

20th Year Anniversary Office of Consumer and Family Affairs

2004 - 2024



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

To: Mental Health Board

Mental Health Program Supervisors

From: Gale Bataille, Mental Health Director

Subject: Mental Health Consumer Affairs Coordinator Date: February 21, 2004

San Mateo County Mental Health Services (SMCMHS) was fortunate to hire Linford Gayle as our first Consumer Affairs Coordinator in early January 2004. Linford was the Ombudsman for San Francisco County Behavioral Health Services prior to accepting this new and challenging position in San Mateo County. **This position was created to promote the active and meaningful involvement of mental health consumers, family members and parents in all aspects of the mental health system.** This new Office of Mental Health Consumer and Family Member Affairs will be expanded to include the roles of family advocate, parent partner and additional peer/client advocates as additional resources can be directed/re-directed. Approximately 6-7 other California Counties have similar consumer leadership positions.

The Consumer Affairs Coordinator has two broad areas of responsibility: promoting and coordinating consumer involvement throughout SMCMHS and, investigating and resolving consumer complaints/grievances regarding community mental health services. Examples of each of these major areas follow.

Promote consumer and family member involvement in SMCMHS. Organize and insure involvement of consumers in mental health planning, program development and evaluation activities.

Lead and participate in initiatives regarding wellness/resilience/recovery. Provide leadership and staff support to wellness and recovery initiatives including: co-chair MHB Wellness and Recovery Public Forum planning committee; and develop and chair/co-chair "Wellness and Recovery Task Force."

Develop Office of Consumer and Family Member Affairs.

Track/monitor and respond to client complaints and grievances regarding SMCMHS.

Linford Gayle 1959 - 2018



Linford Gayle was hired as the Consumer Affairs Coordinator for BHRS in 2004. Over his 14-year tenure, he built a diverse, multicultural team of individuals with lived experience, promoting trust, compassion, and collaboration. Linford played a key role in transforming BHRS by advocating for the integration of those with lived experience across San Mateo County. A nationally recognized speaker, he also chaired the California MHSA Oversight and Accountability Committee before retiring in 2017.



**The Office of Consumer and
Family Affairs is celebrating
their 20th Anniversary in 2024.**



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Peer Support in San Mateo County Behavioral Health



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Peers and Family Support Specialists

In behavioral health, peers are individuals who have lived experience with mental health conditions or substance use disorders or their family members.

Peer Support is an **evidence-based practice**. Peers have long provided support in prevention, early intervention, treatment, recovery and crisis services.

In September 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom recognized the true power of Peer Support Specialists by signing SB 803 into law



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BHRS

13 Peer Support Positions

11 Family Peer Support Positions

October 2024



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Consumer and Family Member involvement in BHRS

LEA, LEEW, Advocacy Council, Speaker's Bureau feed volunteers
into Internal BHRS Committees, Health Equity Initiatives, MHSA
Steering Committee

Health Ambassadors in collaboration with ODE



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Lived Experience Academy – Spring 2019



Consumer and Family Member involvement in the greater San Mateo Community



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NAMI Walk 2024 OCFA, Consumers, Family members, BHRIS Staff

Recovery Happens Picnic 2024



NAMI Basics Class – Half Moon Bay



Presenters at Board of Supervisors Resolution on Peer Support Workers and the OCFA 20th Anniversary Oct 17, 2024



Jana Spalding – Office of Consumer and Family Affairs Director



William Elting – Volunteer and Peer Leader in the Behavioral Health Community



Iliana Solis - Family Peer Support Specialist with the BHRS Youth Team in Redwood City



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Office of Consumer and Family Affairs celebrates 20 years!

OCFA Today - "Nothing about us without us."

Key roles:

- Supports Peer and Family Peer Support specialists in BHRS as they model recovery with their clients
- Manages the BHRS grievance process
- Provides training in advocacy for persons with lived experience serving in committees and workgroups.
- Administers electronic devices programs to allow clients and to telehealth services
- Administers contracts with peer run, training and patient's rights advocacy organizations



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Office of Consumer and Family Affairs looks forward to the next...years

OCFA 2.0 We visualize and plan to

- Clarify, strengthen and grow the recovery model and the peer support role
- Leverage the BHRS grievance process to inform improvements in service to our clients
- Play a leadership role in existing and emerging efforts to integrate substance use disorder and mental health support and thrive
- Strengthen and improve effectiveness of OCFA and BHRS' relationships with community organizations as they serve consumer and families to pursue their goals and dreams



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Thank you for your support.

For more information:

<https://www.smchealth.org/support-clients-family>



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