

Rounding Out the Legislative Session

Greetings Colleagues!

CBHA staff had a productive summer break, and we look forward to working with our partners in the behavioral health community as we round out the last two months of the Legislative Session. Read below for updates on our sponsored legislation, recent Governor's appointments of interest to our community, updates on CBHA's new coalition, and a recap of the behavioral health allocations in the Governor's budget.

Legislative Update

- Senate Bill 428 (Pan) is currently awaiting a hearing date in the Appropriations Committee. This bill would require California schools to implement behavioral health training programs such as Youth Mental Health First Aid. The bill has enjoyed bipartisan support and we will continue to work with the Department of Education and our co-sponsors including CBHDA, Children Now, and the Born This Way Foundation to advocate for the bill's passage.
- We have been in strong support of Assembly Bill 763 (Gray) which would require DHCS to convene a stakeholder group to examine the intake paperwork requirements for EPSDT funded clients. CBHA along with the California Children's Hospital Association and the California Alliance for Child and Family Services have provided technical assistance to the author's office.
- Our budget proposal for funding the Office of State Health Planning and Development's Five-Year Workforce Plan was approved, and the allocation is as follows:
 - \$35 million General Funds
 - \$25 million MHSA funds
 - 33 percent county match of funds (regional partnerships)

We are grateful for the advocacy that our co-sponsors at the California Behavioral Health Planning Council and the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists provided. CBHA staff will continue to work with stakeholders to determine how the funds will be allocated and dispersed.

Speaking of workforce, a new report on California's Ideal Human Workforce Data system was recently released. [Click here](#) to read more about the report.

Governor's Latest Appointments

- The Governor recently appointed his new Deputy Director of Mental Health and SUD Services, Kelly Pfeiffer, MD. Dr. Pfeiffer will be a keynote speaker at CBHA's inaugural conference, BHCALCON, and CBHA staff looks forward to working closely with Dr. Pfeiffer. A link to more information about Dr. Pfeiffer is [here](#).
- Another exciting appointment was announced this week. In June, Governor Newsom released Executive Order N-14-19 which tasked the California Health and Human Services Agency to convene a Cabinet Workgroup for Aging and a Stakeholder Advisory Committee to develop and issue a Master Plan on Aging by October 1, 2020.

The plan will provide a blueprint for state government, local communities, private organizations and philanthropy to ensure all Californians can age with dignity. I was selected to join several other colleagues as a member of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and I am honored to represent the perspective of CBHA member agencies who provide behavioral health services to older adults. The press release can be found [here](#).

The California Access Coalition

CBHA has taken on management of an exciting coalition, the California Access Coalition, which was organized by Rusty Selix 23 years ago. This year has been an exciting one as the CAC has been revived and has served as a forum for behavioral health advocates and pharmaceutical companies to convene to advocate for policies that impact patient access to medication and behavioral health treatment. The CAC has had a phenomenal list of guest speakers at membership meetings including Tom Insel, the Governor's Special Advisor on Mental Health. We invite you to join us for our remaining meetings in 2019. For more information about the CAC, click [here](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#).

Recap of Behavioral Health Budget Allocations

Budget negotiations have been finalized, and the final budget amounts to \$214.8 billion. The Budget includes \$163 billion (\$41.9 billion General Fund and \$121.1 billion other funds) for all health and human services programs and provides funding for several behavioral health items. Below is a synopsis of significant behavioral health funding provisions:

- Medi-Cal Benefits for Mental Health—The Budget expands the Medi-Cal benefit for a pregnant individual who is receiving health care coverage and who is diagnosed with a maternal mental health condition to remain eligible for Medi-Cal program from 60-days to one year.
- Opioid and Other Drug Screenings—The Budget expands the Medi-Cal benefit for adult screenings to include misuse of opioids and other drugs.
- Proposition 56 Funds— The California Healthcare, Research and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act (Proposition 56), passed by the voters in November 2016, increases the excise tax rate on cigarettes and electronic cigarettes, effective April 1, 2017, and other tobacco products effective July 1, 2017. The Budget includes \$1.3 billion in increased provider payments from Proposition 56.
- Whole Person Care Pilots—The Budget includes \$100 million one-time General Fund for county pilots that coordinate health, behavioral health, and social services focused on individuals who are experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of becoming homeless, and have a demonstrated medical need for housing and/or supportive services. In addition, the Budget includes \$20 million one-time General Fund for counties that currently do not operate pilots.
- Behavioral Health Counselors in Emergency Departments—The Budget includes \$20 million one-time General Fund to hire trained behavioral health counselors in emergency departments of acute care hospitals to screen patients and offer intervention and referral to mental health or substance use disorder programs.
- Cannabis Allocation—The Budget includes \$21.5 million in Proposition 64 funds for competitive grants to develop and implement new youth programs in the areas of education, prevention, and early intervention of substance use disorders.
- Acute and Mobile Crisis Services—The Budget includes \$5.3 million (\$4.8 million General Fund) and \$7.9 million (\$4.7 million General Fund) annually thereafter to expand crisis services to the Central Valley.
- Development of Community Crisis Homes for Children—The Budget includes \$4.5 million one-time General Fund to develop community crisis housing specifically for children.
- Specialized Home Monitoring—The Budget includes \$5.8 million (\$3.9 million General Fund) ongoing to increase monitoring of Enhanced Behavioral Support Homes and Community Crisis Homes.
- Specialized Caseload Ratios—The Budget includes \$3.8 million (\$2.6 million General Fund) ongoing to establish a reduced regional center service coordinator caseload ratio for consumers with specialized behavioral needs.

- Best Buddies—The Budget includes \$2 million General Fund to support social inclusion, integrated employment, and leadership program services for children and adults with developmental disabilities and will include a report of the number of persons served annually with these funds.
- Metropolitan State Hospital Bed Expansion—The Budget includes \$15.5 million ongoing General Fund and 99.2 positions for the second and final expansion phase of the Metropolitan State Hospital's secured treatment area. When completed in 2020, a total of 236 additional secured forensic beds will be available for the treatment of incompetent to stand trial commitments.
- Court Evaluations and Reports—The Budget includes \$8.1 million ongoing General Fund and 43 positions for the first year of a three-year phase-in of additional staff dedicated to forensic evaluations, court reports, court testimony, court report coordination, neuropsychological assessments, and treatment.
- Jail-Based Competency Treatment Programs—The Budget includes \$6.4 million ongoing General Fund to contract for up to 73 additional jail-based competency restoration treatment beds through both existing and new county jail treatment programs.
- Mental Health Workforce Investments—The Budget includes one-time \$50 million General Fund to increase training opportunities in existing mental health workforce programs administered by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development. This funding includes \$2.65 million allocated for a Primary Care Clinician Psychiatry Fellowship Program and \$1 million allocated for mental health professionals formerly in the foster care system.
- Workforce Education and Training (WET)—The Budget includes one-time \$35 million General Fund and one-time \$25 million Mental Health Services Fund to implement the new 2020-25 WET Five-Year Plan.
- Early Psychosis Research and Treatment—The Budget includes one-time \$20 million Mental Health Services Fund for projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to deter and intervene when a young person has experienced a first episode of psychosis.
- Mental Health School Services—The Budget includes one-time \$50 million Mental Health Services Fund in 2019-20 and \$10 million thereafter to encourage collaboration between county mental health or behavioral health departments and K-12 schools. The funds will be awarded through a competitive grant program to facilitate access and linkages of ongoing mental health services.

Despite these allocations, CBHA notes the lack of funding specifically allocated for SUDs services and providers. We also note the paucity of funds focused on the behavioral health of older adults. We join many of our partners in continued advocacy for these services and populations.

Finally, thank you for your continued support and partnership with CBHA staff to ensure that the Legislature and local governments elevate behavioral health as a priority issue area.

In Service,
Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Ph.D.
Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs