment grant through 2016/17 and 2017/18, the outreach team will be returning to the San Mateo County Fair next year. With the expectation that Covered CA will be able to fully implement SB10 in 2017,



which generated a lot of interest in sign ups for the Health Plan of San Mateo's CareAdvantage plan. This was twice as many contacts over last year on the first weekend of

there will be plenty of fairgoers in need of information about the new health insurance landscape in California.

- Stefan Luesse

Seeking Nominations for David Lewis Award - by August 15

The San Mateo County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Recovery Commission is seeking an individual or organization who has made an extraordinary difference in the lives of people with substance abuse disorders and the San Mateo County community. Recognition is given for:

- public education or advocacy around alcohol and other drug abuse issues or to address stigma;
- services to persons with substance abuse disorders;
- creation of new and innovative programs or community support activities;
- recognition of fundraising for substance abuse treatment activities or long-term financial support to substance abuse programs;
- working for new legislation; compassionate treatment of persons with alcohol and other drug disorders.



For more information and to download the nomination form, visit: www.smchealth.org/mhsarc.

South Community Service Area Enhances Collaboration

The South Community Service Area (CSA) hosted its first Day of Partnering event at the Sobrato Center in Redwood Shores on May 11th. The event came about thanks to the dedication and hard work of the South CSA Advisory Committee.

Over 75 individuals from a wide variety of programs and agencies were in attendance representing the faith-based community, hospitals, libraries, education, law enforcement, community-based agencies, and county programs.

It was clear everyone had a strong commitment to the clients and families they serve and an eagerness to learn about services available.

I repeatedly heard comments of both interest and surprise as people discovered resources they never knew existed or met individuals in person for the first time. The energy in the room was powerful and contagious and the conversations robust and dynamic.

The morning began with a presentation by Sylvia Leung from ODE on Mental Health



First Aid and the Parent Project. She then shared three digital stories. From the evaluations, this was the most compelling part of the day for participants. The stories eloquently expressed both the challenges and the resiliency of individuals and families in our community as they addressed issues of mental health and substance use. We then moved into small group discussions fueled by the passion and emotions brought to us from the stories.

We then participated in "speed networking" where people quickly move around the room introducing them-

selves and connecting others. People were so interested in getting to one another that it was challenging to make myself heard when it was time to switch partners. I could see how some people could have continued to talk. We ended the morning with an opportunity for the participants to visit the resource tables.

Overall the South CSA Day of Partnering was both energizing and inspirational for all who attended and an affirmation of the work we are doing in bringing the community together to better serve the individuals and families who need help.

- Diane Dworkin



Employee Spotlight



Candy Morones

Patient Services Assistant,
Service Connect

Hometown: Redwood City, CA

Years at BHRS/SMC: 9 years

What do you do?

I open and close cases, analyze and track data, order office supplies and support other administrative functions.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I always enjoy helping our community.

Most rewarding/memorable experience:

Every time a person comes back and says "thank you for

your service," it has changed my life! It is so rewarding, satisfying and something I will always remember.

Favorite hobbies/activities:

I love being outdoors, which includes going camping a lot, even when it is raining or snowing. I also like drawing with my kids.

"If I weren't in my current role, I'd be a..." Counselor or a Peer Mentor. ~

Commission Reports on Housing Challenges for BHRS Clients

San Mateo County’s Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission (MHSARC) has framed unaffordable housing as a public health issue. Information from three MHSARC Community Forums were incorporated into a Housing Forum Report that highlights lack of safe and affordable housing as one of the most powerful barriers to recovery.

Recommendations and solutions identified in the report are as follows:

- San Mateo County should continue exploring tenant protections such as no-fault evictions.
- Encourage housing authority to improve Section 8
- Push for inclusionary housing rentals.
- Seek out potential hotels/apartments to pur-

chase and provide case management and other supportive services.

- Find property anchorages for supportive housing, including county property.
- Increase County resources to provide housing subsidies for behavioral health clients.
- Support the Housing First approach for behavioral health clients.
- Coordinate systematic efforts between County departments and institutions so that consumers/clients are not discharged to homelessness, or dangerous situations in general, after having received institutional care.
- BHRS should support property managers/owners or landlords to retain current housing units and encour-

age expansion.

- Unlicensed room and board are not preferred for behavioral health clients.
- Ask our representatives in Congress to introduce legislation to index low-income and unaffordable housing standards for high income states.

The report was reviewed by the Commission in April and June and is currently pending finalization. MHSARC plans to present the Housing Forum Report to the Board of Supervisors, in order to advise them on a matter that is affecting San Mateo County clients/consumers and family members living with mental health and substance use challenges. View the report at: www.smchealth.org/mhsarc.



- Angelica Delgado,
ODE Intern



SMCHousingSearch.org is a FREE resource to help you find a home in San Mateo County that fits your needs and budget. Property owners and managers throughout the county can post apartments or homes for rent any time which means the list is always current.

www.smhousingsearch.org

Tobacco Education Coalition Appreciation Ceremony

On June 20, the San Mateo County Tobacco Education Coalition (TEC) hosted an Appreciation Ceremony to celebrate the Coalition’s many successes over the past few years. Residents, community organizations, law enforcement, youth, Supervisor Carole Groom, and other Coalition supporters attended the event. Highlights of the Coalition’s successes include:

- Adoption of policies that classify electronic smoking devices (e-cigarettes, vape pens, etc.) as tobacco products so that the electronic products are regulated in the same manner as traditional cigarettes. There are currently 10 jurisdictions in the County that have some form of electronic smoking device regulation.
- Adoption of an ordinance to ban tobacco products from being sold in pharmacies in Daly City (the first ordinance of its kind in the County and the 8th jurisdiction in California to adopt such an ordinance.)
- Adoption of ordinances to prohibit smoking in individual units in multi-unit hous-

ing. There are currently 6 jurisdictions in the County that prohibit smoking in housing locations such as apartments, condos, and/or townhomes.

To stay updated with TEC’s efforts and tobacco-related news, please “like” TEC on Facebook or visit our website (linked below).

To learn more about the Coalition or to get involved, please contact Francesca Lomotan at flomotan@smcgov.org or (650) 573-3777.

- Francesca Lomotan



Facebook page: www.facebook.com/TobaccoEducationCoalition

Website: www.smchealth.org/TobaccoEducationCoalition.

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