

# DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Scott Gilman, MSA, CBHE

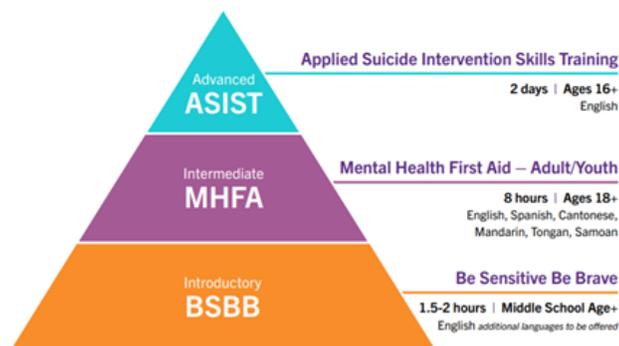
## Suicide Prevention Trainings for Community Gatekeepers

The recently released [San Mateo County Suicide Prevention Roadmap 2021-2026](#) outlines a comprehensive suicide prevention strategy, including strategic aims, goals, and objectives. Suicide prevention gatekeeper trainings are among the key and most widely known suicide prevention activities that the Roadmap highlights. (More details are available in Goal 9 and Objective 9a on pages 40-41.)

These suicide prevention gatekeeper trainings are for any community member (especially those without prior professional training) who wishes to learn how to identify the warning signs of suicide, talk to a person in a suicidal crisis and refer that person to appropriate support. Specialized gatekeeper trainings are offered for different settings and roles (e.g., Kognito for schools and Crisis Intervention Training for law enforcement and first responders). The primary trainings available for community members in San Mateo County include: *Be Sensitive, Be Brave*; *Mental Health First Aid*; and *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills* training. (See below for the key differences. More details are available on page 88 of in the Roadmap's appendix.)

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### Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training



## StarVista Opens Much Awaited Detox Program



### STAR VISTA

StarVista's 24-hour First Chance Residential Detox Center is a new withdrawal management (detox) substance abuse treatment program established to offer

women specialized treatment and supervision in their safe transition through withdrawal from various substances. However, with the unexpected temporary closure of Palm Ave Detox (which served both men and women) in March 2021, San Mateo County was left without a local provider to offer detox services to the community. To meet this urgent need before opening its doors in July, StarVista quickly pivoted and reconfigured their program to temporarily serve adult men, the population historically most in need of detox in the county.

Palm Ave Detox is working to reopen, possibly in Spring 2022. Once that happens, First Chance plans to serve women only at its withdrawal management (detox) facility. This would make it the first female-focused detox facility in the county to provide gender-responsive treatment.

Years in the making, First Chance Residential Detox will provide women-identifying people with the specialized care necessary to achieve stable recovery. "It's going to be very focused on women's issues because there's often a lot of trauma," said Clarise Blanchard, StarVista's clinical director. "It's designed that way, with a lot of heart in it."

A few years ago, the vision for a women's detox clinic was conceived when the county learned that, after undergoing detox, female clients frequently relapsed at much higher rates than men. They found that women often returned to misusing substances because gender-specific traumas

**33.1%**

Revenue Ratio (R3)

**8,406**

Total Clients

**770**

Admitted

**729**

Discharged

remained unaddressed in co-ed settings.

An all-women facility removes the stigma and apprehension often experienced in a co-ed detox environment. Pregnant women also require special medical attention, care, and family and child services upon completion. Beyond regular meals and a safe place to lay their heads, clients receive routine check-ins from licensed counselors, access to therapy, medical supervision, and connections to wrap around services after they exit the program. Clients can participate in the program for any duration from three days to three weeks.

First Chance is co-located with StarVista's Sobering Station in Burlingame. Intakes occur Monday through Friday between 9 AM and 3 PM, and all individuals need medical clearance and a negative COVID test. Medical clearance may come from the San Mateo Medical Center Emergency Department or the Street Medicine Team. While the program invites a diverse group of clients, it reaches out in particular to marginalized populations that may not have as many resources.

"This will be the jumping off point and I'm hoping that this will open the door to other detox for women in the area," said Linda Malone, program director of StarVista's First Chance program. Learn more about the First Chance Residential Detox Center and Sobering Station [here](#).

## New ODE Recognition Series



Scott Gruendl

BHRS strives to be a truly multicultural organization. In a colloquial sense, BHRS aims to "be about it" in its actions, values, priorities, and commitments to eliminating practices and policies that do not support equitable outcomes. How does that happen? It takes the willingness of staff at all levels, particularly executive leadership, to initiate and continue often tricky discussions about equity, particularly issues surrounding race, power, and privilege. Such discussions require personal reflection, vulnerability, and courage. But who does that in a professional setting? Are there role models?

Through many of its programs and initiatives, the BHRS Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) witnesses the transformation of both our BHRS systems, and of staff. The ODE team began discussions about ways to recognize people who are living into our multicultural organizational

development (MCOD) vision.

The Workforce Education Team also noticed in both the Internship Orientation and the Cultural Humility training series, one executive leader consistently showed up willing to courageously engage in personal reflection and vulnerability. Scott Gruendl, BHRS assistant director, has eagerly participated in the Internship Orientation and attended the Cultural Humility training series several times beyond the requirement.

Scott's actions with regards to consistently living into and continuing the MCOV vision over several years, and his willingness to express both courage and vulnerability as an executive leader in BHRS, exemplify equity in leadership.

The initial recognition award in the BHRS ODE Recognition Series is the Equity in Leadership award called the **Scott Gruendl Equity in Leadership Award**. Recipients will be BHRS executive-level leadership members who exemplify the MCOV vision in their roles and interactions with BHRS staff, providers and San Mateo County communities. The award was presented to Mr. Gruendl during the BHRS Internship Orientation in September.

## Commissioner Retires



Patricia Way

**Patricia Way** took the Loyalty Oath as a Commissioner on November 15, 2015 and served as a family member on the [Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission](#) until the end of her second term on September 30, 2021. During that time, she volunteered on various committees. Pat served as Chair of the Older Adult Committee, Chair of the full Commission, and Co-Vice Chair of the full Commission. She served during the leadership of previous BHRS Directors Steve Kaplan and David Young, and the current director, Scott Gilman. Pat has always believed in the importance and power of the family members and consumers lived experience in guiding the Commission.

"I was honored to have served the behavioral health community with a group of vibrant, caring Commissioners as well as dedicated staff. Much has been accomplished in recent years by the Commission, and needs do continue," said Pat. "I am hopeful that the Commission will continue to focus on expanding the continuum of housing and supportive services, the interface between law enforcement and behavioral health,

and the progress of the Cordilleras rebuilding and the re-opening of the psychiatric inpatient beds on 3AB. Continue to aim high...the community is counting on it!"

Thank you, Pat, for your many years of passionate and dedicated service to the commission and the San Mateo County community.

## Congratulations



Chauncey Chatman

**Chauncey Chatman MFT**, East Palo Alto clinic, was recognized at the Housing Hero Awards ceremony last month which took place at the Board of Supervisors meeting. This annual award honors community individuals and organizations who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in providing housing and/or helping at-risk individuals and families with mental health and/or co-occurring conditions to maintain stable housing. Watch the presentation of the award to Chauncey and other Housing Hero recipients [here](#).

## New Health Policy Removes Barriers



Historically, homeless patients who were served by the Street Medicine and Mobile Clinic teams and needed a safe place to get sober were required to first travel to the San Mateo Medical Center Emergency

Department to obtain medical clearance before being admitted to StarVista's First Chance Sobering Station and Withdrawal Management.

A typical medical clearance evaluation involves a history, a physical examination, laboratory studies, and sometimes a prescription for medication to treat the symptoms of alcohol or other substance withdrawal. This process can be highly time and resource-consuming and is often a barrier to treatment for those experiencing homelessness.

Due to a productive partnership led by Public Health Policy and Planning (PHPP) teams, StarVista and BHRS partners, PHPP's new medical clearance policy (2021-399) gives the medical providers on the PHPP Street Medicine and Mobile Clinic teams the ability to provide medical clearance for their existing patients to enter StarVista's First Chance Sobering Station and Withdrawal Management – potentially bypassing a lengthy trip to the Emergency Department

(ED) when not otherwise indicated.

These teams often have substantial and existing relationships with clients, thoroughly understand their medical histories, and can prescribe any medications needed. If a client has highly complex medical needs, or a history of alcohol-withdrawal-related seizures, is pregnant, or has other risk factors, the PHPP teams will work with the ED for the screening. However, this new policy will certainly reduce the load on the ED and offer homeless clients more opportunities for timely and successful treatment.

## COVID-19 Update

Vaccination efforts in the County experienced a setback this month when a data correction was implemented that lowered the total number of persons vaccinated. This included a 5% reduction countywide and a 1% reduction for BHRS. Youth Services will see its progress reduced further when the 5- to 11-year-old population is added to the count, with an estimated 331 additional clients in need of vaccination.

The BHRS Vaccination Outreach Planning Workgroup is developing several interventions after a deep dive review of available data to determine potential strategies for specific populations. A significant pilot is proposed for adult clients at the North County Outpatient Clinic.

We anticipate that, starting this month, vaccination numbers will reflect the workgroup's efforts.

## Suicide Prevention Training

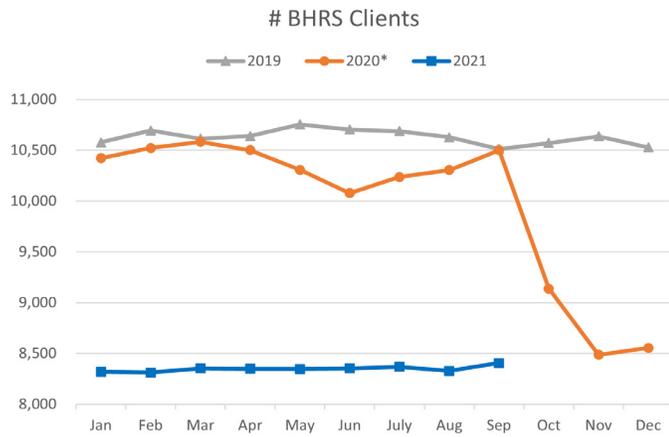
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Below are two key 2021 accomplishments for this goal:

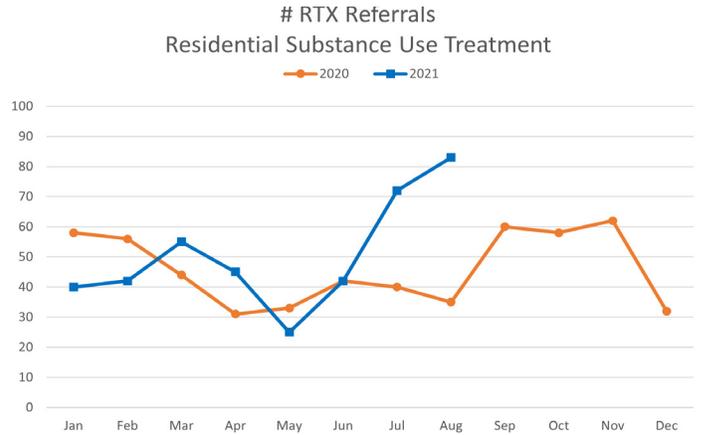
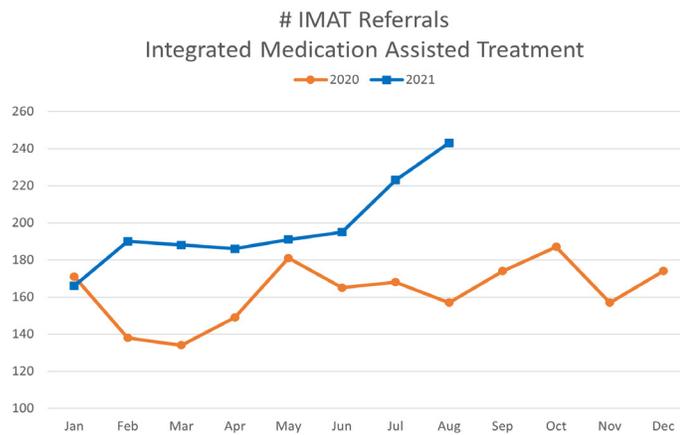
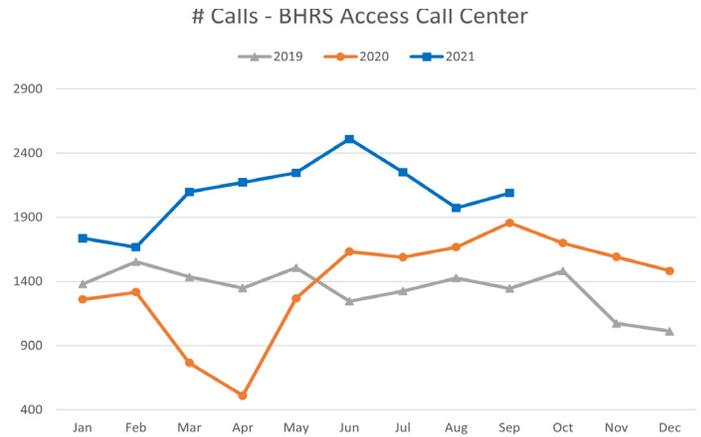
1. Partnered with the County Office of Education (COE), Peninsula Health Care District, and Sequoia Health Care District to offer Kognito training to all public school staff in San Mateo County.
2. Partnered with Dr. Joyce Chu to offer the only comprehensively culturally adapted community training for suicide prevention and mental health – *Be Sensitive, Be Brave* (BSBB). She is also leading the development of BSBB trainings in Chinese, Tagalog, and Spanish.

Learn more about suicide prevention gatekeeper trainings at [smchealth.org/SuicidePrevention](https://smchealth.org/SuicidePrevention).

# SNAPSHOT: BHRS Clients - as of September 30, 2021



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



Service Category	Total Clients	Admitted - September	Discharged - September
Mental Health Services County SMI	5,611	569	584
Mental Health Services Contracted SMI	1,825	103	77
AOD Services	970	98	68
<b>Total BHRS Clients</b>	<b>8,406</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>729</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%** - 33.1% (revenue ratio of billed services as of 09/30/21)