

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Scott Gilman, MSA, CBHE

County and Cities Promote Mental Health Month



May is Mental Health Month or, as it's also called around here, the lime greenest time of the year! This year's campaign, adopted from the statewide campaign, is #SMCTakeAction4MH.

Take Action for Mental Health encourages everyone to take actionable steps to address mental health and substance use matters. Over the past two years, the pandemic has been especially challenging for people. Mental health is more important than ever.

#SMCTakeAction4MH provides resources that allow people to support their own mental health and that of others. Attend one of the many events, learn how to find resources, support and check in with others, get involved, or start using San Mateo County's new wellness app, Wysa.

In addition, the San Mateo County Mayors Mental Health Initiative launched in January 2022 as a direct response to a growing need in local communities for access to mental health care resources. The initiative includes mayors from across 16 cities countywide who have agreed to prioritize the growing importance of addressing mental health challenges in their local communities. The mayors are taking action by claiming May as Mental Health Month at City Council meetings, lighting up public buildings in green (the national color for mental health), hosting community events that ignite conversations about mental wellness, and promoting mental health care resources.

See the full calendar of events, learn ways to get involved, and find trainings and resources at [SMCMentalHealthMonth.org](https://smcmentalhealthmonth.org).

"Wellness for All" – Free Access to Wellness App



The BHRSS Help@Hand project is launching a new campaign, "Wellness for All," that offers a FREE subscription to the Wysa mental wellness app for anyone who lives, works, or attends school in San Mateo County.

"Wellness for All" was born out of a desire to support individuals in San Mateo County who are coping with transitioning out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Wysa app is anonymous and provides access to 24x7 mental wellness supports through a chatbot and self-directed meditation, breathing and mindfulness exercises, with over 150+ self-care tools.

To download the app, visit the [Help@Hand website \(https://helpathandca.org/san-mateo/\)](https://helpathandca.org/san-mateo/) for instructions on obtaining the free access code. The subscription provides access to resources such as:

- Chatbot message system
- Tools that build healthy conversations
- Mindfulness exercises
- Activity reports
- Self-care kit



Help@Hand is a statewide Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Innovation (INN) project that aims to bring technology-based solutions to county behavioral health systems. In San Mateo County, this INN project began in 2019 and has provided an opportunity for BHRSS, stakeholders *(continued on page 4)*

32.8%

Revenue Ratio (R3)

8,584

Total Clients

979

Admitted

898

Discharged

Tony Hoffman Award



The San Mateo County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Recovery Commission's annual Tony Hoffman Award recognizes individuals, professionals, businesses, and media who have made an extraordinary

difference in the lives of people with mental illness and the San Mateo County community. This year, we are proud to honor the following service providers:

- Valerie Bor, Youth Services Center Family Partner and co-facilitator of the BHRS Spanish Coastside Parent Cafe group for utilizing her lived experience to engage and educate parents/caregivers.
- Karen Chavez, BHRS South County Youth Team/School-Based Mental Health Family Partner and co-facilitator of the BHRS Shasta Parent Cafe group, who went the extra mile during the pandemic.
- BHRS Health Ambassadors who were instrumental in providing community support and outreach during the pandemic.
- Seton Medical Center Geriatric Behavioral Health Unit for providing exceptional care and dedication in caring for and protecting a vulnerable population.

Contractors' Association Spotlight



California Clubhouse Celebrates Seven Years in San Mateo County!

As the world emerges from the pandemic, and the isolation stemming from it, mental health

is an even more integral part of the healing journey. Mental Health Awareness Month sets aside time and attention to educate and advocate for mental health to be understood and celebrated. Everyone, whether or not they have a diagnosis is affected by mental health. Equally, everyone has the ability to achieve better mental health. Recovery is real and possible. Through a peer-based approach, organizations like California Clubhouse are reducing isolation and breaking down the stigma associated with mental health.

As California Clubhouse celebrates its seventh anniversary in San Mateo County, it strives to bring hope, change and empowerment to its members. It does not enable passive

recipients of services. Instead, it EMPOWERS active, strong, and productive members of society. The Clubhouse innovates in how it addresses members' needs, building on inherent strengths instead of focusing on illness.

This impact chips away at the inequality and stigma of the national systemic approach that keeps those living with mental illness as patients and passive recipients of services for life. The Clubhouse offers engaging daily work readiness activities, wellness and recreational opportunities, social justice, and strong education and workforce development.

Its programs are organized around a belief that work, and work-mediated peer relationships, are restorative and provide a firm foundation for growth in a person's path to recovery. Want to learn more? Visit californiaclubhouse.org

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



Welcome



Kim Lorica, Contracts Management Analyst. Kim recently joined the contracts team and will be processing invoices for payment, creating and executing contracts, developing RFP's/RFQ's, and providing budgeting and forecasting information, among many other duties. Kim joins us from Alameda County, where he spent the last nine years working in their financial services division. Some of his responsibilities were to implement and manage contracts, prepare and amend board letters, run RFP's, as well as managing state and federal grants.

New MHSA Innovation Cycle

A new cycle of Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Innovation (INN) funds is now available for innovative project ideas. MHSA INN makes up about five percent of the County's MHSA funding. For San Mateo County, this is currently about \$2.15M per year for new projects.

INN Projects are three to five-year pilot projects intended to develop new approaches and community-driven best practices in behavioral health care systems. Projects can focus on any aspect of providing behavioral health care services, including but not limited to, administrative processes, community development, system development, research, prevention, early intervention, and treatment.

To qualify, INN ideas must either:



1. Make a change to an existing behavioral health practice: This means that while the idea might already be happening in a behavioral health setting in the United States, you are proposing changes to reach a different population or to add a unique component to the idea.
2. Introduce a new approach in the behavioral health field: This means that the idea hasn't been tried in a behavioral health setting. The idea could be brand-new, or it could have been tried in another community setting. The important part is that the idea hasn't been tried specifically with people, who are at risk of, or who have, behavioral health challenges.

Anyone who lives, works, plays, or attends school in San Mateo County can submit an idea for consideration. A submission packet including, an idea submission form, frequently asked questions, and myth busters will be available soon on the [MHSA website](#), under "Latest News."

Innovation funding has provided a means for BHRS to try new approaches. Below are previously approved projects:

- Total Wellness (2011-15)
- The Pride Center (2016-2021)
- Health Ambassador Program for Youth (2016-2020)
- Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT) in the Adult System of Care (2016-2020)
- Help@Hand (2019 – current)
- Kapwa Kafe – Social Enterprise Café for Filipino/a/x Youth (2021 – current)

Preparing for the New Peer Support Specialist Roles



Senate Bill 803 establishes a statewide certification program for peer support specialists. It recognizes the benefit that peer support provides to individuals and families with mental health and substance use difficulties, and the increased diversity and effectiveness that peers bring to the health workforce.

The bill defines peer support specialist services

as “culturally competent services that promote engagement, socialization, wellness, recovery, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, development of natural supports, and identification of strengths. Peer support specialist services include, but are not limited to, prevention services, support, coaching, facilitation, or education that is individualized and is conducted by a certified peer support specialist.”

The bill also provides the structure needed to maximize the federal match for peer services under Medi-Cal, adding a unique provider type within specific reimbursable services to allow counties to seek reimbursement or bill for these services.

The Department of Health Care Services, responsible for implementing the program by July 1, 2022, is sponsoring a series of webinars to help providers prepare for the changing roles of the peer support specialists. The webinars focus on integrating the specialists and services into treatment teams and are recommended for behavioral health leadership, programmatic staff, and/or peer support specialists.

Peer Support Specialist Supervision

Tuesday, May 17, 2022, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Presentation topics: DHCS requirements, certification program role, counties and CBO role, outcomes of Supervision of Peer Workforce SHARE! Project

Recommended staff: behavioral health leadership, programmatic staff, and/or peer supervisors.

[Register here.](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

Tuesday, June 7, 2022, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Presentation topics: Walk through the roles and responsibilities chart that is posted on DHCS' website

Recommended staff: behavioral health leadership, and/or programmatic staff. [Register here.](#)

Peer Support Specialist Areas of Specializations

Tuesday, June 14, 2022, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Presentation topics: Parent and Family Peers, forthcoming specializations

Recommended staff: behavioral health leadership, and/or programmatic staff, and/or peer support specialists.

[Register here.](#)

More on peer support specialists at [CalMHSA](#) or [DHCS](#).

First CalAIM Change Broadens Eligibility and Eases Access Criteria



BHRS is in the process of implementing its first major change under CalAIM, which pertains to medical necessity and access criteria. Under the new policies adopted by BHRS,

medical necessity and access criteria are now separated into two criteria and are redefined.

Under the old policy, medical necessity is met when there is a diagnosis that is on the list of covered diagnoses, an impairment from a list in Title 9, and an intervention requirement (i.e., an intervention exists that can correct or ameliorate the impairment).

Medical Necessity

Under the new policy, medical necessity for adults is when it is reasonable and necessary to protect life, when there is significant illness or disability, or to alleviate severe pain. For youth, it is met when it is necessary to correct or ameliorate a mental illness or condition discovered by a screening service, whether or not the service is covered. Mental health services that sustain, support, improve, or make more tolerable a condition is considered to ameliorate the condition and thus medically necessary and covered by EPSDT (Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis, and Testing).

Access Criteria

Adults are eligible to receive specialty mental health services if there is a significant impairment and/or reasonable probability of deterioration of an area of life functioning; AND the condition is due to a mental health disorder in either the DSM-V or ICD-10; OR a suspected mental health order that is not yet diagnosed.

Youth are eligible to receive specialty mental health services if they are at high risk for a mental health disorder due to trauma; OR have at least a significant impairment or deterioration of an important area of life functioning, probability of not progressing developmentally, or there is a need for a service that is not provided by the Managed Care Plan; AND their condition is due to a disorder in the DSM-V or ICD-10, a disorder not yet diagnosed, or significant trauma.

Additionally, the criteria will not exclude coverage or reimbursement for clinically appropriate and covered

prevention, screening, assessment, treatment, or recovery services if it is provided before a diagnosis, not in the treatment plan, or it is co-occurring with a substance use disorder condition. The diagnosis is no longer a prerequisite for receiving services.

Learn more about [CalAIM](#).

Wellness For All *(continued from page 1)*

and community partners to leverage mental wellness focused applications or “apps,” to reach and engage two priority populations, i.e., transition age youth and older adults, with the following goals:

- Provide access/linkages to behavioral health services
- Provide social connectivity and reduce isolation
- Support self-directed mental wellness/recovery goals



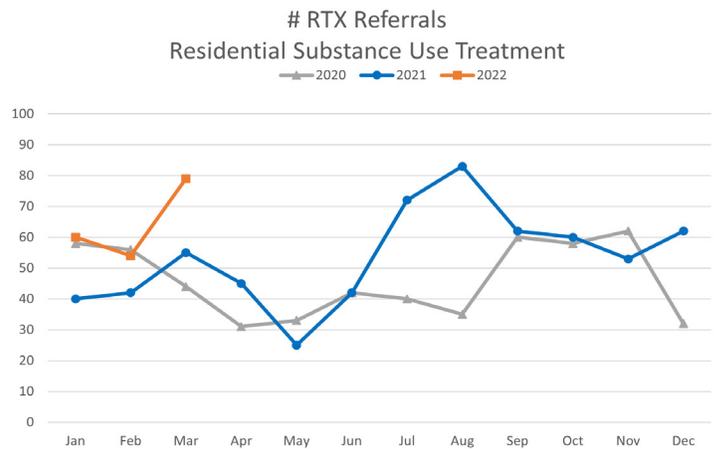
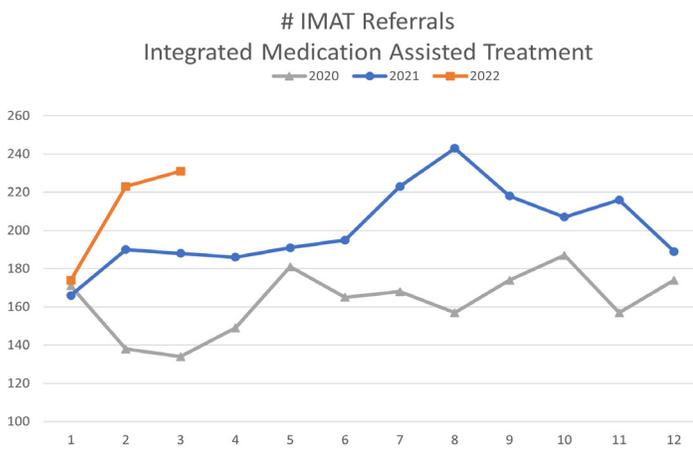
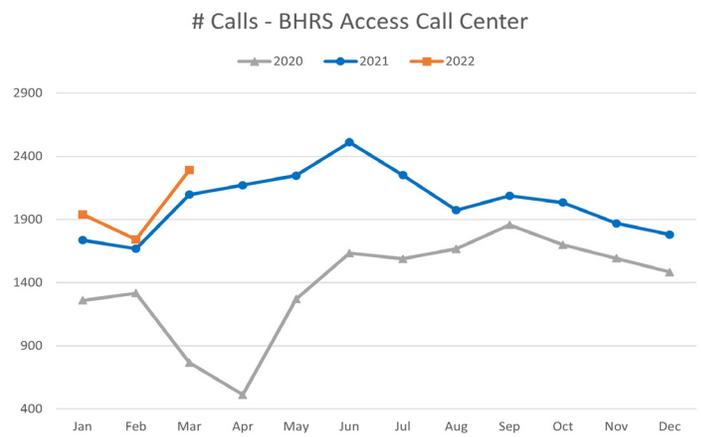
The Help@Hand Advisory Committee and Youth

Advisory Group, comprised of clients, family members, and providers from the older adult and young adult communities, as well as contracted partners (Peninsula Family Service, Youth Leadership Institute, Heart and Soul, and California Clubhouse), meet monthly and have accomplished the following:

- Identified and established client and community technology supports including:
 - » Adding texting capacity to the local teen crisis services managed by StarVista
 - » Distributing 250 devices to community partners and over 400 directly to BHRS clients
 - » Providing digital literacy supports via trainings of BHRS Peer and Family Partners, Tech Cafes to the community and Get App-y Workshops to older adults
- Vetting over 100 apps, testing five apps with the community and selecting Wysa to launch broadly
- Conducted a pilot of the Wysa app with older adults and young adults, and collaborated with the developer to customize app

The Wysa app is currently being tested further by BHRS clients to determine if the app can be a supportive wellness resource for clients.

SNAPSHOT: BHRS Clients - as of March 30, 2022



Service Category	Total Clients	Admitted - March	Discharged - March
Mental Health Services County SMI	5,603	726	695
Mental Health Services Contracted SMI	1,811	102	83
AOD Services County	548	62	16
AOD Services Contracted	622	89	104
Total BHRS Clients	8,584	979	898

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% - 32.8% (revenue ratio of billed services as of 3/30/22)