

CBHA Concludes Mental Health Awareness Month with Momentum

Greetings Colleagues!

In 1949, Mental Health Awareness Month was initiated by Mental Health America. CBHA kicked off Mental Health Awareness month by [joining our colleagues in the Senate Chambers](#) where Senator Beall introduced [SR 30](#) and recognized the organizations in attendance. We also joined several organizations and [participated in the health fair at the Capitol on Mental Health Matters Day](#). This month, we held our annual Spring Policy Forum where we heard from representatives from: Governor Newsom's Office, the Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health, California Health Care Foundation, the California Future Healthcare Workforce Commission, Mental Health America Los Angeles, and many more. Last, we were delighted to have representatives from several organizations [join us as guests at our social hour](#).

Updates from the Governor's Office

Governor Newsom has been quite busy as well. Earlier this month, he announced the provisions in his May Revise. CBHA was thrilled to learn of the Governor's focus on the social determinants of health and his behavioral health priorities. Specifically, we were pleased to read about the Governor's commitment to building the health care workforce, addressing homelessness, and providing opportunities for those formerly incarcerated. We also appreciate his focus on promoting patient centered services that promote access to care such as whole person care, crisis hotlines, and telepsychiatry funding.

Though we celebrate these provisions, there are still areas that we believe need more funding. When we look at the portion of the Revise that allocates funding for Substance Use Disorder (SUDs) services and providers, we find the funding to be lacking. We are aware that there are several budget proposals from our colleagues who represent SUDs providers and have registered support of their proposals to expand funding for SUDs providers and programs. We believe that supporting these proposals is an avenue for increasing the funding allocated to SUD services and infrastructure.

Regarding the aging workforce, we appreciate the Governor's focus in this area. However, we see the need to focus on older patients as well. In a report released last week from SAMHSA, population projections are highlighted that show Americans are living longer, and of the 49.2 million adults over 65 years old in America, one to five percent suffer from serious mental illnesses. We note the lack of funding in the May Revise dedicated to this population, and hope for greater attention to this group. Last, we highlight the proposal to utilize Proposition 64 funds for childcare. The Governor indicates that this use of funds can be categorized as a preventive effort to combat behavioral health issues. However, we question if this is in line with the intent of the Proposition 64 tax revenues allocated for prevention and treatment of behavioral health issues.

The Governor also made some announcements about key positions. He has created the [Homeless and Supportive Housing Advisory Task Force](#) and named Darrell Steinberg and Mark Ridley-Thomas as the co-chairs. He also announced that Dr. Tom Insel will be his special advisor on mental health topics and affectionately referred to him as his "Mental Health Czar" during the announcement of Tom's new position.

Sponsored Legislation

If you have been following our updates, you already know that CBHA's sponsored legislative proposals



are gaining good traction. CBHA staff is thrilled to report that our budget request for \$70 million dollars to fund the Five-Year Workforce Plan created by the Office Statewide Health Planning and Development was included in the May Revise! Even more exciting is the fact that the Governor increased the proposed funding to \$100 million! Both the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees have proposed \$35 million which counties would match resulting in 70 million- our original ask. We support the [Governor's proposal](#), and will keep you posted on what the final number will be.

Our Youth Mental Health First Aid budget proposal was prioritized by both the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees. Each house included our \$1.68 million request to establish pilot programs in two counties and three cities to provide school personnel with YMHFA training.

Our YMHFA bill, SB 428 (Pan and Portantino) would establish trainings in all California schools by 2023, and Adam Gray's AB 763 would create a taskforce to create standardized guidelines for intake forms. Both bills passed with unanimous votes off their respective house floors last week. We are awaiting referral of the bills to the policy committees.

Lastly, we remain thankful for the collaboration we have had with several co-sponsoring organizations including the California Behavioral Health Directors Association, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, California Behavioral Health Planning Council, Children Now, and Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation. Your support has been instrumental, and we look forward to rounding out the remainder of the 2019 Legislative Session getting good work done together.

In Service,
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