

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Scott Gilman, MSA, CBHE

Mental Health Month Raises Awareness

Mental Health Month was a huge success this year. Thanks to the Mental Health Month planning committee and a partnership with local city mayors and community agencies, the county hosted over 30 events in May to increase awareness of and reduce the stigma around mental health conditions. In addition, 15 cities proclaimed May as Mental Health Month and five city buildings, in addition to the county building, were lit up in lime green – and one city raised a lime green flag!

This was the first year since 2019 that in-person events were offered. These included a film screening for *Orchestrating Change*, StarVista's Mental Health Matters Walk, and Cunha Middle School's Wellness Festival: *Celebrating Resilience in Connection*. Additionally, city mayors hosted six free Mental Health First Aid Trainings.

According to participant evaluations, 91% agreed that they had learned more about mental health and/or substance use services they can reach out to, while 88% agreed that they were more willing to seek professional support for a mental health and/or substance use condition if they need it.

Stay tuned for information on 2023 Mental Health Month [here](#).



City Hall, South San Francisco

Cariño Project Expands Services for Coastside Farmworkers and Families



The Cariño Project, which launched in September 2020, provides culturally centered community-based mental health and substance use services, prevention, and support. This includes peer support groups, art and wellness activities, capacity building, outreach, and linkages to behavioral health services and resources for marginalized communities on the Coastside. Services target primarily Latino migrant farmworkers and their families in Pescadero.

The project was founded by Ayudando Latinos A Sonar (ALAS), which creates new models of providing services grounded in culturally responsive frameworks of intervention. The Cariño Project centers on the belief that each person and family is rooted in a history of tradition and culture that strengthens who they are. This allowed ALAS to expand its mental health services and outreach efforts to the community.

In October 2021, with funding from the Mental Health Service Act (MHSA), ALAS partnered with El Centro de Libertad to address substance use matters through the Cariño Project. A dedicated social worker and a farmworker team visit local farms to speak with farmworkers to uncover alcohol or drug dependency among the farmworkers or their family members. The social worker also meets with various groups such as a mothers' group (started by the project) and a "baby & me" group, and engages community members during food pantry services to identify individuals who might require substance use treatment services.

34.4%

Revenue Ratio (R3)

8,571

Total Clients

926

Admitted

915

Discharged

(Continued on page 3)

Behavioral Health Commission

The Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission has been renamed to the Behavioral Health Commission. The change was initiated to promote inclusivity and better represent the services provided by Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The commission consists of 19 members appointed by the Board of Supervisors and represents family members, consumers/clients, professionals, and interested residents. There are also two youth commissioners. The Behavioral Health Commission is committed to the goals of promoting wellness and recovery, enhancing public awareness and knowledge of mental health and substance use conditions, and eliminating stigma. [Learn more](#) about the commission.

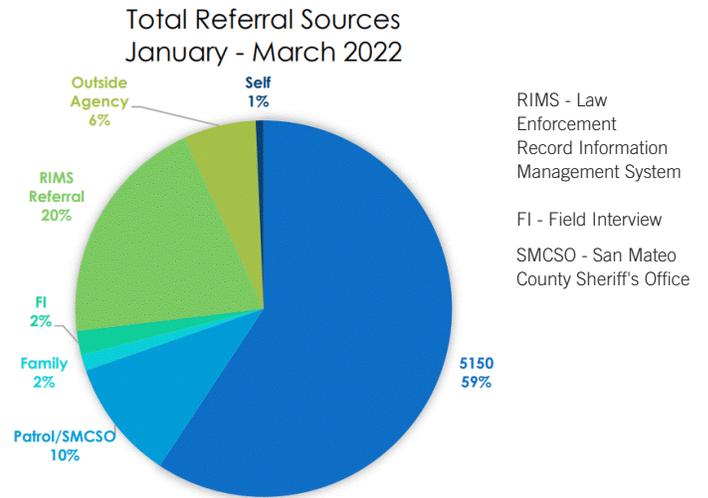
New Alcohol and Other Drugs Standing Committee - The newly formed Alcohol and Other Drugs Standing Committee meets the third Tuesday of each month from 1 to 2 p.m. Visit the [BHRS calendar](#) for meeting details.

Psychiatric Emergency Response Team

The Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) was San Mateo County's first co-response model established by BHRS and the sheriff's office in 2015. A detective and a clinician were assigned to follow up on all sheriff's office cases in which mental illness was suspected to be a factor. In 2019, the county dedicated additional resources to PERT due to the large number of cases being referred to the team. Currently, PERT consists of two detectives and two clinicians providing more support to individuals and families, within the sheriff's office jurisdiction, who are struggling with mental health and/or substance use.

With the increase in size, PERT has been able to carry a caseload to close gaps throughout the mental health and criminal justice systems. PERT develops strategic action plans to assist clients in connecting with treatment and interfacing with county programs, community organizations, law enforcement, jail and juvenile hall, courts, and re-entry programs such as probation, mental health court, and parole.

PERT also began providing training for allied agencies and partners. Since 2005, the sheriff's office has been facilitating the quarterly Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), which offers training to county law enforcement agencies, dispatchers, and AMR medics. In 2019, PERT began developing the Enhanced Crisis Intervention Training program (ECIT), which rolled out in January 2021 and is held quarterly. ECIT builds on the foundation of the CIT program and focuses on de-escalation strategies and techniques at all stages of the 911 crisis call response. Learn more about [PERT](#).



Contractors' Association Spotlight



STAR VISTA **StarVista** is a nonprofit organization that, for over 55 years, has been helping people throughout San Mateo County navigate life's challenges. Its mission is to deliver high-impact services via counseling, case management, skill development, and crisis prevention to children, youth, adults, and families. Through 30 different programs, it reaches tens of thousands of people in the community each year.

To serve its clients, supporters, staff, partners, and diverse community, StarVista utilizes a strength-based, holistic approach, guided by its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. It works closely with local governments to fill unmet needs, partner with schools to connect directly with young people, and collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to share expertise and best practices.

StarVista remains responsive to community needs and, this year, has established new programs that are the first

of their kind in San Mateo County. Two of these programs are the [Youth Stabilization, Opportunity, and Support \(S.O.S.\) program](#), which is a mobile crisis response service for youth ages 0-25 and the [Community Wellness and Crisis Response Team \(CWCRT\)](#), which is designed to improve law enforcement response to community members experiencing mental health crises. Through these two programs and many others, StarVista helps people persevere and transform some of life's toughest situations into personal victories. More information is available at star-vista.org

Learn more about the BHRS Contractors' Association member agencies, programs and services at www.smcontractors.net.



CalAIM Corner



No Wrong Door

The purpose of the No Wrong Door policy under CalAIM is to ensure that Medi-Cal beneficiaries receive timely mental health services without delay, regardless

of the delivery system through which they seek care, and that beneficiaries can maintain treatment relationships with trusted providers without interruption. This means that people can easily access services through both the Mental Health Plan (MHP - BHRS) and the Managed Care Plan (MCP - Health Plan of San Mateo).

Traditionally, BHRS clinicians focused on the client being in the right system, i.e., that the mild to moderately mentally ill were being served through HPSM and the severely mentally ill were served through BHRS. Services were not provided until the beneficiary was in the right system.

Now, clinicians can provide and bill for services regardless of whether the beneficiary is in the right system. Services can also be provided without a completed assessment. Once the assessment is completed and the right level of care is determined, the beneficiary is moved, as clinically appropriate, to the right system.

Beneficiaries can also receive services from the MHP and the MCP simultaneously, as long as the care is coordinated and non-duplicative. If the beneficiary is co-occurring, they can receive care wherever they seek it – MHP, MCP, or DMC-ODS (AOD-substance use provider). Of course, wherever the beneficiary receives care, it

must be within the provider's scope of practice and competency.

No Wrong Door provides beneficiaries with more flexibility based on individual needs and preferences. It also provides flexibility to providers because services can be offered and will be paid for even if the beneficiary is not in the right system. The key word is "system," in that a beneficiary may not be served by any program they present at, but they can be served by the system that program is in. Therefore, if a person presents with a mental health issue at a DMC-ODS program, the beneficiary would be referred back to the MCP or MHP. However, if that person is co-occurring, the DMC-ODS program can provide substance use services immediately and the mental health services can be provided simultaneously by a qualified provider within the MCP or MHP.

Learn more about [CalAIM](#).

Cariño Project (continued from page 1)

Core social and behavioral health services have become even more important as a result of the pandemic and inflation. The Cariño Project met many of these needs by providing expanded outreach and services. The case manager supported the increased caseload and provided support in triaging services, linking individuals to resources, and accessing insurance and wellness care.

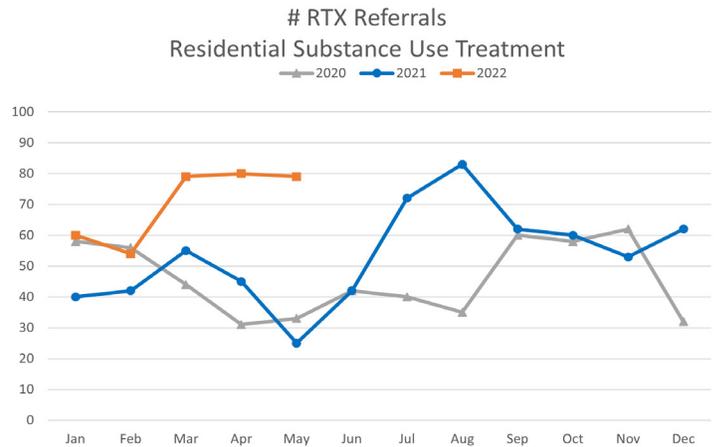
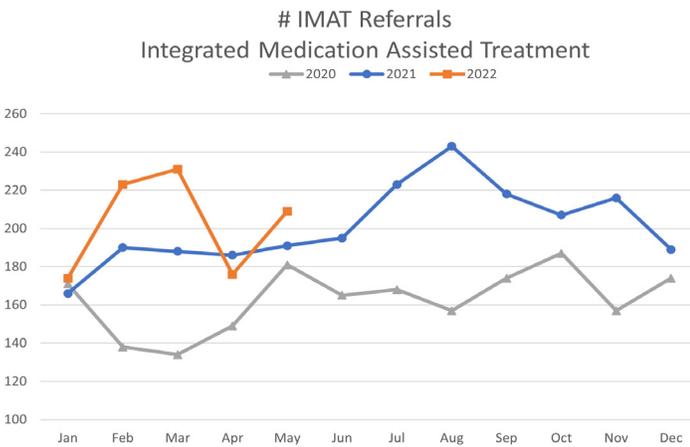
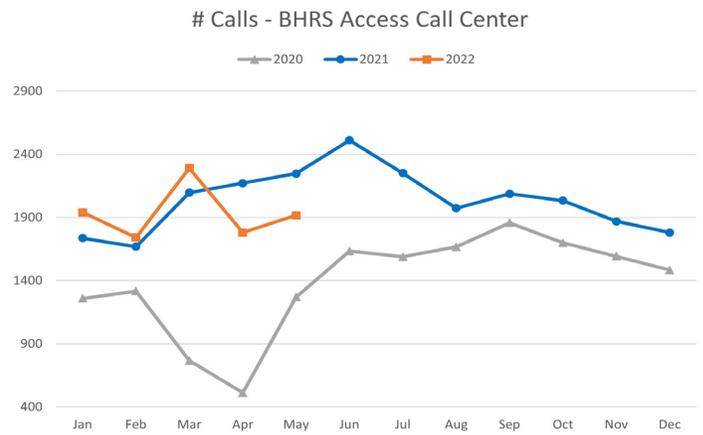
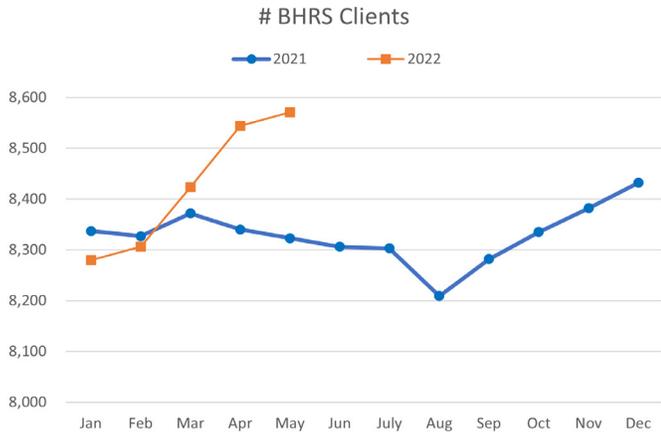
The need for mental health services also grew during the pandemic. Even with additional funding from the MHSA, Sutter Health, and the Atkinson Foundation, there remains a waitlist for mental health appointments. The mental health team currently sees about 80 clients monthly, while the case management team sees 50 to 60 clients.

ALAS data for FY 20/21:

- Served 1,221 unduplicated clients (735 unduplicated families) across all programs/services
- 35 clients received mental health services
- 95% of clients identified as Latinx race/ethnicity
- 90% of clients' primary language is Spanish

ALAS recently participated in an evaluation plan development to collect and report client outcome data, including improved clinical outcomes, increased connection and supports, and access to services. They continue seeking opportunities to support the increasing needs of the Coastside community.

SNAPSHOT: BHRS Clients - as of May 31, 2022



Service Category	Total Clients	Admitted - May	Discharged - May
Mental Health Services County SMI	5,695	667	651
Mental Health Services Contracted SMI	1,843	108	133
AOD Services County	439	65	20
AOD Services Contracted	594	86	111
Total BHRS Clients	8,571	926	915

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% - 34.4% (revenue ratio of billed services as of 5/31/22)