

March Updates: DHCS Reorganization, California Access Coalition, Legislation

Greetings colleagues!

This month, we celebrated International Women's Day (IWD). This month commemorates the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women, and marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. The 2019 theme for IWD is "balance for better."

As I reflect on the various women pioneers in the health field, I am grateful for those who *eluded* the temptation to say "no" to career advancing opportunities in search of a more balanced life. It is because of their long weeks of commitment to a task that doors have been opened for so many women in the healthcare workforce today. So, thank you to all the women who provide needed behavioral health services to clients across our state, and to those women leaders who serve as advocates on behalf of organizations, providers, clients, and their family members to the state Legislature. Thank you for challenging the stereotypes of what it means to embrace a balanced lifestyle.

DHCS Reorganization

Earlier this month, we learned about upcoming changes to DHCS. The DHCS Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services (MHSUDS) Division is being reorganized to better integrate behavioral health with the rest of the Medi-Cal program, as well as consolidate non-Medi-Cal programs into behavioral health divisions. According to DHCS, the MHSUDS reorganization will increase program administration accountability, improve service delivery, decrease processing times, and increase communication and engagement with stakeholders and employees.

Starting on July 1, 2019, there will be four new Divisions:

- Behavioral Health Financing Division
- Behavioral Health Licensing & Certification Division
- Community Services & Grants Division
- Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Division

California Access Coalition

CBHA is honored to convene the California Access Coalition (CAC), a group founded 24 years ago. The mission of the CAC is to educate policy makers and the public about patient access to medication by convening behavioral health stakeholders to advocate for patient-centered policies.

The CAC held its annual [Membership Retreat](#) last month at the Old Sugar Mill Winery in Clarksburg, CA. Kassy Perry from the Perry Communications Group kicked off the retreat with a historical overview of the purpose and accomplishments of the CAC. Adrienne Shilton from the Steinberg Institute led a tribute to CAC founder, Rusty Selix. Attendees benefited from hearing myriad presenters discuss issues related to patient access to behavioral healthcare services including the role of pharmacists, pharmacies and best practices in utilizing MAT in community settings.

We invite you to become a member of the CAC. Membership is complimentary and the membership form can be accessed [here](#). For more information about joining the CAC, please contact Jay Calcagno at jcalcagno@ccbha.org.

Legislation

CBHA requests your support of our budget and legislative proposals:

[Youth Mental Health First Aid](#): Our Youth Mental Health First Aid proposals continue to gain momentum. We have a strong coalition of co-sponsors including CBHDA, Children Now, and Lady Gaga's *Born This Way Foundation* who are advocating for funding for a school-based pilot program to train school personnel in Youth Mental Health First Aid. The proposal is set to be heard in the Assembly Budget Subcommittee 1 on Health and Human Services on May 6, 2019.

The coalition is also sponsoring [SB 428](#) which will require individuals who are fulfilling their teaching credential to take a course in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Senator Dr. Richard Pan and Senator Anthony Portantino are the authors of the legislation. The bill has been double referred to the Assembly Education and Assembly Judiciary Committees. It is scheduled to be heard in the Assembly Education Committee on April 10, 2019. This bill was also highlighted in the [California Health Report](#) and in the [Sacramento Bee](#) recently.

[Workforce, Education and Training Trust Fund](#): We also have proposals that address the behavioral health workforce shortage. CBHA is collaborating with the California Behavioral Health Planning Council (CBHPC) and the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) to sponsor a budget proposal, and Senator Anna Caballero is championing the proposal. Our request is for \$70 million dollars to create a funding source for the efforts that are detailed in OSHPD's statutorily mandated [Five-Year Plan](#). The co-sponsors presented this proposal recently at the Senate Budget Committee's [Subcommittee on Health and Human Services](#).

[SB 539](#) (Caballero) will identify additional funding sources for the Five-Year Plan including 25 percent of the growth funds of MHSA dollars and an option for counties to direct funds to a statewide Workforce, Education and Training Trust Fund. This bill is set to be heard in the Senate Committee on Health on April 3, 2019.

[Paperwork Reduction](#): CBHA is working with the California Children's Hospital Association and the California Alliance of Child and Family Services to provide technical assistance to Assemblymember Adam Gray who is authoring AB 763. This bill will create a workgroup to provide recommendations to the state about mandatory paperwork requirements. The goal is to ease the paperwork burdens that behavioral health staff experience.

For more information on how to support our legislative and budget proposals, please contact the CBHA policy staff. We look forward to a collaborative and productive year.

In service,
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