

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Scott Gilman, MSA, CBHE

BHRS Response to Vaccination Lag: Relentless Incrementalism



As of mid-July, 53% (or 4,656) of BHRS clients twelve or older have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19. In addition, 744 BHRS clients (8% of our current caseload) have

received their first dose. Thus, 61% of BHRS clients have received at least one dose of vaccine. Compared to the countywide vaccination rate of 88%, BHRS clients lag significantly. Of the 744 clients who have received their first dose, 517 are past due (greater than 42 days) for their second dose and nearly a third of these exceed 100 days.

In May and June, BHRS held 11 vaccinations clinics for clients. The clinics were designed to be low-anxiety events with no waiting or lines. Clinical staff and puppies were on hand to further calm participants. A total of 129 BHRS staff volunteered to operate three vaccination clinics each at BHRS's South, Central, and North County regional clinics, and two at the Belmont campus. For each clinic, a vendor provided the medical services at no cost to the county. These clinics resulted in 406 doses administered. Prior to this, BHRS had conducted six vaccination clinics for staff and contractors, administering a total of 306 doses.

Participants received gift cards whose value increased for the second dose. In a post-vaccination survey, 80% of BHRS clients indicated that the gift cards were not the reason why they chose to get vaccinated, but 63% reported that the cards did influence their decision to return for their second shot.

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California Family Urgent Response System & StarVista's SOS Team



[California's Family Urgent Response System](#) (FURS) is a free, 24/7 hotline for former or current foster youth who need trauma-informed support. Foster youth and/or their caregivers

can call or text 1-833-939-3877 and get connected with a trained counselor or peer in a safe, judgement-free, and private space. For more support, a team can go directly to you to work on the problem and stabilize the situation.

As of July, StarVista Crisis Center's role in FURS and San Mateo County's Mobile Response System and Stabilization Teams is to provide in-home stabilization, conflict resolution, and de-escalation. If an in-person mobile crisis response is needed, the FURS team will provide a warm handoff to StarVista's Crisis Center's Youth Stabilization, Opportunity, & Support (S.O.S.) Team. Additional services and emergency support, provided by the SOS Team is expected to launch in the fall.

The SOS Team is designed to respond within 24 hours to any location in the community where a youth (age 0-25) may be in a mental health crisis, provide 24/7 immediate in-person response to current and former youth in foster care, and offer community awareness and psychoeducation about mental health crisis, and suicide prevention and response services. Watch for more information on the SOS Team in the coming months.

Get updates on StarVista Crisis Center's Youth SOS program, subscribe to StarVista's newsletter [here](#) or visit www.sanmateocrisis.org.

31.3%

Revenue Ratio (R3)

8,599

Total Clients

772

Admitted

764

Discharged

Farewell, BHRS Medical Director



BHRS Medical Director, Vanessa de la Cruz, departed BHRS on July 23. Vanessa joined BHRS in April 2020 from Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health.

A resident of San Mateo County since 2007, Vanessa moved back to her home state to help care for a family member.

“It was an incredibly difficult decision to leave because BHRS has been such a great place to work. It has been an honor to get to know so many amazing people and work alongside all of you as we respond to the needs of our patients and staff in the midst of a pandemic. I learned so much. I hope I was able to contribute,” said Dr. de la Cruz.

Vanessa brought over 20 years of experience working in community behavioral health and with underserved populations. “It has been amazing working with Dr. de la Cruz this last year. I especially appreciated her leadership on improving integration of care and expanding access to addiction treatment. She brought with her a wealth of experience in public psychiatry,” said BHRS Deputy Medical Director, Cynthia Chatterjee.

For the next few months, she will provide consultation a few hours a week to ease the transition for the next medical director. Adam Crits, MD, is currently serving as the interim medical director.

BHRS Launches Advocacy Academy



Fifteen consumers and family members, primarily members of the Lived Experience & Education Workgroup (LEEW), graduated from the first BHRS Advocacy Academy in April. The Advocacy Academy was born from the

desire of LEEW, the Office of Consumer & Family Affairs (OCFA), and the Office of Diversity & Equity to help people with lived experience learn the necessary skills to become more effective advocates within BHRS and beyond.

The Advocacy Academy's goal is to provide training that will support direct participation in MHSA (Mental Health Services Act) and BHRS committees, workgroups, and community programs. In addition, it seeks to increase

personal hope, resiliency, and strength as it empowers students through their participation in the BHRS workgroups designed to improve the overall quality of BHRS services.

The Copeland Center for Wellness & Recovery designed the Academy's curriculum which was delivered virtually over five weeks. The curriculum included topics such as understanding what advocacy is, understanding its relationship with wellness and action planning, the structure of government organizations, and creating advocacy action plans.

To graduate, each participant had to create an individual advocacy plan, some of which include advocating for the creation of women-centered services, the inclusion of clinical and peer staff in crisis response teams, the creation of recovery-related graphic novels, and the provision of better services for those incarcerated.

The participants' responses were overwhelmingly positive. One graduate said, “The advocacy training opened my eyes, and I learned from scratch. The facilitators were very helpful, and it was great to meet all participants. The group works were very inspirational.”

The skills that the Academy imparted are now helping graduates prepare themselves to participate in BHRS workgroups that are open to clients/families and find their deepest motivations to advocate for positive social change, outreach, and community inclusion and education.

The OCFA is planning another Advocacy Academy within this fiscal year. Stay tuned for the application announcement.

Employee Service Awards



Congratulations to the following BHRS employees who were recognized this month by the County of San Mateo for their long and dedicated service:

40 Years

- Mary Vozikes, Contracts Management

20 years

- Anthony Barreiro, North County Adult

- Yolanda Booker, OASIS
- Jason Bromley, South County Adult
- Raquel Chavez, Youth Services Center
- Adam Rubenstein, North County Adult
- Martha Ugarte-Ortiz, Contracts Management

10 Years

- Margarie Davis, OASIS
- Stephanie Morales, OASIS
- Concepcion Ruiz Rivas, South County

Cities Light Up in Support of Mental Health Month



South San Francisco City Hall

San Mateo County celebrated Mental Health Month #HopeForChange in May. For the very first time, four cities in San Mateo County (Brisbane, Hillsborough, Redwood City, and South San Francisco)

lit up their buildings in green to symbolize mental health awareness month, and nearly all cities (19 out of 20) proclaimed May as Mental Health Month.

BHRS partnered with local agencies and community members to host 48 free public events throughout the month, reaching over 3,000 people. The topics targeted various interests, age groups, and languages (English, Spanish and Mandarin) to increase mental health awareness and reduce stigma. The events included music, open mics, film screenings, yoga and meditation, storytime, educational and informational workshops, speakers panels, and more. See a list of all events [here](#).

End Stigma Year Round

- **Reduce Stigma Year Round:** Mental health conditions affect 1 in 5 Americans. Stigma is toxic to their mental health because it creates an environment of shame, fear and silence that prevents many people from seeking help and treatment. Share this local webpage: www.smchealth.org/EndStigma.
- **Get Involved in the Mental Health Month Planning Committee for 2022:** We aim to start planning during winter 2021. For more information about the

committee, contact Sylvia Tang at stang@smcgov.org.

- **2021 Suicide Prevention Committee:** The Suicide Prevention Committee (SPC) provides oversight and direction for suicide prevention efforts in San Mateo County. Learn how you can support their work at smchealth.org/suicide-prevention.
- **September is Recovery Month and Suicide Prevention Month:** Get involved in the planning committees and participate in these event.

Thank you to the community partners who hosted these great events and brought the #HopeForChange messages to our community.

BHRS Response to Vaccination Lag

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The survey also found that the primary reason they vaccinated was for safety (42%), followed by a desire to avoid getting sick (15%), and to protect family members (14%).

While BHRS no longer offer the vaccine clinics, we have rolled out a dashboard where staff/contractors can find out if a client is unvaccinated or past due for their second dose. We have also provided guidance similar to motivational interviewing to prepare staff in engaging clients to get vaccinated. In addition, we plan to increase in-home vaccination efforts as needed.

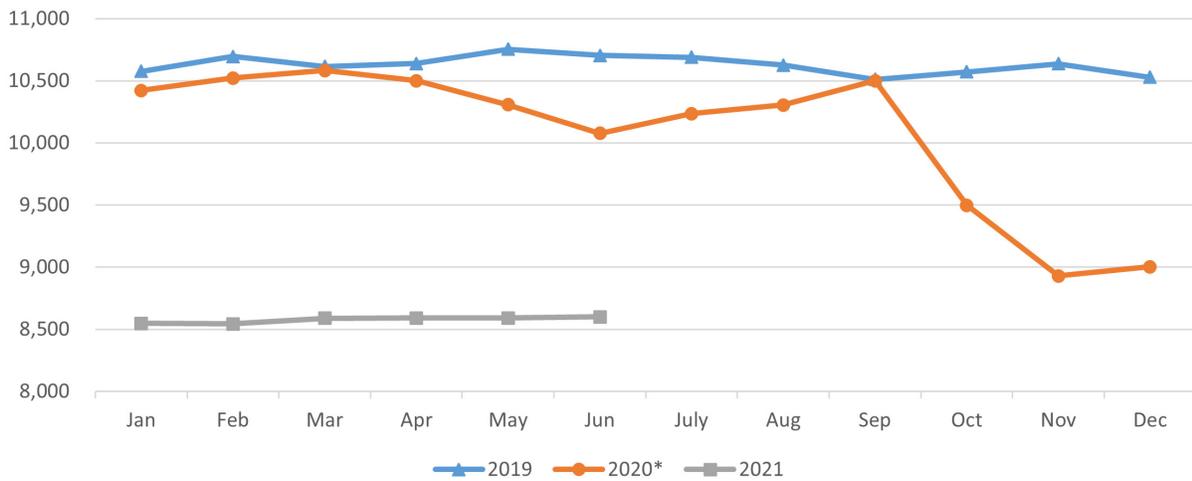
Interestingly, 65% of individuals with a past-due dose have received a service from BHRS within the last 30 days and 80% within the last 60 days. This provides us with an ideal opportunity to discuss the importance of vaccination with our clients.

With more than 3,000 clients yet to be vaccinated, an increasing number of past-due second doses, and small weekly increases in the number of doses administered, “relentless incrementalism” best describes BHRS’s effort to vaccinate our clients. Our goal is to reach 75% this year and 85% next year.

Now more than ever, with the rise in new cases due to the fast spreading Delta variant, it is important that we continue to work together to ensure our populations are protected. Many thanks to the BHRS staff and contractors who have gone above and beyond to get our clients vaccinated.

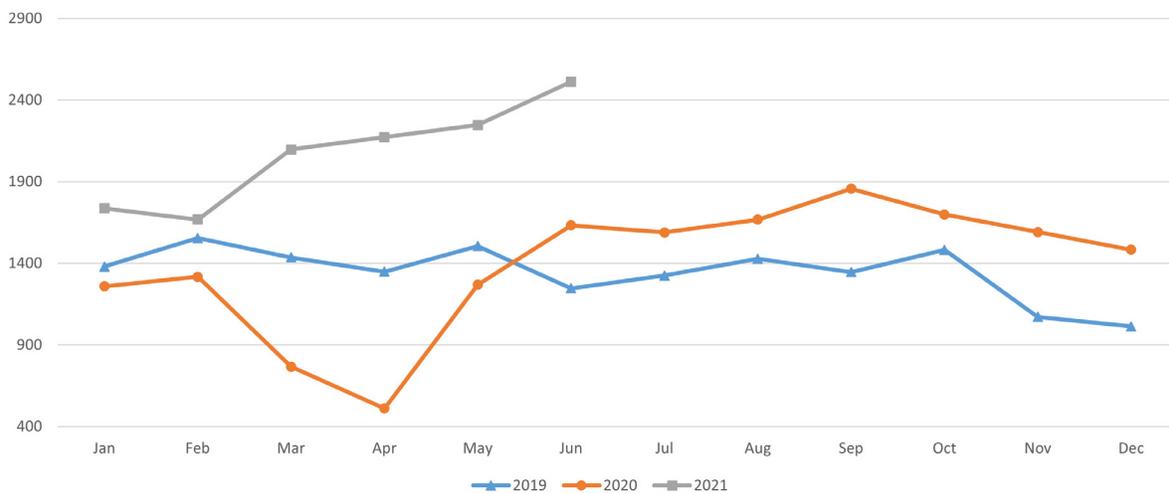
SNAPSHOT: BHRS Clients - as of June 30, 2021

Total BHRS Clients by Month (2019 - 2021)



*Mild to moderate services reverted to Health Plan of San Mateo 10/1/20.

BHRS Access Call Center - Total Calls by Month (2019 - 2021)



Service Category	Total Clients	Admitted - June	Discharged - June
Mental Health Services County SMI	5,682	554	575
Mental Health Services Contracted SMI	1,982	70	78
AOD Services	935	148	111
Total BHRS Clients	8,599	772	764

Total clients are unduplicated within each service category, however, if a client received services in more than one category during the same period, the client is counted in multiple categories.

R3% - 31.3% (revenue ratio of billed services as of 06/30/21)