



**California
Behavioral Health
Planning Council**

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CHAIRPERSON
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August 26, 2025

Behavioral Health Community-Based Network of Equitable Care and Treatment (BH-CONNECT) Team

Department of Health Care Services

P.O. Box 997413

Sacramento, California 95899-7413

RE: Community Transition In-Reach Services Implementation

Dear DHCS BH-CONNECT Team:

The California Behavioral Health Planning Council's Workforce and Employment Committee submitted the [Occupational Therapist Support Letter Re: BH-CONNECT Addendum Community Transition In-Reach Teams](#) in December 2024 to the Department of Health Care Services, strongly urging that Occupational Therapists (OTs) remain a required component of the Community Transition In-Reach Teams. This requirement was outlined originally in the Behavioral Health Community-Based Network of Equitable Care and Treatment (BH-CONNECT) Section 1115 Addendum Application. The Council thanks the Department of Health Care Services for maintaining the requirement that Occupational Therapists be part of the Community Transition In-Reach Teams. We recognize that the exemptions in [DRAFT BHIN 25-XXX Community Transition In-Reach Services Implementation](#) are intended to address concerns that recruitment of Occupational Therapists may be a challenge.

The Council respectfully requests that the Department of Health Care Services refer to the recommendations in our December 2024 letter for the current draft Information Notice. In addition to the recommendations outlined in the previous letter, the Council's Workforce and Employment Committee recommends the following:

- 1) Establish a collaborative partnership with the Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC) to bolster recruitment efforts and

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identify qualified Occupational Therapists who are interested in joining the in-reach teams.

- 2) Leverage the resources and initiatives of the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) for workforce development to expand capacity. We recommend that the state mirrors successful efforts in other healthcare professions where capacity has been a pressing concern.

The Council thanks the Department of Health Care Services for the opportunity to provide feedback on the BH-CONNECT Community Transition In-Reach Services. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact our Executive Officer, Jenny Bayardo, at Jenny.Bayardo@cbhpc.dhcs.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 750-3778.

Sincerely,

Jenny Bayardo
Executive Officer

Cc: Paula Wilhelm, Deputy Director, Behavioral Health, DHCS
Erika Cristo, Assistant Deputy Director, Behavioral Health, DHCS