

Behavioral Health Commission

Unapproved Minutes

Wednesday, August 6, 2025 | 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM



Hybrid Meeting – College of San Mateo, 1700 Hillsdale Blvd, Bldg 10,
Room 468, San Mateo; 840 Deep Woods Trl, Pleridge, MT; and Online

BHC Members:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jean Perry – Chair (online) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leticia Bido – Vice Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yoko Ng – Vice Chair <input type="checkbox"/> Bill Silverfarb – BOS Rep <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Keohane <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Rice (online) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Frieda Edgette	<input type="checkbox"/> Jason Sutherland <input type="checkbox"/> Kristin Kurczak <input type="checkbox"/> P.D. Kristina Bell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laura Gomez <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Lim <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Nichols <input type="checkbox"/> Rubi Garcia	<input type="checkbox"/> Sid Palani <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Victoria Yu
SMC BHRS Staff:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jei Africa <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chantae Rochester (online)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristie Lui <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doris Estremera	
Others Present (in-person)	Dr. Maria Lorente Foresti, Paul Cumming, John Butler, Laura Shih, Colleen Chawla		
Others Present (online)	Annya Shapiro, Audrey Davis, CA Clubhouse, Carlo, Desiree, Erika, David Rice, Jana Spalding, Jeff Blood, Jonathon, July Ugas, Maya Green, MLUV, Pat Willard, Susan Cortopassi, Sydney Hoff, Sylvia Tang, Ted Stinson, Tina Gee, Walter Ng, Waynette Brock, William E, Clara Boyden, Maria Lorente Foresti, Sofia Recalde, Chip Huggins, Maya Green		

Meeting called to order at 3:37 by Chair Jean Perry.

ITEM	DISCUSSION/ACTION
Roll Call/ Introductions	Roll call was completed.
Approval of Agenda	The meeting agenda was unanimously approved after revisions. ► M/S/C Keohane/ Bido
Approval of Minutes	The meeting minutes were unanimously approved after revisions. ► M/S/C Bido/ Lim
Correspondence, Announcements & Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jean Perry – David Lewis Award nominations now open. Nominations due by 8/15. Jean Perry – Community input sessions happening now until September. Take a look at the sessions to be able to provide your input for behavioral health care in the next 3 years. Jean Perry – Next transition taskforce meeting happening tomorrow, 8/7, at Redwood Shores Library or online. Minutes and next topic can be found online. Kristie Lui – September is Suicide Prevention Month. This year's theme is aligned with the statewide theme, Support, Your Way. Additional info including free events, resources and ways to get involved can be found at SMCHealth.org/SPM. In-person meeting with group photo and resource sharing will be 9/2 at 310 Harbor Blvd Bldg. E, Belmont. John Butler – I'm a client of San Mateo County Mental Health Services since 1988. I wanted to speak about our coalition, PATH founded in Menlo Park in August 2024 supported by Mayor Cecilia Taylor, Councilwoman Betsy Nash, and Police Chief Norris. We were inspired to create this because of the death of Dylan, a student at Menlo Atherton High School. We have an event on September 3rd at the Mouton Center for suicide prevention funds from 6PM-8PM. Dr. Maria Lorente Foresti – I'm Director of Behavioral Health & Recovery Services' Office of Diversity & Equity, and I want to say a little more about Suicide Prevention Month. On Tues, September 9th there will be a Board of Supervisors proclamation, and we encourage folks to attend. Also

	<p>afterwards there will be a resource tabling hosted by Voices of Recovery and the Suicide Prevention Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivy, California Clubhouse – Membership is always free and we would always love to have members inquire for a tour. I want to also extend an invitation to folks to attend LEAG (Lived Experience Advisory Group) which I'm the recruiter for. We meet monthly and collaborate boards and committees for the COC so that stakeholders get recommendations and feedback about programs and services for the homeless from those with lived experience. • Pat Willard – I'd like to take a moment of silence for the student who passed away. I also hope in Doris' presentation she will include that BHSA means that BHRS initiatives will go to the other side of the aisle. • One New Heartbeat (via chat) - During Recovery Happens Month and Suicide Prevention Month we will be hosting a 5K.
Colleen Chawla (Chief of Health) Meet & Greet Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been in this role nearly 6 months, and I come here from Alameda County as the health director. I was there for about 7 years and prior to that I was 14 years in San Francisco as Deputy Director of Health. • I started my career actually in the non-profit world. I started in my college years as a volunteer on the HIV Aids hotline. • I'm really glad to have spent so much of my career in local health departments because that's really where so much of the work gets done and it feels really special to do it in the broader Bay Area community. • I want to thank all of you for your service including for Mobile Crisis Response, family empowerment, client empowerment and making sure youth voices are at the table.
Meet & Greet Questions & Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frieda Edgette – What is surfacing as your priorities given where we are? • A: I'm a firm believer in seeing for myself before coming to conclusions. I've been going to many clinics, many facilities, and I've met a lot of staff. I'd like to say some things are familiar and some are different. What's familiar is the landscape, structure of departments and types of services. What's different is the nature of San Mateo County. The difference in how our partnerships work here. There is a really strong feeling of collaboration here. So I think there is a collective spirit of anything is possible here. I feel we are well positioned to weather situations including the state and federal policies coming down as a result of state budget problems and One Big Beautiful Bill. The good news is that many of the implementation dates are further away which gives us time for more advocacy and more people to really understand these impacts are going to be across the nation and not just blue states. The negative is that more people are going to lose their MediCal. More people will be uninsured. There's going to be a disproportionate impact on people who have unsatisfactory immigration status. • Yoko Ng – I have served the internship at SFDPH. I appreciate your background, and I want to continue to advocate for language access in San Mateo County. We do have the resources and the staff will be mandated to know how to work with interpretation, and I also want to advocate for hiring providers to serve the diversity in our cities and counties. Lastly, I want to also stress on staff training for different positions to serve mental health intensive programs. Those are very needed with cultural humility trainings. I hope we are still doing a great job in our county. • A: Thank you for naming language access. There has been so much discussed on a federal level about continuation of equity programs. Our county has shifted some of its language on its most public facing documents but has reiterated our commitment to equity and diversity has not changed. I know this Health Department has been a leader in that road and I expect none of that to change.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura Gomez – I don't know if you reside in San Mateo County, but it is very different from Alameda and San Francisco County. How do you stay connected to the lived experience of those who live in the county and the challenges they are facing? • A: I am definitely a collaborative leader. That's why I don't want to create solutions too soon. The best way I can learn that is to go to spaces like these. To go out and meet our providers, meet with our partners, and have forums with clients. • Michael Lim – I don't have a question. I just want to say thank you for your point of view. Hopefully once it kind of settles down, I hope you can pay us another visit and give us an update on what your thoughts are for more strategic feedback. • Frieda Edgette – You mentioned an observation of a lot of collaboration within the county. How might health plan and BHRS work more collaboratively or are there things you are curious about? How might this commission specifically be a co-collaborator around the social determinants of health? • A: One thing I'll say is that the BOS already named as one of their priorities, the inequities of life expectancy and to work on reducing disparities. Behavioral Health has been playing an important role in addressing inequities. I'll have to get back to you about more concrete ideas. • Leticia Bido – What we love is the BHRS director's newsletter which has been extremely helpful to us to know what has been happening within the month. Do you have a newsletter that you're setting up? • A: Yes, there is a newsletter that we are working to enhance, and we can get the commission on the distribution list. I feel like Jei has been a fantastic partner and really, I feel very informed on key issues because of this. • Frieda Edgette – What board or board adjacent bodies have mapped to your department and what youth representation presently exists? • A: Hospital board, San Mateo Medical Center board. Health Care for the Homeless board. There are other advisory committees that exist for example First Five Commission has representation. • Frieda Edgette – We should be building partnerships with those adjacent bodies to see if there is alignment in strategic objectives. • Dan Keohane – Do you have anything to say about the Innovation Partnership Funds? • A: Those funds are set aside for innovation in technology from the BHSA OAC, and it has not been talked about too much because they just got a new executive director. So their commission is now thinking about how to use those funds through input sessions. That does not come down to the counties; it is a statewide project.
BHRS Brochure Update Review Presented by Audrey Davis, BHRS Communication Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking for some feedback on the BHRS How to Find Treatment and Support brochure. • This is probably our key brochure that is spread widely across the community at events and various community locations. • Goals of this brochure include so people can learn types of services at BHRS, who these services are for, and how to access services. • Key updates include updating out of date information such as the behavioral health crisis guidance and insurance information, reorganizing content of brochure so that mental health and substance use appear to be more unified, and providing a more complete description of behavioral health services. • Lastly the map you see will be going through graphic design, so the current iteration is a draft. • These will be translated into our threshold languages.

BHRS Brochure Update Review Questions and Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoko Ng – Could we add a line about how you deal with privacy and confidentiality? I think this will be more welcoming. Also switch out “we’re here to help” with “how to get help.” • Yoko Ng – Clarify “Go to the PES at this address” • Frieda Edgette – Is there anywhere in plain language we can clarify how we are defining substance use? If I’m new to this world, maybe I don’t know if I qualify or feel vulnerable because of insurance status. • Frieda Edgette – Perhaps remove the word “comprehensive” because of the changing nature of our landscape? • Yoko Ng – What are the threshold languages? • A: English, Spanish, Chinese and Tagalog. • Yoko Ng – Is there an opportunity to put a QR code for other languages? So that people can have language accessible no matter which brochure they pick up. • Leticia Bido – Does the map refer to where virtual services are available? • A: The map is showing regional clinics. • Leticia Bido – I love that listed for families are the Office of Consumer and Family Affair and the Office of Diversity & Equity. Showing that there are services for families and cultural sensitivity is important. • Frieda Edgette – From a flow perspective, I’m curious how it would look like if we led with insurance status and then into call steps because someone might need help but think they don’t have insurance and not try to call. • Pat Willard – I wanted to point out the Suicide Prevention Month brochure we looked at yesterday that had dark green. I might suggest adding something green so that it is clear they are coming from the same behavioral health & recovery services organization. I also agree with the person that said make it clear you do not need to have insurance. • Michael Lim – I think what might be helpful in getting people to seek AOD services is putting a blurb that says full abstinence is not a requirement for services.
Office of Improvement & Innovation Presented by Doris Estremera & Laura Shih	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June, Dr Africa talked with you all about our BHRS transformation journey. This has been a very important part for doing our strategic visioning and a large part of this is data. How do we collect data that will help us improve our system? • With the transition of Prop 1, how do we think about our priorities along with the requirements we need to meet. • The Department of Healthcare Services has identified population level data that they can use to track outcomes across the state. This is publicly available data, and they can help us see how we compare to other counties. • The Department of Healthcare has prioritized increasing access to care, decreasing homelessness, decreasing justice involvement, decreasing removal of children from homes and decreasing untreated behavioral health conditions. • Social connection was one of the ones that showed the biggest gaps, so we selected this one as one of our priorities that we will be developing strategies for in our 3-year integrated plan, one of the requirements under prop 1. • This population data is what is guiding our community input sessions. Join a session to be able to hear more about these priority goals. • One of the priorities from the BHC retreat was how to better utilize data and understanding what is available in your advisory role to the director. • We are following the PDSA model (plan, do, study, act) • Broadly speaking there is a planning phase where we use data to help identify performance gaps and then develop strategies to address them with broad input, and then implementing those strategies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Prop 1 BHSA guided activities, the planning phase related to the community planning process. The do phase relates to the integrated plan implementation. • One of the priorities of BHRS' transformation journey is that we support BHRS in embodying a spirit of inspired learning, curiosity, growth and continuous improvement and supporting BHRS' journey in attending that future state vision. • Some things we are tackling right now include the basics of becoming a data-driven organization including BHRS staff/stakeholder identifies data need, data request is submitted through centralized request form, and data request is triaged by Oll manager, who discusses request with requestor. • What happens next is we convened a new group of folks called the Data Dream Team to discuss request and design approach. • One thing we are trying to improve is to have analyst documents data methodology so we can really learn from each other. • Really, we are trying to turn data into information that can guide strategic and operational decisions. • We're also working on building systems and processes for continuous improvement because of course having data doesn't solve all the problems. • What we want to do instead of just big improvement pushes is to have small, daily improvement that occurs on a regular basis. This is what we are working on building over the next few years. • There is a San Mateo County performance portal that has all our metrics on it, and you can find BHRS under the department portal. • Another data source from the county is the Public Health Policy and Planning Division. • We are also currently working on creating internal dashboard for better outreach of hiring of positions so that staff match the client population. • As we strengthen our internal infrastructure, we hope that more data will flow outward to all of you in the broader community.
Office of Improvement & Innovation Presentation Questions and Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frieda Edgette – I'm curious about the review iteration approach you are taking. Is it agile? • A: Yes, very similar to agile. LEAP stands for learn, engage, aspire, perfect and is built off of LEAN management. We are hoping that staff even in their daily work are looking with their teams what is the workflow, and what can we change today that will help tomorrow. • Laura Gomez – There is a lot of emphasis on interoperability data sharing. Is that something you see on the roadmap? • A: Yes, within our system there are efforts on the health and county level to strengthen the underlying infrastructure. My current focus on OI is more on report building within BHRS, but absolute there are a lot of opportunities to work with other stakeholders and players for how we embed the data sharing workflows.
Standing Committee Reports	<p>Committee for Children & Youth Service Reported by Frieda Edgette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are welcoming our new cohort this Saturday. There are 14 members total with 50% being returning members and 50% new. A big thank you to commissioner Lim for being so active during the interview process. • This makes our 3rd full term as a cohort. • We have two new seats: Networking and Recruitment • Violet Schuller and I attended meeting to network for the two commissioners who will be sitting alongside the commissioners. We hope to have them present at our August meeting. • We will be talking about strategic initiative updates including Pathways prototype and Youth Centric Crisis Healing Center

	<p>Next meeting is Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. Virtual: Zoom or dial 669-444-9171 Meeting ID: 990 0971 9684</p> <p>Committee for Adult Services Reported by Yoko Ng</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart & Soul will do a picnic on 8/17 from 11AM -2PM at Beresford Park in San Mateo. No meeting August. We will meet back in September and have a presentation to share more updates on Prop 1. We will likely have a site visit in October or November of Serenity House. <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 10:30 a.m. Virtual: Zoom or dial 669- 900- 6833 Meeting ID: 983 9161 3998</p> <p>Committee for Older Adult Services Reported by Jean Perry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We heard a presentation from Cassie from Aging and Adult Services around resources for hoarding. No meeting in August. September will be our input session. <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 1 p.m. In-person at 2000 Alameda de Las Pulgas, Suite 200, San Mateo, CA 94403 Virtual: Zoom or dial 669-900-6833 Meeting ID: 944 8158 6160</p> <p>Committee for Alcohol and Other Drug Services No report given.</p> <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, August 13, 2025, at 4 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. Virtual: Teams</p> <p>Mental Health Services Act Steering Committee No report given.</p>
<p>Director's Report presented by Dr. Jei Africa</p>	<p>See attached slides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR 1 will shift eligibility requirements including impacting those with unsatisfactory immigrant status and abortion provider ban. There is a state budget deficit and you can see slow decrease in access to benefits. San Mateo County Overdose Prevention Coalition aims to reduce overdose deaths, increase access to recovery and treatment services and improve overall health of residents. The San Mateo County Pride Center found a new fiscal sponsor which will be the San Francisco Public Health Institute Foundation. Unfortunately, there is still work to explore reopening a new sobering station. The challenge there is that BHRS is a small component in terms of funding. We anticipate another month and a half of negotiations. The crisis hotline will continue in operations. There will still be people there to answer the phones. There was a question for me last time about StarVista's contract with probation and Human Services Agency so they are taking care of those contracts within their own departments. Regarding the transition to Felton, the hope is that the formal transition will happen soon, but the full transition will likely take place over a couple months. Doris already talked a lot about the Behavioral Health Transformation but to reiterate the focus is improving behavioral health outcomes and equity, expanding capacity of behavioral health facilities and improving accountability. Dr. Jana Spalding is leading work on standardizing peer roles and expectations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have 22 peer specialists, 18 certified, 4 non-certified, and since we last spoke, 4 received promotions, and 1 person became newly certified.
Public Comments on Director's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoko Ng – In the future I'd like to know if peer specialists are bilingual. Jean Perry – In the future it would also be good to know the number of contractors that have peer support specialists.
Liaison, Task Force and Ad Hoc Committees	<p>Suicide Prevention Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report given. <p>Legislative Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report given. <p>New Member Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report given. <p>QIC Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report given. <p>Site Visits Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report given. <p>Cal BHB/C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report given.
Old Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved to next meeting.
New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved to next meeting.
Adjournment	This meeting was adjourned at 5:35PM by Chair Jean Perry.

Next BHC Meeting:	Wed, September 3, 2025, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. College of San Mateo - College Center, Building 10, Room 468 840 Deep Woods Trl, Polebridge, MT 59928, and Online Information will be posted on www.smchealth.org/BHC .
Next Executive Committee Meeting:	Wed, September 3, 2025, at 5:30p.m. College of San Mateo - College Center, Building 10, Room 468 840 Deep Woods Trl, Polebridge, MT 59928, and Online
Note:	PLEASE BE SURE TO CONTACT KRISTIE LUI AT KFLUI@SMCGOV.ORG . IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND EITHER THE BHC OR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), auxiliary aids and services for this meeting will be provided upon request when given three-day notice. Please call 650.573.2544.