



**California Coalition
for Mental Health**



2023 Annual Report

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

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Executive Summary

The California Coalition for Mental Health (CCMH) is a diverse, broad-based coalition of statewide associations and organizations who seek to improve the delivery of mental health care in California, with a focus on creating better access to care and assuring parity in the delivery of mental health services that is on par with other health care services. CCMH coalesced around Proposition 63 in 2004, the landmark initiative that significantly bolstered funding of mental health programs through a one-percent tax on individual income over \$1 million. One of our core commitments is to ensure adequate funding for mental health programs and care.

Priority areas for 2023 included: housing, parity and workforce. These priorities guided state and federal legislative and policy analysis, recommendations and advocacy. Through quarterly meetings, virtual work sessions, and meetings with state leadership CCMH members discussed/informed the following:

- Implementing 988 and a Robust Crisis Care Continuum in California (Appendix H)
- Behavioral Health Workforce (See Appendix C, D, E and G)
- Behavioral Health Modernization / Behavioral Health Services Act Initiatives
- Increasing Parity through the “Better Mental Health Care for Americans Act”

Long-Standing Barriers & Concerns: CCMH also engaged in discussions with California’s Health and Human Services Administration and Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission leadership, focusing on long-standing barriers and concerns (See Appendix B).

BHSA & BHIBA: Due to major initiatives that may change the Mental Health Services Act (through the March 2024 “Proposition 1” ballot initiative), CCMH also focused on informing these initiatives: [SB 326](#), the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) legislation and [AB 531](#), Behavioral Health Infrastructure Bond Act (BHIBA) legislation.

Safeguarding Funding: Historically, mental health programs are among the first to be cut when California faces economic challenges. This trend leads to a chronically underfunded system. As we move into 2024, CCMH will continue to work to safeguard mental health care funding and support budget decisions that strengthen the delivery of mental health services throughout California.

2023 Policy and Legislative Action

CCMH supported and/or informed the following bills. As a broad-based organization, CCMH uses a consensus model, and is guided by the [Agenda for Fairness](#).

Concern:

[SB 326](#) (Eggman): Behavioral Health Services Act

Appendix A: [CCMH Joint Statement on the BHSA Proposal](#), July 27, 2023

More information: [Proposition 1 BHIBA and BHSA Summary](#)

Support:

[SB 598](#) (Skinner & Wiener)

Health Care Coverage: Prior Authorization

[S. 923](#) (Bennet)

Better Mental Health Care for Americans Act

[AB 1437](#) (Irwin & Quirk-Silva)

Medication Prior Authorization Requirements

[AB 236](#) (Holden)

Provider Directory Requirements

[SB-509](#) (Portantino)

School employee and pupil training

[SB 282](#) (Eggman)

Same-Day Access

Membership

The following organizations were active members in 2023:

- California Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry
- California Alliance of Child & Family Services
- California Association for Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors
- California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards & Commissions
- California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists
- California Association of Mental Health Patients' Rights Advocates
- California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies
- California Behavioral Health Planning Council
- California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies
- California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions
- California Primary Care Association
- California Psychological Association
- Council on Criminal Justice & Behavioral Health
- County Behavioral Health Directors Association
- Disability Rights California
- Mental Health America of California
- National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter
- National Union of Healthcare Workers
- Occupational Therapy Association of California, Inc.
- Psychiatric Physicians Alliance of California
- Racial and Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition
- San Diego Coalition for Mental Health

Officers:

President (2022-24): Theresa Comstock, CA Assoc. of Local BH Boards/Commissions
Past President: Adrienne Shilton, CA Alliance of Child and Family Services
Secretary (2022-24): Chad Costello, CA Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies
Treasurer (2023-2025): Erin McIntyre, Occupational Therapy Association of CA
Past Treasurer (2021- October 2023): Carol Neidenberg, San Diego Coalition for MH

Acknowledgements:

Thank you to our 2023 speakers/panelists and support staff:

Adrienne Shilton, Vice President of Public Policy and Strategy, California Alliance of Child & Family Services

Lauren Finke, Policy Director, The Kennedy Forum

Mental Health America of California - Member dues pay for fiscal and administrative assistance from CCMH member organization Mental Health America of California. Special thanks to Curtis Paulins and Shelby Gnos!

Michelle Baass, Director of California Department of Health Care Services

Michelle Doty Cabrera, Executive Director County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California

Shari Sinwelski, MS/EdS, LPCC, NCC, Vice President of Crisis Care at the Suicide Prevention Center at Didi Hersch

Stephanie Welch, CA HHS Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health

Suzanne Rabideau, MBA, MA, LPC with Health Management Associates
(Contracted with the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of CA re: Medi-Cal Crisis Mobile Benefit Roll-Out)

Theresa Comstock, Executive Director, CA Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards/Commissions

Toby Ewing, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission



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