



CBHPC Public Forum on BHSA – Stockton, CA

Thirty-two (32) members of the public showed up in Stockton, CA on August 3, 2023, to discuss the Behavioral Health Modernization Act (SB 326). Attendees included individuals who identified as peers/consumers, family members, providers, community leaders, County Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder employees, the MHSA Coordinator, the San Joaquin County Mental Health Board Chairperson, the County Behavioral Health Director, a County Supervisor, and concerned citizens.

Community organizations represented included:

- AA Whole Life Center
- Child Abuse Prevention Council
- Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health
- County Officer of Education
- El Concilio
- Family Promise of San Joaquin County
- NAMI San Joaquin
- Parents by Choice
- Peer Recovery Services

The main points about **housing** are:

- Housing is important. Most attendees support providing housing interventions such as subsidies, just not at the expense of vital mental health services.
- The required percentages for housing will take away from behavioral health services needed in San Joaquin County.
- The reasons persons are unhoused are complicated and extend beyond a simple “lack of housing”; in fact there are unused beds designated for the homeless “right now” in San Joaquin County.
- Attendees overwhelmingly support fewer funding restrictions from the state and more county control in the implementation of housing interventions.

A few quotes from attendees about the Housing Section of SB 326:

“So, I am 100% opposed, well, I am probably like 95% opposed if something like what is being proposed is going to pass or it is not. To me, providing services to get people from being homeless to being in a permanent housing situation is wonderful. But taking it away from current mental health services is just horrifying to me.” Michael Fields, Peer/CEO of Peer Recovery Services

“I am speaking more as a parent of a young lady who is homeless and an addict living on the streets in Lodi. And what I can tell about this is that my daughter is not going to seek housing until she gets her mental health issues taken care of. And if money is taken away from that, there is no hope for her.” -Angela Lopez, Parent

The main points discussed around **Full Service Partnerships** were:

- The community supports the inclusion of persons with lived experience of Substance Use Disorder.
- San Joaquin County currently has robust Full Service Partnerships for which funding would be reduced in the proposed BHSA (SB 326) resulting in a loss of services while the eligible population is increasing.
- There is great concern that with the diversion of funds causing cuts in some categories of spending like general support services, there will not be “step down services” for individuals when they graduate from FSPs.
- The community is concerned about a rise in hospitalizations due to the reduction of prevention programs funded in SB 326.

A few quotes from attendees about the Full Service Partnership Section of SB 326:

“My concern more is where would people graduate to. If they have completed Full Service Partnership, where do they go after that? So, if there is limited general support services, where do we step them down after intensive services?”- Genevieve Valentine, County Staff & Family Member

“If they [the state] are going to take money away from these areas of early intervention, the mild to moderate, and we are not going to have a middle area, we are going to see hospitalization go through the roof. We are not going to have the availability and the places for them to go to. It is going to become a huge crisis when we could mitigate using the mild to moderate adult community trauma programs. So, we really need to think about that. That program will probably go away, if they take this money away, leaving people with nothing going into the severe mental health crisis.” - Leonard Lippert, Clinician, El Concilio Behavioral Health

The main points about the **Community Planning Process** are:

- The proposed BHSA exacerbates and even creates additional health disparities as it will eliminate services utilized by marginalized groups.
- Counties need to listen to the individuals served by these programs to find out what is working and what they need.
- Each county is different and the programs, services and interventions need to be tailored to each county.

A few quotes from attendees about the Full Service Partnership Section of SB 326:

“We need to have better opportunities, and more opportunities to get feedback from (consumers) about what works for them on a day-to-day basis with the people that are working with them. We have to take their suggestions, their opinions, their perceptions, into consideration to know what is going to work for them. And that is not at a meeting, some random time of day-- So, I think we really need to take a couple steps back and really look at how do we get the information from the people that this is actually supposed to affect? ”- Chelsea Rambo, Clinician