**JULY 2023 PEER COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

**43 Members**

* **Welcome**
  + Ice Breaker
  + Minority Mental Health Month
* **Review of Meeting Summary**
  + Review
  + Approval
* **Council Updates and Announcements**
  + General Updates
    - Minutes to be archived soon on our Webpage
  + Meeting of the Minds
    - Potential presentation opportunity for the peer council. Let us know if you would like to get involved.
* **BHAB Guidance**
  + *Presented by Mary Jo O’Brien*
  + [Behavioral Health Advisory Board](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_act/bhab.html)
    - The peer council should work towards having a voice within BHAB.
  + [Purpose Statement and Board Priorities](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_act/bhab_purpose_priorities.html)
    - The purpose of the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Advisory Board is to review and evaluate the community’s behavioral health needs, services, programs, facilities, and procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement in the planning process.
    - The County will present a proposal that will need to go to the board of supervisors for approval.
  + [Meeting Materials](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_act/bhab_meeting_materials.html)
    - You can attend in person or virtually.
    - You can request to receive BHAB Meeting Notices/Agendas
    - The BHAB Public comment online form is what you can use to submit a comment. This will put you in the running to have 3 minutes to speak at the next BHAB meeting.
    - Meetings are the first thursday of every month from 2:30-5:30 PM
  + [June Meeting Minutes](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/documents/NOC/bhab/June%201%202023%20BHAB%20Meeting%20Minutes%20DRAFT.pdf)
  + [Contact Us](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/BHABcontact-us.html)
  + Q&A
    - Peer Comment: A participant shared in the chat that she spoke at the BHAB meeting this month in person and mentioned that there is free parking under the county building. She was allowed 2 minutes to speak.
    - Peer Comment: There are 3 subcommittees with BHAB that we can look into. Alcohol and other drug prevention, community engagement and criminal justice.
    - Mary Question: Is there anyone else who has specific issues that they are passionate about and we can bring to BHAB?
      * *Robert Comment: My focus has been criminal justice, however, I have broadened my expertise to other topics such as homelessness. The state prison system still releases people out into our communities without a safety net. A vast amount of them are senior citizens with no place to go. There are issues with the process of compassionate release and very few beds at facilities for those who are getting out of prison. Compassionate release takes 45 days to process and in that time, no one is holding that bed or place for those who are being released. There are also not enough LCSW’s in the workforce and those who are working have too much on their plate. Another issue is the sheriff’s rebuttal of technology. We want to be able to have those who are incarcerated to wear a wristband and have their heart monitored. This leads to less inmate deaths. Carceral traumas are also impeding positive outcomes.*
* **East Regional Collaborative** 
  + Piedad Garcia
    - Deputy Director of Behavioral Health Services
* Presentation
  + East Region Crisis stabilization unit and recovery bridge center
    - Advancing Behavioral Health.
      * Behavioral health this working to restructure priorities within the system of care
        + While crisis services were the focus and prevention given the least amount of priority, we are working to shift how we think about mental health.
    - Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) Overview
      * Purpose
        + Provides immediate mental health support and treatment services in a calming setting to individuals with serious behavioral health needs.
      * Overview of Services
        + Services provided on a short-term basis (up to 24 hours)

Crisis Intervention

Mental Health Assessment

Medication Assistance

Therapy and peer support

Resources and connections to ongoing behavioral health services

* + - * + Accessing Services

Drop-offs by health, safety, and law enforcement agencies

Walk-ins to adults ages 18 and up

* + - Recovery Bridge Center Overview
      * Purpose
        + Provides a safe, supervised, non-medical environment to stabilize individuals whose level of public intoxication puts themselves or others at risk. Outpatient services will also be available to ensure continuity of care
      * Overview of Services
        + Services are provided on a short term basis:

Screenings for substance use or mental health conditions

Counseling services

Outpatient substance use disorder services

Resources and connections to ongoing behavioral health services

* + - * Accessing Services
        + Accepts drop-offs of adults ages 18 and up by health, safety, and law enforcement agencies
        + Referrals from CSU or sobering service
    - Location
      * Located in El Cajon at 200 S Magnolia Avenue and West Douglas Avenue
* Contact Us
  + - [Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov)
  + Q&A
    - Peer Question: If needed, is someone able to stay longer than 24 hours in the CSU?
      * *Piedad Answer: It’s not allowed under state regulations, however, sometimes clients who are designated in a 5150 are kept longer only due to lack of beds in behavioral health facilities.*
    - Peer Question: How many times can the crisis unit be accessed in one week?
      * *Piedad Answer: As long as the person needs to be evaluated for an urgent crisis, as many times as they need. My hope is that that individual will be connected to mental health or substance use services so they won’t have to come back multiple times to the facility.*
    - Peer Follow Up Question: Are there any options for involuntary admissions due to clients who have anosognosia?
      * *Piedad Answer: It’s a very tough situation, especially for the MCRT or law enforcement who have to respond to these crises. If the person is not on a 5150, presents well, and is able to tell those responding that they do not need behavioral health services, we have to abide by their judgment and the laws surrounding 5150s. There is always client choice that we adhere to.*
    - Peer Question: When will the facility open?
      * *Piedad Answer: We will start demolition in the next month or so. And then to create the CSU it will probably take about 18 months.*
    - Peer Question: Is this a safe place to bring someone that is suicidal?
      * *Piedad Answer: Yes, of course.*
    - Peer Question: What ages will this facility handle?
      * *Piedad Answer: 18+ years old*
* **Peer and Placement Program**
  + CalMHSA Certification Website:
    - <https://www.capeercertification.org/>
      * Certified entity for California. Check this website for updates on the Certification process.
    - Certification
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/certification/>
      * Application fee is $100.00
      * Exam is $150.00
      * Renewal fee is $80.00
    - Certification Requirements
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/certification-initial/>
    - Certification Scholarships
      * There are scholarships available to help cover fees.
        + If you decide to train for the certification with NAMI San Diego, we ask you to not apply for the scholarship until after you complete the training.
    - Initial Certification Application Instructions:
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/website-instructions-for-initial-process/>
    - Documentation
      * You will need a government issued ID/Driver’s License and a high school diploma in order to get your certification
    - Code of Ethics
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/code-of-ethics/>
      * Those who have taken the exam for certification have said that they found the code of ethics very helpful for preparation.
    - Core Competencies
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/medi-cal-peer-support-specialist-core-competencies/>
      * Another resource for studying.
    - Training
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/training-for-medi-cal-peer-support-specialist/>
      * If you are planning on taking the exam you are required to do an 80 hour training through an approved vendor.
    - Exam
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/certification-exam/>
      * The exam is 2 ½ hours. 120 item multiple choice questions.
      * Reasonable accommodations can be made with the exam. CalMHSA needs at least 30 days to review the accommodation request.
      * Recommend looking into the differences listed between in-person and online exam. Video on the subject: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1wNSNzdlNw>
    - Exam Preparation Guide
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/exam-preparation-guide/>
    - Resource Library
      * <https://www.capeercertification.org/resource-library/>
    - Approval Process
      * Once you turn in your application, you have to wait for your application to be approved. Then you will turn in your proof of training. There is a second application approval process after that. That’s when you will get an ID number and instructions on how to sign up for the exam.
  + Questions? Contact CalMHSA directly
    - Phone: 1(279) 234-0699;
    - Email: PeerCertification@calmhsa.org
  + CAMHPRO Study Group
    - <https://camhpro.org/event-registration-step1-peer-support-organization.html?eventid=51>
  + BestNow! Study Group
    - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/california-peer-support-specialist-exam-preparation-tickets-663290739457>
  + NAMI San Diego and Imperial Counties Peer Training and Placement Program (including the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Training)
    - <https://namisandiego.org/pssc/>
  + NAMI California Training (if you have a CalMHSA scholarship)
    - <https://namica.org/medi-cal_pssc_training/>
  + NAMI San Diego Peer Training and Placement Program
    - **Cost:** Free
    - **Location:** Online (through Zoom)
    - **Days:** 2.5 weeks, Mondays-Fridays
    - **Time:** 12:30-4:30pm (including breaks)\* - participants are required to factor in an additional 28 hours outside of sessions for homework and training support.
    - **Virtual Office Hours:** Offered weekly, 10-11 am (participants are required to attend 1 out of the 3 virtual office hours)
    - Follow-up support, career counseling, and career placement assistance.
    - Upcoming Trainings
      * **Cohort 5:** August 16-September 1
      * **Cohort 6:** September 18-October 4
      * **Cohort 7:** October 23-November 8
      * **Cohort 8:** November 29-December 15
    - After training, we do provide support with job leads.
    - Eligibility
      * Do not have a CalMHSA scholarship.
      * Intend to become state certified as a Peer Support Specialist (PSS), including sitting for the state certification exam.
      * Be at least 18 years of age.
      * Reside in San Diego or Imperial County.
      * Possess a high school diploma/equivalent (or higher) degree.
      * Live with a mental health and/or substance use condition; or as the parent, caregiver, or family member - support a loved one living with either of these conditions.
      * Be willing to share your experience.
      * Have a strong dedication to recovery.
  + Q&A
    - Peer Question: Do you know how long we are able to wait before we can take the exam?
      * *Shannon Answer: Once your application has been approved, you have 12 months to take the exam. You are encouraged to take it sooner rather than later in order to retain your knowledge.*
    - Peer Comment: I have to retake this exam and I’m in a role outside of the peer support specialist now. One thing that I would suggest is to be sure to put yourself in the role of the peer support specialist when you answer these questions, regardless of how you would respond now.
* **Advocacy Feature**
  + Advocate of the month
    - Shannon Switzer
  + KPBS feature
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDDyUFoc6F8&t=365s>
* **Community Updates, Feedback, Thank you!**
  + Community partner updates
  + Feedback
  + Thank you!

**Next Council Meeting:**

**August 15th, 2023 2:00pm-3:00pm**