

**MINUTES - APPROVED  
OCTOBER 15, 2020**

**MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD**

September 17, 2020

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Health Services Agency, 1400 Emeline Avenue, Room 206, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Present:** Antonio Rivas, Catherine Willis, Hugh McCormick, Jennifer Wells Kaupp; Lynda Kaufmann, Serg Kagno, Stephan DuBose, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput

**Excused Absence:** Erika Miranda-Bartlett

1. Public Comments

- Helen Bradley – misses MHCAN, shared personal story.
- Shelly Bard-Sewald – MHCAN representative. Loss of MHCAN hard hit for everyone; worry about own peers. Seeing a lot of suffering, the sooner they can get the doors open, the sooner individuals can get help. MHCAN place of healing.
- BJ Nadeau – the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention offers a program called Healing Conversations where you can chat with a trained suicide survivor by phone or video. If you know someone who has lost someone to suicide, please refer them to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Hospice, both can provide individual counseling.
- JP Butler – VP at Front Street. Appreciate the evacuation of Willowbrook and how helpful the County was in making sure there was a place to take clients. Acknowledge the response and kind-hearted employees that helped clients and staff.

2. Approved meeting minutes for August 20, 2020.

Motion by Stephan DuBose to approve August 20, 2020 MHAB minutes with the correction of Antonio Rivas' unexcused absence to excused absence. Second by Antonio Rivas.

AYES: Antonio Rivas, Catherine Willis, Hugh McCormick, Jennifer Wells Kaupp; Lynda Kaufmann, Serg Kagno, Stephan DuBose, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: Erika Miranda-Bartlett

3. Standing Board of Supervisors (BOS) Report, Supervisor Greg Caput

- Over 1000 people at Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. Overflow at Lake View Middle School and Watsonville High School. Supplied food and brand-new clothing. Team effort included the County, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and National Guard. Donations dropped off at warehouses. Now approximately down to 100 people at the Fairgrounds. Received Federal and State funding to help with the cost.
- Passed ordinance on Tuesday against price gouging by hotels and motels. Charging more than 10% their normal rate. Before the fire, hotels/motels charging double the cost.

4. Standing Behavioral Health Director's Report, Erik Riera

- Received new Behavioral Health mobile office. Still testing equipment that was installed. New home will be in Watsonville.
- Recruiting new Mobile Emergency Response Team for Youth (MERTY) Clinician, who will be paired with a family partner. Both will work within the mobile Behavioral Health (BH) office, working with children and youth as well as young adults providing crisis services in the community. The mobile BH office will be able to connect with the local office for psychiatry services through video conferencing, which is integrated into the van.
- Budget update – no significant reductions or changes to the budget. Received Federal funds last minute. Next year will be new set of challenges.

- Reassigned licensed clinician to be full time support for COVID shelter and hotel programs, working under the Human Services Department.
5. Presentation – “Suicide Prevention Service” by Carly Memoli, Program Director of the Suicide Prevention Service of the Central Coast
- Suicide Prevention Service of the Central Coast serves Santa Cruz County, Monterey County, and San Benito County. Accredited by American Association of Suicidology and a member of the National Lifeline. Talk to people in 140 languages.
  - Outreach and training - public messaging, social media campaigns. In addition to the crisis line, opportunity to use online chat feature and crisis text line.
  - Provide presentations and trainings for the community - broaden who needs to be trained and provide education and resources to.
  - Work closely with Suicide Prevention Task Force and with Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health. Provide range of services for survivors, also have 2 peer run support groups.
  - Enhanced services during COVID- online support groups, recruited more facilitators, collaboration with Hospice groups.
  - Trends during COVID:
    - call volume increased 30% (March to present compared to previous years). Suicidal rates are seasonal - Spring and summer tend to be higher
    - more calls from younger callers, middle school age students. Developed training modules for the volunteers on how to support the younger individuals.
    - More service providers calling in; higher calls for people experiencing domestic violence; higher calls from higher risk group (has specific plan that is imminent and has access to lethal means for suicide)
  - Future:
    - How to work together as service providers
    - funding and strategy
    - how to distribute the ability to do suicide intervention broadly in the community
    - call volume projected to increase – numbers to double
    - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline switching from 800 number to a 3-digit 988 number in early 2022
  - Need to update priority populations and will continue to shift as we get more data on COVID. Will not see specific data related to COVID and suicide increases for another year.
  - Suicide death rates in Santa Cruz County:
    - 45-64 dying more than any other age group
    - Males die by suicide more often than females, whereas females attempt more frequently
    - Individuals who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, etc. may have higher rates of suicide. Most likely higher suicide rate due to the way they are treated by society.
  - Next steps and opportunities:
    - Confident will obtain funding for more implementation of the strategic plan which includes developing group of service providers who could work together on prevention efforts, training more people in the community on the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale which is the gold standard for doing risk assessment, and looking at more active postvention efforts.
    - Screening of S Word and panel on 09/29/20 – importance of stigma and shame and shaping the conversation about suicide, and how to get resiliency and hope
    - Volunteer responder training starts 10/08/20
    - International Survivors Day on 11/21/20 – hosting virtual podcast, with panel and discussion

[Click here to view the Suicide Prevention Service presentation.](#)

6. Standing Reports
  - a. Jail Committee Report – Chair: Hugh McCormick
    - Working on PDF version of Jail Information packet – almost complete. Meetings scheduled with Paul Ramos, Sheriff's Office, and Probation Department.
  - b. MHSA Advisory Committee – Chair: Lynda Kaufmann
    - Set up community meeting in October to talk about budgets.
  - c. Site Visit Committee – Chair: Hugh McCormick
    - No report.
  - d. SUDC/MHAB Merger Committee – Chair: Lynda Kaufmann
    - Still hoping for November merger.
  - e. Community Engagement Committee – Chair: Stephan Dubose
    - Requesting input from the Board about priorities and engaging the public.
7. Patients' Rights Report – prepared by George Carvalho.  
[Click here to view the August Patients' Rights Report.](#)
8. Unfinished Business
  - a. Retreat Update – Date of retreat is Thursday, November 19, 2020, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
9. New Business/Future Agenda Items
  - a. Upcoming Data Notebook topic: “Use of Telehealth during the 2020 Public Health Emergency”
  - b. Presentation next month: Bill Wilson Center on the Host Home Program

Motion to adjourn made by Stephan Dubose. Second by Antonio Rivas. Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.