

Systems and Medicaid Committee

Meeting Minutes
Quarterly Meeting – April 20, 2023

Members Present:

Karen Baylor, Chairperson	Uma Zykofsky, Chair-Elect	Catherine Moore
Walter Shwe	Marina Rangel	Cindy Wang
Noel O’Neill	Susan Wilson	Daphne Shaw
Deborah Pitts	Tony Vartan	Steve Leoni
Dale Mueller	Liz Oseguera	Javier Moreno

Staff Present:

Ashneek Nanua, Gabriella Sedano, Jenny Bayardo

Presenters: Casey Heinzen, Janelle Ito-Orille, Melissa Stafford Jones, Autumn Boylan, Adrienne Shilton, Tyler Rinde, Tracy Lacey, Le Ondra Clark Harvey, John Drebinger, Wendy Wang, Patricia Costales, Tim Ryder

Meeting Commenced at 8:35 a.m.

Item #1 **Approve January and February 2023 Draft Meeting Minutes**

The Systems and Medicaid Committee (SMC) reviewed the SMC January 2023 draft meeting minutes. Steve Leoni provided an edit indicating that he was present but his name was not listed on the meeting minutes. The committee approved the SMC January 2023 Meeting Minutes with the edit to include Steve Leoni’s name on the minutes. The SMC reviewed the SMC February 2023 draft meeting minutes. Daphne Shaw abstained. The committee approved the SMC January 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Action/Resolution

SMC staff will make edits to the January 2023 Draft Meeting Minutes. The January 2023 and February 2023 SMC Meeting Minutes are approved.

Responsible for Action-Due Date

Ashneek Nanua – April 2023

Item #2 **Discussion Re: SMC Participation in CBHPC Workgroups**

Chairperson Karen Baylor brought the committee’s attention to CBHPC’s workgroups and committee representation in the workgroups. Uma Zykofsky is the SMC representative for the Planning Council’s Reducing Disparities Workgroup. Noel O’Neill is the committee representative for the Children’s Workgroup. Karen Baylor volunteered to represent the SMC for CBHPC’s Substance Use Disorder Workgroup.

Action/Resolution

The workgroup representatives will report the activities of the CBHPC workgroups at subsequent SMC meetings.

Responsible for Action-Due Date

Karen Baylor, Uma Zykofsky, Noel O’Neill - Ongoing

Item #3 Review of SMC Feedback to DHCS Behavioral Health Information Notices and Concept Papers

SMC staff shared committee documents such as letters and responses to DHCS Behavioral Health Information Notices (BHINs) to highlight the work that the SMC has done in response to DHCS’ proposed behavioral health policies and programs. The most recent feedback to DHCS is the SMC [recommendation letter](#) written to DHCS in February 2023 regarding the [CalAIM Behavioral Health Administrative Integration Concept Paper](#), which lays out the proposed policy for the administrative integration of mental health (Specialty Mental Health Services) and substance use disorder programs (Drug Medi-Cal and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System) into a single county-based behavioral health program. Staff also shared the committee’s feedback on the draft Behavioral Health Information Notice for the elimination of cost reporting requirements for counties and providers under CalAIM.

Steve Leoni requested that the committee ask DHCS for more consideration and increased time frames to respond to the BHINs as the current response period is counterproductive to quality feedback. Chairperson Karen Baylor stated that the Executive Officer meets with DHCS regularly and could potentially bring this feedback to DHCS.

Action/Resolution

SMC staff will continue to solicit committee feedback for DHCS policies and Behavioral Health Information Notices. Staff will then share the final version of committee feedback to the SMC.

Responsible for Action-Due Date

Ashneek Nanua – Ongoing

Item #4 Overview of DHCS Children and Youth Programs/Initiatives and Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTPs)

Janelle Ito-Orille, Chief of Licensing and Certification Division at the Department of Health Care Services, and Casey Heinzen, Chief of Behavioral Health Innovation Branch of the Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Policy Division presented to the SMC on Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTPs). In 2021, DHCS reviewed all

STRTPs in California licensed by the Department of Social Services and conducted determinations on which facilities may be deemed as an Institute for Mental Disease (IMD). DHCS completed determinations for all licensed STRTP facilities based on guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and determined that 3 STRTPs can be IMDs in December 2022. The IMDs cannot claim Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for reimbursement which means that these 3 facilities cannot bill Medi-Cal and must use other funding sources.

Casey Heinzen provided an overview of the children and youth component of the Medicaid Section 1115 California Behavioral Health Community-Based Continuum (CalBH-CBC) Demonstration Waiver, which seeks to enhance community-based services to support adults with serious mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbances. One goal of this demonstration is to request approval from CMS to bill FFP for short-term stays in IMDs. Elements of the demonstration pertaining to children and youth include a cross-sector incentive pool for county Mental Health Plans, Managed Care Plans, and child welfare agencies to meet milestones that would result in financial incentives used for activities to improve care, clarifying coverage of evidence-based practices (EBPs) and community-defined evidence practices (CDEPs) via Centers of Excellence and updated guidance, and ensuring the Child and Adolescent Needs (CANS) tool is administered in the same way across entities and developing a standardized process to track progress and outcomes. Casey stated that DHCS is taking feedback on the community-defined practices and cross-incentive pool measures from stakeholders.

Committee members engaged DHCS in a Q & A session following the presentation. Topics discussed included Centers of Excellence, CANS data, EBPs/CDEPs, and potential challenges with STRTPs opting into the Section 1115 CalBH-CBC Demonstration due to STRTPs having clients across multiple counties.

Action/Resolution

N/A

Responsible for Action-Due Date

N/A

Item #5 Overview of DHCS Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI), Progress Reports, and DHCS Work Stream

Melissa Stafford Jones, Director of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI), and Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director of the DHCS Office of Strategic Partnerships, provided an overview of the CYBHI and DHCS-specific work stream of the initiative. Melissa spoke on the Governor’s Master Plan for Kids and the CYBHI as an element of the plan, the CYBHI work stream and evaluation components, and CYBHI Reports. The [January 2023 Progress Report](#) includes the specific activities of each CYBHI work stream. The [Youth at the Center Report](#) is a synthesis report of findings from a series of community engagement sessions and youth and family listening

sessions throughout California to incorporate the youth voice into the design, implementation, and policy infrastructure of the CYBHI to have a youth-centered system of care. Melissa highlighted findings from the report such as children identifying culture as a form of healing, emphasis on early intervention and preventative services, and recognition of family behavioral health and well-being. The [Ecosystem Working Paper](#) articulates 10 key findings of changes that must operationalize to achieve success.

Autumn Boylan presented on DHCS' programs of the CYBHI. These components include the behavioral health virtual services platform, scaling evidence-based practices and community-defined evidence practices across the state through 6 rounds of grant funding totaling \$429 million, and statewide all-payer school-linked fee schedule which will cover outpatient behavioral health services at or near a school site reimbursable by Medi-Cal and commercial health plans.

The SMC engaged presenters in Q & A following the presentation. Topics included commercial plan participation in the CYBHI, challenges with educating community colleges with Medi-Cal billing and participation in the CYBHI, issues related to broadband access and access to technology for the virtual services platform, teaching foster youth to use the technology, considerations for partnering with school-based health centers, youth suicide prevention, and social and emotional learning (SEL).

Action/Resolution

N/A

Responsible for Action-Due Date

N/A

Item #6 Public Comment

Bill Stewart stated that the Youth at the Center Report is powerful and a strong way to think outside of the box. He acknowledged the work being done and asked if there are any recommendations to add psychology courses for teachers.

Steve McNally suggested that CYBHI be presented in larger groups with breakout groups to address the silos that currently exist. He expressed the importance of creating safe spaces for county and state staff to speak publically without recrimination. Steve stated that there may be able to create more awareness to the end user by utilizing free public spaces and leveraging safe adults in the community.

John Drebingler stated that the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA) is excited to partner on the CYBHI efforts.

Action/Resolution

N/A

Responsible for Action-Due Date

N/A

Item #7 Short-Term Residential Treatment Program (STRTP) Presentation

Adrienne Shilton, Director of Public Policy and Strategy, and Tyler Rinde, Deputy Director of Child Welfare Policy from the California Alliance of Child and Family Services (CACFS) presented to the SMC on Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs. An STRTP is a short-term intervention that offers more intensive mental health supports to youth with the goal of transitioning them back to communities and families. These facilities were created under the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) via AB 403 to transform group homes into residential treatment programs if they meet certain standards and requirements.

The CA Alliance reported that 750 licensed STRTPs were lost between December 2022 and January 2023 after DHCS' Institute for Mental Disease (IMD) determinations, and one of the 3 STRTPs deemed as IMDs will be closing by June 2023. The CalBH-CBC waiver is meant to assist STRTPs via the IMD Waiver, however, there is little incentive for STRTPs to participate due to the risk of it being a county opt-in benefit because STRTPs serve youth from multiple counties and it does not account for the loss of STRTPs that have already occurred. Therefore, the CA Alliance does not foresee the demonstration waiver increasing STRTP capacity as intended. There are also challenges and delays in the payment and documentation reform for STRTPs under the CalAIM Initiative.

The CA Alliance has engaged with CCR workgroups on STRTP rates and advocated for higher rates in the programs. There are two different funding streams for STRTPs: a monthly rate through child welfare department for care and supervision needs of the youth and a rate for billing for mental health services. CCR created interim rates that were extended in order to move to a final rate structure by January 2025. The CA Alliance has a budget request to increase the average rate to \$27 per hour for direct care staff to help hire and retain staff and sustain the programs by 2025. Adrienne stated additional concerns include a lack of community-based services as well as nearly half of foster care programs reporting a reduction in services due to budget concerns.

The SMC engaged the CA Alliance in a Q & A session. There were discussions around ways to make the children's system of care more effective, average length of stays and access issues, education and school considerations, importance of broader spectrum of youth needs beyond medication interventions, and funding sources.

Action/Resolution

N/A

Responsible for Action-Due Date

N/A

Item #7 Local Implications of School-Based Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youth

Tracy Lacey, Director of Policy and Regulatory Affairs, County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA) presented on school-based behavioral health initiatives and how counties are partnering with Managed Care Plans (MCPs) to deliver these services. Tracy presented the successes and opportunities such as strong partnerships with counties and local education agencies, strengthening relationships between counties and MHPs, leveraging funding, enhanced coordination across systems, increased access through CalAIM’s No Wrong Door policy and criteria to access services, and being able to identify children’s behavioral health needs earlier. Potential challenges include the workflow in referral process, having adequate space to deliver services, differences in privacy practices, workforce challenges, impacts on existing partnerships and contracts, and Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) reform.

Action/Resolution

N/A

Responsible for Action-Due Date

N/A

Item #8 Provider Perspective of Children and Youth Initiatives

Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Executive Director of the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA), and John Drebing, Senior Advocate of Policy and Legislative Affairs, provided a brief background on CBHA and introduced a perspective of non-profit behavioral health providers who have expertise in service to youth. CBHA believes these providers play a crucial role in the development of evidence-based practices EBPs and interventions to address the behavioral health needs of students. They also provide training to school staff and teachers to help identify mental health and substance use disorders in students to assist in ensuring students are successful in school and life. With Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP), non-profit behavioral health providers can partner with counties and other community-based organizations to expand infrastructure in underserved and marginalized communities and leverage expertise to increase capacity to provide comprehensive and coordinated care to youth and families. These non-profits may also ensure CYBHI programs are effective and responsive and can provide feedback on program design and barriers to accessing services.

John introduced CBHA members to share their experiences and perspectives of school-based behavioral health services and CYBHI in their communities and share feedback on how to ensure California youth receive the care they need to thrive. The provider representatives discussed the statistics and the needs for school-based mental health

services for youth, workforce shortages, budget and capacity challenges, pay equity, and the need for wellness programs and prevention and early intervention services.

Action/Resolution

N/A

Responsible for Action-Due Date

N/A

Item #9 Wrap Up/Next Steps

Chairperson Karen Baylor proposed the following next steps for the remainder 2023:

- Focus on behavioral health payment reform during the June 2023 Quarterly Meeting as changes will be made to how counties may bill Medi-Cal beginning in July 2023. It would be helpful to hear the impact and potential changes of how counties and providers are funded.
- Review the work that the committee has accomplished in the last two years during the October 2023 Quarterly Meeting. Committee members will then create a new SMC Work Plan since there will be a new SMC Chairperson in 2024.

Catherine Moore acknowledged Steve Leoni’s comments about the client and family member perspective. She indicated that language can be technical which can make it difficult to respond to proposed DHCS initiatives and BHINs. She asked if there is a better way to convey the consumer and family voice to respond to DHCS proposals. Karen Baylor expressed the challenges of getting consumer feedback but that the committee should creative ways to get the consumer voice because it is important.

Steve Leoni stated that Medi-Cal payment reform only goes so far but the MHSA is different because it is used to bill for how services will help someone build their life rather than how it will help reduce an illness. He stated that a shift from an illness system to a recovery system in billing is the next step from Medi-Cal reform.

Action/Resolution

The SMC Officer team will consult with SMC staff to plan the SMC June 2023 Quarterly Meeting agenda.

Responsible for Action-Due Date

Ashneek Nanua, Karen Baylor, Uma Zykofsky - June 2023

Meeting Adjourned at 12:05 p.m.