



Mental Health Advisory Board

Annual Report 2018

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Letter from the Chair

As Chair of the Solano County Mental Health Advisory Board (MHAB), we are pleased to present this Annual Report to those who have been directly or indirectly touched by mental illness, and those concerned with the quality of behavioral healthcare locally.

The members of the MHAB care deeply about mental health issues, the people experiencing mental health illness, and their families. The MHAB works to champion a progressive system of seamless, accessible and effective services that advances wellness, recovery and resiliency for individuals, families and communities – making certain special attention is given to the cultural and linguistic needs of those served. We continue to look for ways to improve care by listening to the concerns of the community through the lens of our personal experience as consumer advocates, family members, and community leaders.



Working hand in hand with the Department of Health and Social Services, Behavioral Health Division, the MHAB seeks and promotes the most effective methods to educate the public and change some of the negative perceptions attached to those in the community living with behavioral health issues. Through internal and external educational presentations, those who attend MHAB meetings gain a larger understanding of the potential for wellness in our county.

The MHAB serves to champion community awareness of mental health issues, support service availability, and reducing stigma associated with getting the help people need. The Board meets regularly once a month on the third Tuesday from 4:30PM-6:00PM, except in July, for a total of eleven public meetings per year.

Heather Theaux Venezio

Mental Health Advisory Board Chair

Letter from the Behavioral Health Director

The Mental Health Advisory Board continues to strive to make a difference to the community. The MHAB is comprised of community representatives, consumers of mental health services, and family members of loved ones with mental illness, all of whom are committed to mental health issues and community mental health services. Our MHAB is committed to promoting awareness about mental health, reducing stigma and discrimination, promoting diversity, and supporting the recovery from mental illness. Together, along with Behavioral Health staff and the contract provider organizations that create a service system, we strive for access to high quality services to achieve mental health wellness for the community.



Over this last year the Advisory Board has been an active voice in issues related to service access and reducing stigma. This is aligned with the Division focus on improving access and service delivery to the identified under-represented communities in Solano County: Latinos, Filipinos and LGBTQ adults and youth. These efforts are grounded in several action plans developed collaboratively between County, contract providers, and community members, each designed with particular strategies that are aligned with the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards. These plans will be implemented over the next one to two years, alongside other improvement initiatives.

The service system has been challenged with many additional State and federal regulations associated with the funding we receive for Medi-Cal service delivery. Along with increased administrative demands, the service delivery challenges continue in their complexity; our clients have more medical conditions and unmet psycho-social needs, including the housing and homelessness crisis that exists in California. The turnover in operation of the local large shelter and the closure of another small shelter posed a huge challenge to our clients, providers, and the community.

One of the most significant service delivery changes in 2018 was the transition of the Crisis Stabilization Unit to a new vendor, Crestwood Behavioral Health. This has required collaboration with service providers, law enforcement, and hospital partners. Feedback from service recipients has been positive and the setting is perceived as much more welcoming and recovery-oriented.

We are also addressing additional service obligations that come with AB 1810, a new jail diversion law that allocated no new funding. As a Stepping Up County, this is aligned with the MHAB's intent to reduce the number of mentally ill adults in jails, prioritizing treatment over criminal justice alternatives when possible.

MHAB meetings are an opportunity for meaningful engagement with community members, where they can ask questions, provide input, and discuss the impact of mental health services in Solano County. I welcome any questions or feedback about our work and invite you to attend our monthly meetings.

Sandra Sinz, LCSW

Behavioral Health Director

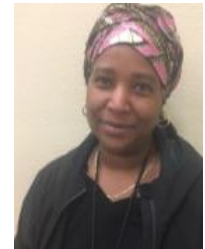
Meet the Board Members

Supervisor Monica Brown: As the Supervisor for District 2, Monica Brown brings her background as a classroom teacher of 39 years and a former Trustee at Solano Community College to her position as a Supervisor. Seeing the devastating impacts of poverty on families in her community, Monica is dedicated to providing resources to those who need them most. Monica is dedicated to using her position as a County Supervisor to help solve homelessness and provide more services for mental health in Solano County.



Heather Theaux Venezio: Ms. Theaux Venezio is the Trauma Program Director for NorthBay Medical Center and a pediatric liaison nurse. She earned a BA in Psychology from University of Massachusetts at Amherst, a BS in Nursing from University of Louisiana at Lafayette and a MS in Developmental Psychology from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Heather was appointed to the MHAB in 2015 and she is the current Board Chair.

Denise Coleman: Denise Coleman represents the perspective of consumers and family members with lived experience interfacing with the mental health system. She participates in the MHAB to promote awareness and recovery. Ms. Coleman has received “Peer to Peer” training, “Recovery Training” and voluntarily facilitates connection groups with the Solano County National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and Solano County’s Behavioral Health Wellness & Recovery program. She is also working in a local mental health contract provider program.



Elizabeth de la Torre: Elizabeth de la Torre has over thirty years of experience working in the field of Human Services with over 20 of those years working with Mental Health/Behavioral Health as a consumer and advocate. Her focus has been inclusion of consumers in the process of establishing Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) protocols that are “for consumers, about consumers.” Ms. de la Torre is dedicated to outreach in the underserved Latino communities and strives to eliminate stigma associated with mental health issues. Ms. de la Torre’s goal is to continue as a voice for consumers and their families and would like to see consumers encouraged to be a voice in their own programs.

Jules D. (J.D.) Hatchett: J.D. Hatchett is a consumer of mental health services who uses his experience of recovery from mental health disorders to support others in recovery. Mr. Hatchett currently works with The Circle of Friends and the local National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI) to provide peer support to mental health consumers. Mr. Hatchett's experience and involvement with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and Sacramento County of Education inmate re-entry program serves as a driving voice for the MHAB to advocate for mental health consumers. Mr. Hatchett also oversees a Transitional Housing Sober Living Environment program and has a deep understanding and ability to communicate with



the homeless mentally ill population. A native of Vallejo, Mr. Hatchett thrives by staying active in his local community and being of service to helping others.



Alexandra Winston: Alexandra Winston has served on the Solano County Mental Health Advisory Board since May 2018. Her interest in serving, like many involved, stems from having close family and friends that have minor to severe behavioral health/mental health issues. Some of the primary goals that she hopes to achieve on the Advisory Board are to increase communications between law enforcement and family members of those with mental illness, address the stigma of mental illness, continue to practice transparency and have open dialogue to address everyone's needs, and to advocate for cultural humility, education, and training

for staff and community members. Alexandra's career experience includes working at the American Lung Association in California as an Advocacy/Government Relations Manager, Alameda County Public Health Department as a Policy Specialist, and currently as an Aide to Solano County Supervisor Skip Thomson. She graduated with honors with a BA in Organizational Development and Leadership from Eckerd College in her hometown of St. Petersburg, FL and is currently attending California State University San Bernardino pursuing a Master's in Public Administration. She relocated to California in 2012 and has resided in Vallejo since 2015 with her husband William, and her four children Lars, Aila, Isabell, and Arwynn

Michael Wright: Michael Wright joined the MHAB in 2015 and brings to the board the perspective and experience of a parent to an adult mental health services consumer. Mr. Wright is especially passionate about increasing mental health awareness to the law enforcement community. He has a BA in Business Management and Administration from St. Mary's College. After an amazing 30 years with Safeway and 7 years as a community services supervisor for the City of Fairfield, Mr. Wright serves as a community volunteer in an effort to be both a voice and an ear for those receiving or in need of receiving mental health services in Solano County.



County Local Mental Health Board Statutory Requirements

The Mental Health Board serves as an advisory board to both the Board of Supervisors and the Mental Health Director providing community input, ideas, expertise and feedback about the local mental health program. The primary function of the Mental Health Advisory Board is to review and evaluate the county's mental health programs and services, make recommendations on improvements needed; review State performance contracts for the quality and cost effectiveness of services; advise the County Board of Supervisors and the Local Mental Health Director concerning any aspect of the local mental health program; review and approve the procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement in all stages of the planning process; submit an annual report to the governing body on the needs and performance of the county's mental health system; review and make recommendations on applicants for the appointment of a local director of mental health services; review, comment on, and endorse the county's Performance Outcome Data to be sent to the State Mental Health Planning Council; perform additional duties, which may be delegated by the Board of Supervisors to the Local Mental Health Advisory Board.

The State of California mandates every County have a Mental Health Advisory Board (MHAB) to advise the Mental Health Director and the Board of Supervisors regarding mental health issues, needs and policy. Mental Health Boards and Commissions (MHB/C) were created in 1957 when the State of California passed the Short-Doyle Act that made counties responsible for providing treatment for the mentally ill through a community-based and community-oriented mental health system. These boards are the fundamental way to have oversight of the administration and provision of county mental health services. The Solano County Mental Health Advisory Board is an official community body that advocates for an accessible, appropriate, and effective mental health system that promotes prevention, intervention, recovery, and resiliency for individuals and families in need. The Board consists of up to 15 citizen members (direct consumers, family members, and public interest members) and a member of the Board of Supervisors. One of the Mental Health Advisory Board's responsibilities is the development of an Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors.

MHAB members work closely with Mental Health Services staff and providers through reviewing program and budget priorities, participating in program site reviews, selecting new providers and the Mental Health Director, and serving on various local and state mental health committees.

Board Members provide leadership on mental health issues through public advocacy, education and outreach. The MHAB continues to co-sponsor public education activities regarding illness, appropriate treatment and public policy. Through these and other activities, members of the MHAB advocate for the involvement of consumers, family members and parents of Special Education children in the mental health program and in policy development.

This Annual Report summarizes key activities and accomplishments of the Mental Health Advisory Board for the year 2018.

Mandated Responsibilities

The County Board of Supervisors, in accordance with California Welfare and Institutions Code 5604.2 et. seq. appoints Mental Health Advisory Board members. MHAB duties and responsibilities are the following:

1. Review and evaluate the community's mental health needs, services, facilities and special problems.
2. Review State performance contracts for the quality and cost effectiveness of services.
3. Advise the County Board of Supervisors and the Local Mental Health Director concerning any aspect of the local mental health program.
4. Review and approve procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement in all stages of the planning process.
5. Submit an annual report to the governing body on the needs and performance of the county's mental health system.
6. Review and make recommendations of applicants for the appointment of a local director of mental health services.
7. Review and endorse the county's Performance Outcome Data to be sent to the State Mental Health Planning Council.
8. Perform additional duties, which may be delegated by the Board of Supervisors to the Mental Health Advisory Board.

The MHAB bylaws were revised in 2014, available online at [Solano MHAB Bylaws](#). These bylaws were approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 25, 2014. No changes to the bylaws were proposed in 2018.

	Member (List names or Vacant)	Committee Position (List all committee positions)	1/16/2018	2/20/2018	3/20/2018	4/17/2018	5/15/2018	6/19/2018	7/17/2018	8/21/2018	9/18/2018	10/16/2018	11/13/2018	12/11/2018	
Family Member/ Vice Chair	John Mackenzie	5/24/2016-5/26/2019	A	Resigned											
Consumer/ ADAB Liaison	Elizabeth delaTorre	7/25/2017-7/25/2020	A	X	A	X	X	A		A	A	A	A	X	
Family Member	Melanie Norris	4/7/2015-5/22/2021	A	A	A	X	A	A		Resigned					
Consumer	Denise Coleman	7/25/2017-7/25/2020	X	X	A	X	X	A		X	X	A	X	X	
Family Member	Michael Wright	11/3/2015-11/3/2018	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	A	X	
Community Representative/Chair	Heather Theaux Venezio	10/20/2015-10/20/2018	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Consumer	Jules D. Hatchett	11/14/2017-11/14/2020	A	X	X	X	X	A		X	X	X	X	X	
Board of Supervisor	Monica Brown	Annual	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Community Representative	Alexandra Winston	5/22/2018-5/22/2021						X		X	X	A	X	X	
Minutes sent to BOS			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y				
Minutes Posted on Mental Health Website			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Quorum Present *		* 51% of filled positions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Agenda Posting Locations: (State where agendas are posted)			County Administration Center Bulletin Board HSS (275 Beck Street) Website												
			Brown Act Training is required within one year of appointment and reviewed every two years thereafter.												
			AB1234 is required within one year of appointment and renewed every two years thereafter. Renewal trainings satisfy the above Brown Act review requirements.												
Quorum Present (* Define what a quorum is) Example: 51% of filled positions, 5 members per bylaws, etc.															

MHAB Goals & Accomplishments

Outreach Committee

Mission Statement:

"The Outreach Committee works to enhance opportunities for the public to benefit from participation in mental health services, and to better understand the needs, questions and concerns of mental health consumers, and family/friends of mental health consumers. Information on mental health programs and support groups are shared at public events whenever possible."

Representing the MHAB, members participated in outreach throughout attending:

- NAMI meetings
- The community leader Homeless Roundtable event held in Fairfield
- Opening of the new Crestwood crisis stabilization unit

Membership Committee

Mission Statement:

"This committee is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the Mental Health Advisory Board Members receive the appropriate training in order to perform their duties to the best of their abilities."

Goals:

1. Recruit consumers and advocates to the Board
2. Facilitate the orientation of Mental Health Advisory Board members to the operations, policies and procedures of Solano County Mental Health Services
3. Recruit for a law enforcement representative
4. Actively recruit culturally diverse members to the Mental Health Advisory Board

One new member, Alexandra Winston, was added to the MHAB in 2018. There were many efforts underway to recruit additional members which then came to fruition in 2019 and will be reported in that year's annual report.

The President of the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions (CALBHBC) presented to the MHAB in March 2018. She provided information regarding training of members and resources available to help boards with ideas around recruitment, member roles, and bylaws.

The June meeting was held at the public library in Vacaville and the October meeting was held in Vallejo in effort to improve access to the meeting across the county. The MHAB noted that meetings held in Vallejo often had more attendance than the meetings routinely held in Fairfield.

May Is Mental Health Month

Goals:

1. Participate in the Resolution to the Board of Supervisors to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month
2. Participate in May as Mental Health Awareness Month activities
3. Plan a community awareness event

The MHAB met these goals. May as Mental Health Month was designated by the Board of Supervisors on April 25, 2018. The MHAB members remain active participants in activities held throughout the month of May in

support of greater awareness to mental health issues and treatment access. This continues to include supporting the display and sales of art created by consumers. The Circle of Friends hosted its annual event as a BBQ at the center on May 14, 2018.

Alcohol & Drug Advisory Board Liaison

The addition of a liaison from the Alcohol & Drug Advisory Board (ADAB) assists and enhances our oversight to better acknowledge our consumers with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

The two boards held their meetings jointly in February 2018. This was in effort to identify common areas across both boards and to engage in discussion about the viability of a joint Behavioral Health Board. The statute which governs the MHAB allows for the board to focus specifically on mental health or more broadly on behavioral health issues, to include both mental health and substance abuse. At the time, the ADAB felt that the issues they address require focused attention and were not at the time inclined to sunset their independent board. Given the benefits of approaching both mental health and substance use disorders from a comprehensive behavioral health approach, this issue remains a topic for consideration from the perspective of the MHAB members.

Data Notebook

For the last few years the California Mental Health Planning Council has created a “Data Notebook” focused on a particular demographic, the local services available, and comes to the County populated with claims data provided by the with that population. This year’s Data Notebook focused on services to transition age youth and included claims data for services claimed to Medi-Cal from 2016. One should note that the service data does not include services that are not billable to Medi-Cal (supportive services that do not meet the threshold of medical necessity) or those services that are funded entirely by MHSA and do not claim Medi-Cal. The Data Notebook was compiled in collaboration between the division and the MHAB. It was then reviewed and approved for submission by the MHAB. Although not posted on the Planning Council’s website at the time of this writing, it will be found at <http://www.calbhbc.com/data-notebooks.html>.

Reviewing the Mental Health System

Through presentations by County staff and community partners, the MHAB heard about County Mental Health ongoing services, future projected programs, and an overview of noteworthy projects in addition to routine staff presentations.

The MHAB hosted the review and public comment session associated with the review of the MHSA Annual Plan in November 2018. After 30-days’ public posting on the internet, community representatives came to the meeting held in Vallejo to share their thoughts as well as concerns about the MHSA Annual Plan. The MHAB responded and engaged the division staff in responding to questions by members of the community. These questions and responses were posted online following the public meeting. The MHAB voted to approve and recommend the Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors.

The MHAB received a monthly report from both the MH Director and the MHSA Coordinator, aimed at a list of all of the contracts to be approved by the Board of Supervisors with the adoption of the FY18/19 budget.

Other Program Presentations Included:

1. Monthly a report from the MH Director and the MHSA Coordinator

2. Institutional Care Services – the service delivery and outcomes associated with the team that provides case management and clinical treatment planning for those clients who are in subacute and State Hospital placements.
3. Quarterly Quality Improvement Committee reports
4. Fairfield Adult outpatient clinic – described how the Open Access model works as well as the services available through the adult clinics. This presentation occurred in April and highlighted the launch of urgent care access to psychiatry planned for July 2018.
5. Quarterly Quality Improvement Committee Reports
6. UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities – Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola presented an overview of the Center’s priorities and specifically the Innovation project occurring in collaboration with Behavioral Health staff, contractors, and interested community members, all aimed at creating a system that is more welcoming and service-appropriate to underserved communities.
7. Vacaville Adult outpatient clinic – this clinic provides an array of outpatient services and offers Open Access two days per week
8. Circle of Friends – provided an overview of the peer run wellness center, noting its expansion from its main Fairfield location to include two days per week in Vacaville
9. Crestwood Crisis Stabilization Service – leadership and staff from the new crisis unit provider described their service model and approach to crisis care.
10. Laura’s Law – the MHAB reviewed the elements of Laura’s Law (assisted outpatient treatment) and expressed a desire to learn more and advocate for adoption locally. This was ultimately adopted in 2019 and can be found online at <https://www.solanocounty.com/depts/mhs/aot.asp>

As required, the MHAB hosts the annual public hearing for any Plans associated with the Mental Health Services Act. In August the MHAB reviewed and approved the Reversion Plan for FY18-19 to FY 19/20. This Plan was required in order to disperse funds that were otherwise unspent and would revert to the State. AB 114 allowed for counties to issue a new plan to avoid reversion of identified funds. For Solano County, this included approximately 1.4 million dollars associated with the set-aside for Innovation. The MHAB agreed to continue to fund the projects associated with the UCD project for reducing disparities as well as a research component to the statewide early psychosis project.

Next Steps

Recruitment and retention of board members continues to be an issue of concern and priority. The MHAB is also interested in maintaining a broader understanding of the services provided both within the County programs and under contract by community based agencies.

The MHAB is aware of the many new requirements that the County Mental Health Plan is addressing. In addition to a continuously increasing set of requirements from a regulatory perspective, there are also new service requirements. The adoption of Laura’s Law, for example, could increase the caseload of clients receiving intensive outpatient case management. Further, as the County implements jail diversion – attempting to direct people with crimes related to their mental illness to treatment rather than jail – this is an additional mandate on the County Mental Health system that does not bring additional funding. Similarly, the Courts have begun to implement a Mental Health Court. These efforts are beneficial toward prioritizing treatment over incarceration, though an impact on the existing service system must be

acknowledged. These varied efforts are likely to result in fewer mentally ill individuals serving time in jail; while the County may incur savings due to lower jail utilization, there is an implied increase cost to the service delivery systems.