



# County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

405 W. 5th Street  
Santa Ana, CA 92701  
TEL: (714) 834-5481  
MHB Website:

<http://ochealthinfo.com/bhs/about/mhb>

## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Doug Chaffee, Chairman**  
Fourth District

**Katrina Foley, Vice Chairwoman**  
Fifth District

**Janet Nguyen**  
First District

**Vicente Sarmiento**  
Second District

**Donald P. Wagner**  
Third District

**Wednesday, June 25, 2025**  
**10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

### **Meeting Location:**

601 N. Ross St., (MPR Room) Santa Ana, CA 92701

**Hybrid Option for members of the Public:**

<https://zoom.us/j/95862491099>

**Meeting ID:** ID: 958 6249 1099

**Call In:** +1 301 715 8592

### **MINUTES**

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**Members Present:** Alan Albright, Frederick Williams, Supervisor Sarmiento's Office, Carla DiCandia, Stephen McNally, Linda Smith, Duan Tran, Chase Wickersham, Michell Fernandez

**Members Absent:** Hector Bustos, Adela Cruz, Danielle Sena, Ethan Truong

**Staff Present:** Linda Molina, Anthony Padilla, Karla Perez, Amy Nguyen, Flor YousefianTehrani, Mark Lawrenz, Frank Congine, Michelle Smith

## **BHAB MEMBERS**

Alan V. Albright, LMFT  
**Chair**

Frederick Williams, LMFT  
**Vice Chair**

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento  
Second District

Hector Bustos

Adela Cruz

Stephen McNally

Linda Smith

Duan Tran, MSW

Chase Wickersham

Carla DiCandia

Michell Fernandez

Danielle Sena

Ethan Truong

### **Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. by Alan Albright who then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- May 28, 2025: Chase motioned to approve the minutes with edits. Linda to second. Minutes approved with edits. (Yes 8/No 0)
- Karla shared implementation of new tracker for requests that took place. Tracker will be included in meeting minutes going forward.

### **BHS Chief's Report**

Linda Molina provided updates on behalf of Ian Kemmer. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting on June 24, 2025, marked the conclusion of contract renewal season and the MHSA plan was approved. Per the BOS's direction, the contract for postvention services was awarded to Didi Hirsch, BHS is preparing to get the contract effective July 1, 2025. HCA has been working with Aliso Ridge Behavioral Health on the corrective action plan, and as a result, the suspension for LPS designation has been lifted, and they now have a conditional designation for the next few years that will allow them to increase their census with ongoing monitoring. The Outreach & Engagement (O&E) Team with BHS Navigation will be moved under CEO's office under the Office of Care Coordination effective July 1, 2025. BHCIP Round 2 is open, so BHS is looking to have further opportunities for partnership to build and plan.



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## HEALTH CARE AGENCY

**Ian Kemmer, LMFT**  
**Director**

Behavioral Health Services

**Linda Molina, LCSW**  
**Deputy Director**

Behavioral Health Services

**Karla Perez**  
**Staff Specialist**

Behavioral Health Services

Steve McNally inquired about the search for detox beds with Salvation Army since that had not been awarded. Anthony Padilla clarified that the opportunity is not gone, but rather this BHCIP conversation is focused on finding various proposals and launch-ready projects. Anthony shared that BHS is still in conversation with Salvation Army and UCI.

Linda Smith inquired about status updates for the Be Well Irvine Campus, as there is confusion that comes from Mind OC's monthly newsletter, and the role between Mind OC and OCHCA at the Irvine Campus. Linda also inquired about the timeline of opening the campus. Linda Molina shared that the current timeline to open is now October due to construction-related delays. Contracts are established for Crisis and SUD providers. Anthony confirmed Area 1 of the campus will be open in October, and then Area 2 is planned to be open early 2026. Linda Smith asked the maintenance agreement between Mind OC and OCHCA for Irvine campus, which Linda Molina shared that at this time was not yet determined. Steve asked for clarification regarding if the providers are contracted with the county, at both sites. Linda Molina shared that the providers at both sites, although not the same providers, are contracted with the county directly.

Alan Albright wanted confirmation regarding Ian's prior statements regarding the services that Didi Hirsch would be providing, and the availability of this service through other means within the county if someone were unable to receive services through Didi Hirsch. Linda Molina clarified that other postvention types of services are available to provide support, however, resources or supports would be different from what Didi Hirsch would be providing. Treatments can be handled by the county. Alan inquired about the location of services, which were previously in Santa Ana. Linda shared that is still in negotiations. For clients that could not get to Santa Ana, Didi Hirsch did have subcontractors located at other sites, and a telehealth option.

Carla DiCandia suggested the option of an office setting at one of the family resource centers that could be rented out to Didi Hirsch to make services more accessible for South County residents as there is a need.

Vasila requested information regarding how many individuals Didi Hirsch served per year and how many were referred to the subcontractors per year.

Steve McNally inquired if there were open office spaces in the county owned buildings for county providers to be able to use space when offsite. Linda Molina clarified that due to Medi-Cal certification, privacy policies, and protections of records, that type of co-location arrangement is not currently available. Steve proposed considering a co-located floor or a center that can provide co-located facilities that can service South County.

Chase Wickersham inquired about the status of OC4Vets and reinstalment of OC4Vets at the VSO office. Linda Molina clarified that OC4Vets was made up of multiple components, county operated portion and contracted portion. County portion of OC4Vets is remaining, placement is to be determined. Contracted portion was part



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of the reduction. Chase shared about the importance of having clinicians easily accessible at the VSOs office has been a significant advantage to getting veterans to look at mental health issues and treatment options. Ian Kemmer shared that there would be future consideration to bring this service, along with other services that back once MHSA funds can be used to provide these types of services once Medical billing has increased. Chase will let the veteran community know this is a working project. Carla inquired about doing contracting with the VA, so that the VA could be billed for services. Ian shared the goal with providers is to help them look for grant funding or funding through other sources as there are many types of opportunities available.

## Orange County Family Wellness Initiative

by Kristin Stits and Michele Cheung, M. D.

Kristin Stits presented on the Orange County Family Wellness Initiative. The task force's purpose is to support families affected by perinatal substance use. The task force is one of the few task forces that's under the WE CAN Coalition working to end child abuse and neglect. It is a countywide cross system, partnership to move resources and support upstream in the communities to families affected by perinatal substance, use to reduce negative health outcomes, prevent child welfare, intervention and infant parent separation through the implementation of the Family Wellness Plan (Plan of Safe Care) plan of safe care.

The OC Family Wellness Initiative focus is to improve the outcomes for infants and families affected by prenatal substance exposure, support the recovery of pregnant and parenting individuals and their families, develop policies and protocols that support intervention during the prenatal period, and to reduce the number of infants removed from their families as a result of parental substance use. Their goals include reducing stigma and discrimination, increase the coordination of care, improve data collection and exchange, and increase access to care and services.

There is an average of 250-350 calls into the hotline. 90% of the calls result in a family investigation and if needed a case will be opened. If criteria are met, the infant will be removed from the county. Statistically, only about 15% of these infants will be reunited with their birth family because criteria for reunification are strict.

Michelle Cheung shared that over the years, more organizations have become involved to improve and implement Family Wellness planning.

Family Wellness Plan Components should be interdisciplinary, family-focused, preferably completed during prenatal period, easily accessible, and grounded in evidence-informed practices. Components include infant medical care, mother medical care, mother's substance use and mental health needs, and family/caregiver history and needs. Family wellness plans can be started at the hospital as well.



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Resources are available online at EveryParentOC.org in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Carla asked about referring someone if they she received a call about a pregnant woman looking for detox. Michelle clarified that detox would be better handled with a different provider, as they are more specialized on the Planning for Safe Care. Mark confirmed that OC Links would be the best place to call. Currently a toolkit is being worked on so that people know where to call. There is a direct line in the process of being developed with two BHS staff dedicated to helping with the Plan of Safe Care.

Chase inquired about the number of county employees are a part of this, what the budget is, and Steve asked what the funding source is. Since the Plan of Safe Care must be offered and implemented, there are not additional staff being dedicated for this initiative, these services are part of the services offered in general.

## **Public Comment:**

- **James Farrell**  
Mr. Farrell met with a representative from District 1 to discuss concerns regarding handling of 5150 and conservatorships. Upon follow up, the representative had not yet addressed it with Supervisor Janet Nguyen. Mr. Farrell will keep the board updated.
- **Keith Torkelson**  
Mr. Torkelson shared a presentation on his proposal for a housing hotline. In his presentation, he shared proposed questions that would be asked on the hotline to determine the needs of the caller.
- **Bob Sengal-**  
Mr. Sengal shared about his app project called the Joy Score which was designed to help people with anxiety, depression, and stress. Cost is currently free, but subscription fees are expected to be implemented in the upcoming months.
- **Bennie Tinson- LARCA**  
Mr. Tinson is the executive director of the Licensed Adult Residential Care Association (LARCA). Association currently collaborates with LA county to help transition individuals from skilled nursing facilities and into residential settings. They are looking for opportunities to partner with Orange County.

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**New Business:**

- **BHSA Fiscal Update by Anthony Lee**  
Anthony Lee provided the BHAB members an update on the fiscal status of our MHSA Fund 13Y. He reviewed FY 24/25 projections of revenue and expenses, and the projected outlook through FY 25/26. Projected revenue was provided by the State Consultant, Mike Geis, with most recent projections given in early June. Projected ending balance on June 30, 2025, is \$174.9 million. Projected ending balance on June 30, 2026, is \$136.1 million. HCA and County Budget and Finance Office continue to meet regularly with the State Consultant, reviewing and updating projected amounts and planning for a variety of future potential outcomes.

Anthony will come back at a future meeting to address questions after the BHAB has reviewed the documents shared with them. Linda requested additional explanation regarding how Medi-Cal funding will affect the budget.

- Committee Reports and Announcements will be addressed at a future meeting. Alan reminded the group to defer to the website for the committee schedules as those are subject to changes.
- BHSA County Policy Manual was provided to BHAB members. Updates will be provided as they come out.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

**Officially submitted by: Karla Perez** \*\* Note copies of all writings pertaining to items in these BHAB meetings are available for public review in the Behavioral Health Services Advisory Board Office, 405 W. 5th St., Santa Ana, CA 92701, 714.834.5481 or Email: [OCBHAB@ochca.com](mailto:OCBHAB@ochca.com) \*\*

2025 BHAB Attendance Record											
General Meetings											
MEMBER	22-Jan	26-Feb	26-Mar	23-Apr	28-May	25-Jun	23-Jul	27-Aug	24-Sep	22-Oct	26-Nov
Alan Albright	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Supervisor Sarmiento's Office	A	P	P	P	P	P					
Hector Bustos	P	P	A	P	P	A					
Carla DiCandia	P	P	A	P	P	P					
Stephen McNally	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Tuong Chinh Nguyen	P	P									
Linda Smith	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Duan Tran	A	P	A	A	P	P					
Frederick Williams	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Chase Wickersham	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Mitchell Fernandez		P	A	A	P	P					
Danielle Sena		A	A	P	P	A					
Adela Cruz					P	A					