



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES (BHRS) BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD (BHB) April 23, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting convened at 5:35 p.m. and was called to order by Kathy Rupe, Chair. Peter Dean led the board members and the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kym Barber, Peter Dean, Olivia Esquivex Gonzalez, Daljit Grewal, Annie Henrich, Margie Johnson, Kathy Rupe, Jack Waldorf, Supervisor Terry Withrow

STAFF PRESENT

Cynthia Bocage, Keri Magee, Ruben Imperial, Sandy Martinez, Olivia Jimenez

GUESTS PRESENT

Brian MacLaren, Codie Hernandez, Teresa Blackword, Luis Perez, Mike Baldwin, Jazmyne Thomas, Rebecca Sanchez, Vivian M. Joseph Slane, Wesley Blueford, Clifton Williams, Christopher Villalobos, Vincent Hoheisel

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Baldwin expressed concern regarding his involvement with certain local individuals, stating that these circumstances resulted in adverse impacts to him and Legacy Alliance Outreach. He indicated that when concerns or allegations were raised, he was not provided with specific information or an opportunity to respond. He further expressed concern that bias or inequitable treatment may have influenced related actions. He requested an official review or investigation, an opportunity to present relevant information, and equitable consideration regarding access to partnerships, contracts, funding, and related opportunities associated with Legacy Alliance Outreach.

Clifton Williams shared his personal experience with behavioral health services, stating that BHRS played an important role in supporting treatment access during incarceration and in connection with court-related matters, including services related to PTSD. Mr. Williams also commented on services provided through Legacy Alliance Outreach and shared his perspective regarding participant engagement and program effectiveness.

Luis Perez shared his personal experience with homelessness and substance use recovery. He stated that he reconnected with Legacy Alliance Outreach and received support and services through BHRS, which helped stabilize his circumstances and support his recovery. Mr. Perez also expressed disagreement with the organizations current challenges.

Rebecca Sanchez shared her personal experience with homelessness, unemployment, substance use challenges, and domestic violence. She stated she received support through Legacy Alliance Outreach program, which contributed to improvements in her wellbeing, and personal

development, and English language skills.

Christopher Villalobos shared that Legacy Alliance Outreach supported his recovery from gang involvement, substance use, and homelessness and helping him rebuild his life and reconnect with family, and he noted that additional funding could expand services to more people.

Teresa Blackwood shared that Legacy Alliance Outreach supported her recovery, helping her maintain over three years of sobriety after homelessness and family separation. She credited the program's impact on her life and urged support for the organization amid current challenges.

Vincent Hoheisel shared his personal experience related to childhood adversity, substance use, and legal challenges. He received support through Legacy Alliance Outreach, which helped him develop coping skills and improve stability. Mr. Hoheisel also shared his perspective regarding the program's role in providing support and structure during his recovery.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action: Olivia Esquivel Gonzalez made a motion to approve the Behavioral Health Board minutes of March 26, 2026, and Kym Barber seconded the motion.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (BOS) REPORT

Supervisor Terry Withrow stated that, due to legal matters, comments regarding Legacy Alliance Outreach would be limited.

Supervisor Withrow noted prior support for implementing a recovery program modeled after Homeboy Industries and advocacy for county funding based on confidence in the program's mission and services. Supervisor Withrow acknowledged the success of the recovery model but stated that county support was later withdrawn due to accountability concerns.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Kathy Rupe reported that the committee finalized the agenda for the April 23, 2026, board meeting. Keri Magee reported that the Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF) Phase One plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors (BOS). The BHSA Integrated Plan draft was submitted to the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). BHRS upcoming audits include the External Quality Review (EQR) on April 16, 2026; the MHSA and Mental Health Block Grant review on April 21, 2026; and the Behavioral Health Plan review scheduled for June 8 through June 12, 2026. Additionally, the County is piloting the Authorization to Share Confidential Member Information (ASCMi) tool to enable member authorized data sharing for care coordination, with initial rollout at select sites.

- Drop The Drugs at Love Oakdale event is scheduled for April 25, 2026.
- The Empty Chair Display will be held at Vintage Faire Mall from April 24 through April 29, 2026.
- The NAMI Walk is scheduled for April 25, 2026.
- The Mental Health Awareness Month proclamation is scheduled to be presented before the BOS on May 5, 2026.

Administrative Fiscal Management Committee

Jack Waldorf reported that efforts are underway to strengthen contracts. Sutter will provide funding support for the Promotora network in three rural areas of the county. Fourteen additional housing units were included in the budget. Outcomes reports reflected improved service access times. The Modesto Police Department (MPD) and the Sheriff's Office will offer Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and CIT Teen training. Additionally, the Department employee vacancies decreased from 18% to 12% over the last 18 months.

Margie Johnson reported that Lizzette Ervin, Behavioral Health Equity Manager, provided an update regarding discrimination complaints. It was reported that eight complaints had been received, three had been closed, and four involved matters related to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Ruben Imperial, BHRS Director, distributed the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Behavioral Health Services Act County Policy Manual to clarify that the stated goal of the policy framework includes reducing the number of children removed from homes, consistent with statewide behavioral health objectives.

Ruben provided an overview of the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) that was passed in March 2024 represents a significant shift in the state's approach to mental health and substance use disorder services.

He reported that the BHSA Draft Integrated Plan for FY 2026-2029 is a required county submission that consolidates behavioral health funding sources, including state and non-state funds, and outlines service coordination. He stated the Integrated Plan will serve as a foundational document for the Department's strategic plan and once approved by the Board of Supervisors, will be submitted to the state and incorporated into ongoing planning efforts.

Key components of the plan include:

- BHSA funding allocations
- Populations served by BHRS
- Infrastructure and funding landscape
- Statewide priority goals
- BHSA-funded programs, including workforce strategy
- Required appendices

The full draft Integrated Plan will be posted on April 28, 2026, for a 30-day public comment period. Comments may be submitted via multiple channels, including email, phone, fax, in-person submission, and an online comment form. Print copies will be available at BHRS Administration and public libraries, and a public hearing will be held at the next Behavioral Health Board meeting.

Jack Waldorf inquired regarding the timing of the state's announcement of the Prevention Program. Ruben responded that the state has released a statewide Prevention Plan document and requested that Cynthia locate the document and email the link to the board.

Peter Dean commented that Full-Service Partnership (FSP) programs, and CARE Court have

faced criticism for relying on a legal framework to compel treatment without adding new services. He stated that CARE Court has become the second largest funded program, exceeding medication and health services, and the public has raised concerns that forced type programs may be less effective than peer type programs.

Jack Waldorf inquired whether this would affect communities currently served by Promotora programs. Ruben responded that under the new Medi-Cal treatment team model, some Promotora projects may no longer be funded as they were previously, as the system shifts toward more clinical treatment focused services. He stated additional information would be provided at the upcoming BHSA public hearing.

Olivia Esquiviz Gonzalez emphasized the importance community education regarding the new plan, including increasing awareness of available services and appropriate use of the system.

Ruben stated that the Department will conduct countywide community outreach as part of BHSA implementation, plan, including town halls and engagement with ethnic, cultural, and community collaboratives to share information on implementation.

Cooper Williams expressed support for BHRS funding and services and emphasized the importance of maintaining focus on participants' treatment needs. He stated that recovery may be more effective when participation is voluntary rather than court mandated and encouraged continued investment in programs that individuals find beneficial in supporting rehabilitation and recovery. He further encouraged consideration of participant feedback regarding effective services and continued support for programs that promote stability and community integration.

An audience member inquired whether the referenced \$41.5 million in funding is provided by the state or the county. Ruben responded that the \$41.5 million referenced is funded through BHSA and represents one of several funding streams used to support behavioral health programs within the community.

CORRESPONDENCE

None reported.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m. The next meeting will be May 28, 2026, 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., at 1130 12th St. Modesto.

Respectfully Submitted by O. Jimenez, Confidential Assistant III