

RIVERSIDE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES FOR April 2, 2025 • 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS –

Vice Chair Brenda Scott called the Behavioral Health Commission (BHC) meeting to order at 12:01 pm and led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner attendance was taken by roll call and followed by introductions.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING –

Victoria St. Johns made a motion to approve minutes as written from March 5, 2025 and Beatriz Gonzalez seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS – Vice Chair Brenda Scott chaired the BHC meeting on behalf of Chair Richard wishing him well.

COMMISSION MEMBER REMARKS –

Carole Schaudt shared that there are several elderly communities in the Coachella Valley that are in need of more suicide prevention resources and outreach.

Greg Damewood shared he attended the integrated and forensic programs provider meeting and encouraged others who are interested in learning more about facilities and grants to attend.

PUBLIC REMARKS –

A public attendee shared she was a consumer of Jefferson Wellness Center (JWC) who was previously receiving assistance through the housing workforce solutions but had a set back when she went to treatment and when she returned home, she learned her funding was stopped. She tried to obtain rapid rehousing but couldn't get into a sober living or motel and wanted to know what other services were available to her and through county housing services.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT –

Dr. Chang provided a brief report on the structure of programs and grants with sustainability.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY- Transitional Age Youth TAY Program (Novanh Xayarath)

Novanh Xayarath, Western Region Children's and TAY Stepping Stones BH Administrator introduced peer support specialist Jose Aguilera with TAY Stepping Stones. Mr. Aguilera announced that the TAY program, which provides services to consumers aged 16-25 years old, was one of the first to pilot a creative intervention project for those who have difficulty sharing their trauma. This project includes a live studio for consumers to record music, films and poetry. Mr. Aguilar then introduced Christian Moreno who shared that creative intervention has been crucial in sharing his trauma through a creative outlet he enjoys. He created a song and shared the video with the audience as well as sang live to the audience with his catchy tune "productive on a weekday". He shared he entered his film into the Directing Change contest which expresses how he copes and manages his anxiety, depression and isolation. Mr. Aguilar shared music helps him with his symptoms and make his heart feel full and writing helps him to express himself without judgement. He concluded by sharing he wants to become a peer to one day help others like himself and make a difference.

NEW BUSINESS-

1. Children's and TAY Programs Overview (Janine Moore)

Janine Moore, Deputy Director of Children's and Transitional Age Youth Programs provided an overview of the countywide behavioral health services for the youth. She began by sharing the core values of the children's system which include trauma informed care, cultural and gender competence, evidence-based services and practices, developmentally appropriate care, access to care, integrated care, family-centered and peer service delivery. These values are critical to ensuring the services provided meet the needs of the youth and families being served and the youth being served are among the most vulnerable. This includes youth that are involved in the welfare system, juvenile justice system, those experiencing their first episode of psychosis and other serious challenges.

EPSDT which stands for early periodic screening diagnosis and treatment, is a comprehensive federal health care program under Medi-caid for children and adolescents under the age of 21. The goal of EPSDT is to ensure that children receive regular health screenings to detect potential health issues early and get appropriate diagnostic and treatment services. The staff work in collaboration as part of the multidisciplinary team to provide services and support to the youth and caregivers. A part of serving the youth also includes the staff collaborating with a wide variety of other youth serving organizations such as schools, child welfare, probation and IEHP. Youth are connected to services in a variety of ways including through CARES, RUHS primary care clinic behavioral health integration teams for youth in need of higher level of care and schools. EPSDT offers an array of traditional health services, including assessment, individual and family therapy as well as groups. To qualify the children's system of care is the requirement to provide intensive care coordination, intensive home-based services and child and family team meetings for youth that qualify.

Specialize evidence-based practice include eating disorder program (family based therapy), parent child interactive therapy (PCIT), parent child care (PC Care), trauma focused CBT (TF-CBT), incredible years (dinosaur school), eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), seeking safety, coordinated specialty care for first episode psychosis, equine assisted growth and learning association (EAGALA), wraparound and multi-dimensional family therapy (MDFT). Mrs. Moore highlighted two evidence-based practices that are unfamiliar to most. The first being PC Care, which is a 6-week intervention for children 2-10 and their caregivers. It is designed to improve the quality of caregiver-child relationships and teach caregivers skills to help them identify and build their children's strengths and manage their challenging behaviors. The other she highlighted was EAGALA, which is an equine therapy that is a therapeutic model that involves working with horses to address mental health, emotional and behavioral challenges. It is structured to approach therapy that combines the expertise of a licensed mental health professional and certified equine specialist. Horse play is a significant role in helping individuals gain insights, build skills and develop personal growth. There are several staff certified in the model, and they provide the service at a ranch, which they have three contracts with, one in mid-county and the others in the western region.

Mrs. Moore continued by sharing the full-service partnership programs for youth (FSP), each outpatient clinic has an FSP track for youth for those that need that level of care and in addition there are 4 Stand Alone FSP programs that focus on specific populations. Youth connect provides connection and navigation to youth and families during and after inpatient psychiatric hospitalization. The Youth Hospital Intervention Program (YHIP) provides intensive treatment for youth who have been hospitalized or are at risk of hospitalization as well as youth discharged from residential treatment facilities.

Wraparound provides services to youth that are on probation and at risk of out of home placement. Multi-dimensional family therapy is an evidence-based treatment designed to treat adolescents and their families, particularly those facing behavioral issues, substance abuse, or other emotional and mental health challenges.

She continued by sharing the specific programs that are available in the Desert Region, the Mid- County Region and the Western Region. Also sharing the TAY programs that serve youth 16-25 and their families and that each region offers a TAY drop-in center where the TAY are encouraged to drop in to receive support and services across any spectrum of needs. Mentioning additional services for youth were the 24/7 mobile crisis response, mental health urgent care, SAPT services both outpatient and residential and parent support training program. Mrs. Moore concluded by sharing 3 upcoming programs within the youth services, the Mindful Body and Recovery Program that is a county operated eating disorder intensive outpatient program that will begin serving consumers in May. The other program which is still in the planning stages is the Youth Enhanced Care Management and the last program is the Wellness Village that will offer children's programs on its campus as well as a children's crisis residential program which is the first in the county as well as a mental health urgent care specifically for youth and younger children.

2. WET Employee Appreciation Winner (Nisha Elliott)

Nisha Elliott, Workforce Education and Training Administrative Services Manager announced Israel Torres Administrative Services Assistant, as the employee who was recognized and nominated as this quarter's Employee Appreciation Winner. A video was shared, and Mr. Torres was presented with a plaque. Ms. Elliott gave recognition and praise to Mr. Torres as well as his Deputy Director Bill Brenneman for Mr. Torres's outstanding teamwork and work ethic with WET and overseeing the conference center at Rustin. Several of the commissioners and other staff in attendance also gave praise to Mr. Torres as he has become the face of the Rustin conference center, and everyone's go to always willing to help everyone to ensure the conference center runs smoothly and he does it without complaint and a smile on his face. Mr. Torres concluded by giving thanks to his manager, deputy director, team of coworkers for their support and to those who recognized him for this honor.

3. Chair Elections and Nomination Committee (Action Item)

BHC liaison proposed the implementation of policy A21. Greg Damewood made a motion per policy A21 the Vice Chair could assume the seat of Chair the next fiscal year, Victoria St. Johns seconded the motion and a vote by role call was taken. The commission voted and the majority opposed the implementation of policy A21.

The BHC liaison then requested volunteers that would like to be nominated for the executive seats of chair, vice chair and secretary. Brenda Scott and Launa Wilson volunteered to be nominated for Chair, Victoria St. Johns and Launa Wilson volunteered to be nominated for Vice Chair and Greg Damewood and Quintilia Avila volunteered to be nominated for Secretary. Since there were no other volunteers of the commission interested in being nominated it was agreed a nominating committee would not be needed.

OLD BUSINESS-

1. **Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Update** - (Diana Gutierrez)

Diana Gutierrez, Administrative Services Manager for PEI, announced the upcoming Directing Change event taking place in May and provided invitations with more details for those interested in attending. Mrs. Gutierrez on behalf of David Schoelen, then asked for volunteers from the commission to participate in the upcoming public hearings across all regions. Victoria St. Johns volunteered for the Desert public hearing, Brenda Scott and April Smith volunteered for the Mid-County public hearing and Greg Damewood and Launa Wilson volunteered for the Western Region public hearing.

2. **Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program (SAPT) Update** – (Heidi Gomez)

Heidi Gomez, SAPT Administrator, announced the 1 Life 1 Heart Walk Poisoning and Overdose 5K Walk taking place in all five regions and provided flyers to those interested in volunteering and/or participating in the walk.

3. **Care Court Update** – (Marcus Cannon)

Marcus Cannon, Deputy Director of Forensics, provided a brief update on Care Court sharing that there were 154 petitions and 150 clients. And of 264 integrated referrals, 252 individuals were referred, 154 of those became CARE Court Petitions. Mr. Cannon concluded by sharing there was one graduation in March.

Resources Available:

www.Care-Act.org

COMMITTEE UPDATE (Desert RAB) – TABLED

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS-

Site Visit Updates suggested by Sylvia Bishop.

Annual BHC Report suggested by Greg Damewood.

SB 43 rollout suggested by Rhyan Miller.

WET Employee Appreciation Winner suggested by Cheryl Coson.

Chair elections suggested by Sylvia Bishop.

3 Project Overview suggested by Brenda Scott.

Department AI plans suggested by Walter Haessler.

ADJOURN – The Behavioral Health Commission meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Sylvia Bishop

Sylvia Bishop, Recording Secretary

FY 2024/25 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION ATTENDANCE ROSTER

MEMBERS	JUL	SEP	OCT	NOV	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
April Smith, District	A	A	A	A	P	N/A	N/A	A		
Beatriz Gonzalez, District 4	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P		
Brenda Scott, District 3	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P		
Carole Schaudt, District 4	P	P	ML	A	ML	ML	A	P		
Daryl Terrell, District 5	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P		
Elysse Rico, BOS Rep. Dist. 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	A		
Greg Damewood, District 5	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Harshita Arunkumar, Dist. 1	P	ML	P	P	P	A	P	P		
Launa Wilson, District 1	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P		
Quintilia Ávila, District 2	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Richard Divine, District 2	P	P	P	P	P	P	M/L	M/L		
Rick Gentillalli, District 5	P	P	ML	P	P	P	P	A		
Sheila Mallet-Smith, Dist. 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	P		
Victoria St. Johns, District 4	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Dr. Walter Haessler, Dist. 3	ML	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		

Present = P • Absent = A • Medical Leave = ML

Minutes and agendas of meetings are available online at:
<http://www.ruhealth.org/behavioral-health/advisory-committees>

To request copies, please contact the BHC Liaison at 951-955-7141
or email SBishop@ruhealth.org

PRESENT		
Bill Brenneman	Rachel Gileno	Daniel Gonzalez
Lucy Lopez	Shannon McCleeryHooper	Ryanne Monaghan
Sylvia Bishop	Chris Benetiz	Sarah Abdelmish
Deborah Johnson	Melisa Vasquez	Steve Lusk
Dr. Chang	Claudia Vizcaino	Maria Amada
Kristen Duffy	Jose Aguilera	Patricia Winkler
Diana Gutierrez	Lawrence Blake	Carolina Ayala
Tony Ortego	Israel Torres	Dani Damewood
Janine Moore	Conni Rider	Vera Lopez
Kristen Miller	Jose Ajaih	Lisa Bravo
Heidi Gomez	Sujei Larkin	Miranda Deshields
Novanh Xayarath	Miriam Resendiz	Ashley Housley
Nisha Elliott	Lauren Adamson	Laurence Gonzaga
Marcus Cannon	Carina Gustafsson	
Brandon Jacobs	Anniemarie Morales	
Kelly Grotsky	Christian Moreno	

OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY	
Lorena Santa Cruz	George Gaeta
Scott Weigold	Leah Newell
Maria Martinez	Jane Beamer
Rita Massie	Melissa Noone
Dortothy Cockrell	Beverly McKeddie
Elysse Rico	Maria Moreno
Kami Winston	Elizabeth Del Rio
Orli Zaprir	Amelia Dia
Melissa Dalke	Dina Burlage
Girlyanne Lacson	Nancy Stevens
Steve McNally	Alea Jackson
Carolina Ayala	Cheryl Coson
Jun Zeng	