

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

of Mariposa County
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MARIPOSA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

TO: Mariposa County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Mariposa County Behavioral Health Board
Debbie Cook, Chair
Ellie McQuarrie, Vice Chair
DATE: May 1, 2020

Mission Statement: Our mission is to ensure high quality behavioral health services for all individuals in our community by **evaluating** the community's behavioral health services and needs, **advocating** for persons with behavioral health and substance use disorder needs, **advising** the Board of Supervisors and Behavioral Health Director on related issues and **educating** the public on the importance of behavioral health as a part of community health.

Membership: Members of the Behavioral Health Board (BHB) previously appointed by the Board of Supervisors met on June 5, 2019 and elected **Debbie Cook** as Chair and **Ellie McQuarrie** as Vice Chair. Subsequent meetings were conducted on the first Wednesday of each month until April 2020, when that meeting was canceled due to COVID-19. New member **Olga Leonard** was appointed on October 1, 2019. Currently the other continuing members are **Rosemarie Smallcombe, Ronald Schmidt, Paul Brickett, and Lt. Sean Land.**

Action Plan: The yearly Action Plan was revised and finalized at the August 7, 2019 BHB meeting. Major Action Plan goals included: improved outreach, engagement and interaction with the community and the Board of Supervisors; improved use of data analytics to gauge the health needs of the community and the effectiveness of county services; and updated BHB operations and procedures. Some of the year's activities of the BHB related to the action plan will be described in chronological order, followed by related work reported by other committees and community partners.

The last 2018-2019 Annual Report was presented to the BOS on May 28, 2019. That month a major outreach for the year was the booth at the Mariposa Butterfly Festival. Over 500 people were contacted, and activities include a "sound bath", emotion wheel with giveaways, and a mental health quiz, the results of which were presented at the June BHB meeting. For 2020, the Butterfly Festival that was scheduled for May 2020 was rescheduled for the July 4th weekend 2020.

On July 10, 2019, a group of BHB board members visited **Changing Echoes**, an in-patient drug and alcohol recovery center which the county contracts with. This facility primarily uses counseling therapy, but also can monitor drug-assisted treatment (e.g. Suboxone). Board members reported that the staff was knowledgeable and committed, program strategies were thoughtful, and the facility was comfortable and well-maintained.

At the August BHB meeting the results of the 2019 Needs Assessment & Community Survey, completed by board members, were presented and discussed. Based on this and other relevant information, the **2019-2020 Action Plan** was established.

Labor Day weekend was the other major outreach event, a booth at the county fair was staffed by members of Mariposa Minds Matter task force, adjacent to the counties' HHS booth. MMM reported 1948 visitors over the three-day event.

The October BHB meeting featured training/education presentation by Theresa Comstock, Executive Director of California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards & Commissions. Ms. Comstock described how the BHB could be more effective in its role as advisor to the Board of Supervisors as well as other duties. Two BHB members also attended a CALBHB/C that month in Stockton. The BHB meeting also reviewed and discussed the Mariposa county **2019 Data Notebook**, prepared under CALBHB/C guidelines, the topic this year being "Trauma-Informed Principles of Care Across the Lifespan." To advance Trauma Informed Care, both the Probation Department, and Health Services have stated plans to provide Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) training to county service providers.

In November and subsequent months recruitment of additional BHB members was initiated by creating and approving a recruitment letter, a more eye-catching flyer for display and posting, and placement of newspaper notices.

In January 2020, the Deputy Director of Behavioral Health gave an overview of the contracts budget, and reported that an analysis is ongoing. One of his social workers reviewed different facilities and how decisions are made as to where clients are admitted.

At the February BHB meeting, Chevon Kothari, Health and Human Services Agency Director, announced the launch of a strategic planning process for the agency. At the following month's meeting, a formal Substance Abuse Strategic Plan Group Interview was conducted with board members, staff, and community representatives by consultant Heather Bernikoff. Attendees were asked to identify risk factors, protective factors, and helpful interventions related to substance abuse, as well as other related topics.

Since the March 4, 2020 BHB meeting, the COVID-19 pandemic caused cancelation of the April BHB meeting, a scheduled visit to a Mental Health facility in Merced, CA, and the ACEs training.

Finally, much of the work related to the BHB's mission is furthered by other sub-committees and community organizations. **Mariposa Minds Matter**, formerly the Stigma Reduction Task Force, has been instrumental in outreach efforts at previous year's Butterfly Festival and County Fair. One long-standing BHB member has been a regular part of this group and this year a HHS staff person has been added to this committee to facilitate ongoing work.

The **Living Free Initiative**, formerly the Opioid Task Force, has been very active this year in efforts to mitigate substance abuse issues in the community. The official mission of the group has been expanded to also include methamphetamines and alcohol, reflecting the current impact of these substances. Physicians and other medical professionals, as well as law enforcement personnel, are active collaborators in this group. The efforts regarding opioids have focused on Medication-Assisted Treatment as an effective treatment for opioid dependency and non-pharmacologic Alternative Treatments for pain management. Two BHB members regularly attend this group's monthly meetings.

Mariposa Heritage House is a nonprofit facility providing services for clients recovering from substance

use disorder. Either the director or a senior staff person regularly attend BHB meetings and report on current issues.

In summary, the Behavioral Health Board this year attempted to understand the challenges of mental health and substance abuse issues in the community and evaluate how well county services have met those challenges.

Sincerely,
Mariposa County Behavioral Health Board
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