

# DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Scott Gilman, MSA, CBHE

## Youth S.O.S. Team Expands Mobile Crisis Services



As part of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) three-year planning process, stakeholders recommended the expansion of mobile behavioral health crisis

support services for youth in crises to decrease the need for psychiatric hospitalizations, emergency rooms visits and law enforcement response. The recommendation included evidence-based crisis prevention efforts such as training youth, parents and school staff to identify signs of mental health and substance use-related issues, reducing stigma, supporting youth behavioral health, and increasing their knowledge of available local resources. The Mental Health & Substance Abuse Recovery Commission's Youth Committee then met monthly starting in October 2019, to plan an integrated youth crisis strategy.

Subsequently, the Family Urgent Response System (FURS), established by Senate Bill 80 and amended by Assembly Bill 79, required that counties develop and implement a mobile response system for current and former foster youth and their caregivers. BHRS and Human Services Agency partners opted to implement a coordinated effort to address the needs of both the youth crisis support services and the FURS foster youth response, thus establishing the Youth S.O.S. Team.

### Youth S.O.S. Team

Youth Stabilization, Opportunity, & Support (S.O.S.) services are expected to launch by July 1, 2021, and will be provided by StarVista, which, in addition to running

the local Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Center, already provides many programs for youths and families in the County.

The Youth S.O.S team incorporates trauma-informed, culturally-responsive best practices to respond to youth (age 0-21) who may be in a crisis anywhere in San Mateo County within 24-hours. The team will be dispatched via the StarVista Crisis Hotline, available 24 hours-per-day, 7 days-per-week. For current and former youth in foster care, the team will provide an immediate, in-person, 24/7 response.

The response team will consist of a triage clinician and a family partner to help improve the families' level of comfort and trust, and support linkages and warm hand-offs. In addition, a youth peer partner will support community awareness and education of behavioral health crises, suicide prevention and response services and will join the response team if needed to support the youth in crisis.

## County Helps Preserve Affordable Transitional Housing



This past December, the County and BHRS contractor, Our Common Ground (OCG), partnered up to purchase "The Gorman House"—a transitional housing facility located in Belmont at 750 El Camino

Real. Funds from the CARES Act were used by the County to purchase the facility, then leased back to OCG, who have provided residential and transitional housing services from this location since 1988.

The property was originally used as community

**29.4%**

Revenue Ratio (R3)

**9,291**

Total Clients

**733**

Admitted

**782**

Discharged

housing for individuals with a serious mental illness. It was owned and operated by Dr. Richard Lamb, a psychiatrist, and the former director of psychiatric rehabilitation services for San Mateo County Mental Health from 1964 to 1976. Dr. Lamb was passionate about helping those with a serious mental illness who were homeless and involved in the criminal justice system.

In 1988, OCG leased the Belmont property from Dr. Lamb to open an adolescent residential substance use treatment program. The facility was converted to housing for adults receiving residential treatment in 2001, and in 2008, a multi-use transitional living facility for people in recovery was established. The facility was named "The Gorman House," after Native American Artist Carl Gorman of the Navajo Nation, who donated \$25,000 to help OCG launch the transitional living facility in 1998.

When Dr. Lamb passed away in July 2019, the Lamb family wished to sell the property to OCG to honor their father's passion for helping those with behavioral health conditions and honor their 30+ year relationship.

OCG contacted San Mateo County for financial assistance. In December 2020, the County purchased the facility and leased it back to OCG long-term for transitional housing for San Mateo County's recovery community, demonstrating that, when we all come together, we can accomplish anything despite obstacles.

"We are grateful for the partnership with the County and being able to secure the property for long term use as a community living facility," said Orville Roache, Executive Director, Our Common Ground.

## Congratulations



**Jennifer Basler-Cameron**, Clinical Services Manager I, Crisis/Outreach and Engagement Services, has served as the work out of class clinical services manager I for crisis/outreach and engagement services since July 2020. Jennifer previously worked for BHRS as the program specialist for the PERT (Psychiatric Emergency Response Team) and HEAL (Homeless Engagement Assessment and Linkage) teams. Jennifer

brings to the role several years of experience in mental health, AOD, and crisis and outreach services in both the US and Canada.

She also has a wealth of knowledge and experience in crisis services as BHRS's Crisis Response Team Coordinator and through her work with Field Crisis and the BHRS Disaster Operations Center during the COVID-19 pandemic; experience working with law enforcement around mental health issues in multiple jurisdictions; and experience overseeing outreach and engagement teams through HEAL and previous positions.



**Claudia Saggese**, Office of Consumer and Family Affairs (OCFA) Director, has worked for the OCFA for 15 years. She served as the work-out-of-class director for the past two years. Prior to this, she spent 12 years as the Spanish family liaison and then one year as the

coordinator for family education and support. Claudia used her lived experience as a family member to support other family members of adults and youth in obtaining information, support, education and resources, and assisting them in navigating systems. She has also led the monthly Spanish Family Support Group in Redwood City for the past 13 years.

Claudia has a Family Development Credential and is a trained facilitator for NAMI Familia a Familia and NAMI Basics; Parent Project; and Wellness, Recovery, Action Planning (WRAP).

## BHRS Launches Vaccine Clinics



In mid-February, San Mateo County surpassed 100,000 residents vaccinated, reaching half of the older adult residents. County vaccinations targeted Health Plan of San Mateo members and others ages

65+, and remaining health care workers through two mass vaccination clinics located at the San Mateo County Event Center and San Francisco International (SFO), with SFO reaching 3,500 older adults in a single day. Vaccinations are also being administered by many

of the local primary care clinics and more recently, by local pharmacies. Based on the California Immunization Registry data, as of 2/23/21: 136,875 individuals (21.3% of County population age 16+) have received 188,150 doses and 51,275 individuals (37.5%) have completed their vaccination series. See the most recent data [here](#).

Last month, BHRS began contracting with HR Support (who currently runs several testing sites throughout the County and provides surveillance testing to nearly 41 facilities with BHRS clients) to provide a series of vaccination clinics at three of our regional clinics, vaccinating a total of 180 BHRS staff and contractors—with most all completing their vaccination series within a month.

BHRS offered these clinics as staff began having trouble obtaining the vaccine through their own health care providers or were previously not ready to be vaccinated. This provided BHRS the opportunity to gain valuable experience facilitating the clinics and better prepared us to provide the clinics for our clients.

As the County's Mental Health Plan for Medi-Cal beneficiaries with a serious mental illness, BHRS is responsible a population of 15,000 who are not assigned to the Health Plan of San Mateo. BHRS is planning to roll out a series of vaccine clinics for their clients in order to meet the specific needs of this population. It is estimated that at least 20% of these clients will most likely receive their vaccination through BHRS for a variety of reasons – some may only be willing to receive them through a trusted provider, others aren't able to wait in line or to be in large crowds, while some do not have Internet access required to register for mass vaccination clinics. In addition, our home/facility bound clients will need a mobile clinic that can go to them. The clinics for clients are anticipated to roll out late March.

## New Housing Initiative Task-force



A new [Mental Health Services Act](#) (MHSA) Housing Initiative Task-force has been developed to further this work. The task-force will be co-led by consultant and subject-matter expert, Judy Davila and MHSA Manager, Doris

Estremera. Judy has worked in leadership roles with what is now known as, the Department of Housing under the Human Services Agency, Alcohol and Other Drug Services, and as the clinical services manager for adult services under BHRS.

Participation in the Housing Initiative Task-force is time-limited, with the following objectives:

- Identify gaps in services based on a proposed housing continuum of housing support services
- Define and prioritize outcomes
- Develop and prioritize housing strategies for future funding consideration

The meetings will be held virtually on the first Wednesday in March, April and May 2021 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining the task-force, we ask that you attend all three (3) meetings to allow for consistency in information sharing and decision making.

Contact Doris Estremera, MHSA Manager at [mhsa@smcgov.org](mailto:mhsa@smcgov.org) or (650) 573-2889 for the meeting links.

## BHRS Cultural Competence Updates



BHRS is excited to share our Cultural Competence Plan (CCP) [update](#) for the fiscal year 19-20. The Department of Mental Health requires county mental health systems to submit a CCP consistent

with the Cultural Competence Plan Requirements (CCPR) criteria. The criteria assists counties in identifying and addressing disparities across the entire behavioral health care system, including Medi-Cal services, and Mental Health Services Act and realignment activities. This plan is intended to move providers toward the reduction of behavioral health services disparities identified in racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and other underserved/unserved communities.

BHRS continues to deepen its efforts to develop a culturally responsive and inclusive system in support of the behavioral health and recovery needs of San Mateo

**NEW COVID MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES PAGE**  
[smchealth.org/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellness-resources](https://smchealth.org/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellness-resources)

County’s increasingly diverse population. Through the BHRS Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE), we have laid a strong foundation and legitimacy within our system for deepening the manifestations of cultural humility and inclusion in partnership with diverse stakeholders and communities. ODE staff have been leading this work through:

- The community-oriented Health Equity Initiatives and the Diversity and Equity Council (Cultural Competence Committee).
- Facilitating BHRS’ process to Multicultural Organization Development.
- Championing the adoption of the broader County Health racial equity framework.
- Development of a health equity focused Theory of Change (Strategic Plan) framework for ODE.

BHRS is currently on a three-year reporting cycle. Our [latest formal plan](#) was submitted during the fiscal year 18-19. In the interim years, BHRS submits CCP updates that reflect our progress and how our work supports the CCPR criteria. This year, BHRS highlighted how our agency swiftly moved to address disparities in our marginalized and communities of color during

the pandemic. Additionally, our workforce rapidly implemented telehealth to provide care to those we serve and worked with our community partners and community members to identify and address the concerns and challenges of the community, as well as community based organizations. The updates also describe the incredible work accomplished through our strategic partnerships and community empowerment programs.

The advancement of cultural competence within BHRS is a collective and collaborative effort. As we prepare to submit a new plan, we want to express our gratitude for your continued support of this vital work. Together, we are ensuring that San Mateo County achieves cultural and linguistic competence and becomes an equitable place for all. For more info, contact [Maria Lorente Foresti](#).

### Correction

In the February 2021 issue, the article *"Service Connect Recognized as County's Team of the Month,"* should have included BHRS staff Faith Rohlke and Nabeela Rahman. Congratulations Faith and Nabeela!

## SNAPSHOT: BHRS Clients - as of January 31, 2021

| Service Category                         | Total Clients | Admitted - January | Discharged - January |
|--|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Mental Health Services<br>County SMI     | 5,753         | 539                | 572                  |
| Mental Health Services<br>Contracted SMI | 2,600         | 85                 | 89                   |
| AOD Services                             | 938           | 109                | 121                  |
| <b>Total BHRS Clients</b>                | <b>9,291</b>  | <b>733</b>         | <b>782</b>           |

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%** - 29.4% (revenue ratio of billed services as of 01/31/21)

# Be the one to help



## Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) Housing Initiative Taskforce

Join advocates, providers, clients and family members to provide input on MHSA housing priorities!

The MHSA Three-Year Plan prioritizes housing supports for individuals living with mental illness as an area to engage in deeper strategic planning and guide future funding allocations.

Join us for a time-limited Housing Initiative Taskforce!

### Objectives include:

- Identify gaps in services based on a proposed Housing Continuum of housing support services
- Define and prioritize outcomes
- Develop and prioritize housing strategies for future funding consideration

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- ✓ Stipends are available for clients/family members
  - ✓ Language interpretation is provided if needed\*

*\*Please contact [mhsa@smcgov.org](mailto:mhsa@smcgov.org) or 650-573-2889, at least 2 weeks in advance, to reserve language services.*

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### DATES & TIME

Wednesday's 10:30am – 12:00pm

**March 3, 2021**

**April 7, 2021**

**May 5, 2021**

To join the Taskforce, we ask that you attend all three (3) meetings in March, April and May to allow for consistency in information sharing and decision making.

Contact Doris Estremera, MHSA Manager at [mhsa@smcgov.org](mailto:mhsa@smcgov.org) or (650) 573-2889 if you would like to participate in all three meetings and to receive the meeting links.

[www.smchealth.org/MHSA](http://www.smchealth.org/MHSA)



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH  
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) provides a dedicated source of funding in California for mental health services by imposing a 1% tax on personal income over \$1 million.