



**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE
SACRAMENTO COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD**

Calendar Year 2024

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Executive Summary

The Sacramento County Mental Health Board (MHB) is fulfilling its mission regarding children with serious emotional disturbances and adults with severe mental illness. Its activities are guided by its statutory mandate. It is comprised of consumers, family members, public interest representatives, and a Board of Supervisors representative. This diverse membership guarantees that multiple perspectives are included in the work conducted by the MHB.

The MHB has had many accomplishments in 2024. It focused on advising the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and the Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services Director on fiscal and policy issues. It reviewed the Sacramento County Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25, evaluated how it aligns with the policy and fiscal recommendations that the MHB has made in the past, and made recommendations in support of growth proposals for county departments with an emphasis on Behavioral Health Services (BHS) programs. It completed its Annual Report for Calendar Year (CY) 2023 along with its Performance Report of the Sacramento County Mental Health System for CY 2023. It completed the 2024 Data Notebook for the California Behavioral Health Planning Council. It formed an ad hoc committee dedicated to the establishment of a Behavioral Health Commission, in accordance with the Behavioral Health Services Modernization Act (BHSA). Additionally, it conducted a public hearing related to the Draft Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Two Year Plan.

The MHB has successfully completed a majority of its goals for 2024, with significant progress made on others. It continued to monitor the program design, planning, and implementation of new and ongoing programs within the Division of Behavioral Health Services and it was actively involved in the process of defining the structure, roles, and responsibilities of a new Behavioral Health Commission. Completion of the MHB's policy-related goals resulted in budget recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. It had process-related goals that resulted in the MHB committees' successful outreach to community members, use of both qualitative and quantitative data in decision-making, and collaboration by both the Adult System of Care Committee, the Children's System

of Care Committee, and the Community Wellness Response Team Advisory Committee with other county advisory boards and system partners countywide. In addition, the MHB has apprised itself of many important issues and programs in the community through the presentations it has had at its standing committee and general meetings throughout the year.

The MHB has extensive representation on Behavioral Health Services committees and has liaison relationships with other committees and community-based organizations. These relationships provide opportunities to share the viewpoints of the MHB and to ensure that the MHB is informed of the policies adopted by these entities and of trends in the community.

MHB Purpose

The Sacramento County Mental Health Board is committed to championing the rights of those with mental illnesses in Sacramento County.

MHB Mission

To enable children with serious emotional disturbances and adults with mental illness to access services and programs that assist them, in a manner tailored to each individual, to better control their illness, to achieve their personal goals, and to develop skills and supports leading to their living the most constructive and satisfying lives possible in the least restrictive available settings.

MHB Statutory Mandate

The statutory mandate for mental health boards is found in Section 5604.2(a) of the California Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC):

(a) The local mental health board shall do all of the following:

(1) Review and evaluate the community's public mental health needs, services, facilities, and special problems in any facility within the county or jurisdiction where mental health evaluations or services are being provided, including, but not limited to, schools, emergency departments, and psychiatric facilities.

(2) Review any county agreements entered into pursuant to Section 5650. The local mental health board may make recommendations to the governing body regarding concerns identified within these agreements.

(3) Advise the governing body and the local mental health director as to any aspect of the local mental health program. Local mental health boards may request assistance from the local patients' rights advocates when reviewing and advising on mental health evaluations or services provided in public facilities with limited access.

(4) Review and approve the procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process. Involvement shall include individuals with lived experience of mental illness and their families, community members, advocacy organizations, and mental health professionals. It shall also include other professionals that interact with individuals living with mental illnesses on a daily basis, such as education, emergency services, employment, health care, housing, law enforcement, local business owners, social services, seniors, transportation, and veterans.

(5) Submit an annual report to the governing body on the needs and performance of the county's mental health system.

(6) Review and make recommendations on applicants for the appointment of a local director of mental health services. The board shall be included in the selection process prior to the vote of the governing body.

(7) Review and comment on the county's performance outcome data and communicate its findings to the California Behavioral Health Planning Council.

(8) This part does not limit the ability of the governing body to transfer additional duties or authority to a mental health board.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that, as part of its duties pursuant to subdivision (a), the board shall assess the impact of the realignment of

services from the state to the county, on services delivered to clients and on the local community.

The composition of mental health boards is also specified in statute in WIC Section 5604(a)(2). It is to have 50% consumers (persons with lived experience of mental illness) or the parents, spouses, siblings, or adult children of consumers. At least 20% shall be consumers, and at least 20% shall be family members of consumers.

MHB Membership

The table below includes MHB members by appointment category and Board of Supervisor district as of December 31, 2024.

District 1: Phil Serna

District 2: Patrick Kennedy

District 3: Rick Desmond

District 4: Sue Frost

District 5: Pat Hume

Member	Appointment Category	District
Evan Minton, Secretary	Consumer	1
Kesha Harris	Family Member	1
Maria Padilla-Castro, Vice Chairperson	Public Interest	1
Patricia Wentzel	Consumer	2
Mykel Gayent	Family Member, Veteran	2
Corrine McIntosh Sako, Chairperson	Public Interest	2
Supervisor Patrick Kennedy	Board Supervisor	2
VACANT	Consumer	3
VACANT	Family Member	3
Melinda Avey	Public Interest	3

VACANT	Consumer	4
Brad Lueth	Family Member	4
VACANT	Public Interest	4
Laura Asay-Bemis	Consumer	5
Theresa Riviera	Family Member	5
Mallika Walsh	Public Interest	5
Supervisor Pat Hume	Alternate	5

The MHB gained two new members in 2024: Kesha Harris and Melinda Avey. The MHB experienced two resignations of members during 2024 (William Cho, District 3; Ryan Gallant, District 3), along with another member who completed their second term of service and thus was ineligible for reappointment at the end of the year (Maria Padilla-Castro, District 1).

MHB General Meeting Date and Location

The MHB meets in-person on the first Wednesday of every month from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building at 700 H Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Hybrid participation for members of the public was available at each meeting.

MHB Standing Committees

MHB Budget Committee

Purpose: To advise the MHB on budget concerns and to provide recommendations for consideration by the MHB.

MHB Members: Patricia Wentzel, Corrine McIntosh Sako, Evan Minton.

MHB Executive Committee

Purpose: To prepare an agenda for the MHB's annual retreat and to carry out any responsibilities delegated to it by the MHB for any activities that do not require approval of the full MHB. To fulfill the MHB's responsibilities only when sensitive matters arise and urgent response is required but the entire MHB cannot be convened. These actions must be approved by the MHB at a subsequent meeting.

MHB Members: Corrine McIntosh Sako, Chairperson; Maria Padilla-Castro, Vice-

Chairperson; Evan Minton, Public Information Secretary; Patricia Wentzel, At-large Member.

Children's System of Care Committee

Purpose: To work on goals assigned to it at the MHB Annual Retreat and perform other assignments made by the MHB.

MHB Members: Corrine McIntosh Sako, Committee Chairperson; Maria Padilla-Castro; Theresa Riviera; Kesha Harris.

Adult System of Care Committee

Purpose: To work on goals assigned to it at the MHB Annual Retreat and perform other assignments made by the MHB.

MHB Members: Patricia Wentzel, Committee Chairperson; Brad Lueth, Committee Vice-Chairperson; Mallika Walsh; Melinda Avey.

Community Wellness Response Team (CWRT) Advisory Committee

Purpose: Composed of MHB members and community members with diverse community, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic representation. Goals include:

- Ensure fidelity to the community stakeholder workgroup input in the implementation of CWRT as a program and its related advisory committee
- Monitor CWRT program operations and review outcomes
- Make program recommendations regarding the CWRT
- Assist BHS with transparency and accessibility by providing public awareness and updates regarding CWRT
- Serve as a forum to receive input regarding the CWRT program from community stakeholders.

MHB Members: Corrine McIntosh Sako, Committee Co-Chair; Mykel Gayent; Evan Minton (until April 2024); Patricia Wentzel (joined August 2024)

Community Members: Katie Houston, Committee Co-Chair; Elijah Orr, Committee Co-Chair; Elizabeth Kaino Hopper; Adam Wills (until November 2024); Severine Hollingsworth (until August 2024); Sarina Rodriguez (until August 2024)

MHB Accomplishments 2024

1. The MHB established a new standing committee, “Justice Committee,” focused on the intersection of individuals with mental illness and their interactions with the justice system.
2. Conducted five site visits:
 - 7/08/2024 - [HeartLand Child and Family Services Family Wellness Full Service Partnership](#)
 - 7/29/2024 – [Capital Star Community Services Full Service Partnership \(FSP\) for Transition Age Youth \(TAY\)](#)
 - 8/05/2024 – [El Hogar Community Justice Support Program Full Service Partnership](#)
 - 8/19/2024 – [Hope Cooperative New Directions Full Service Partnership](#)
 - 12/04/2024 – [Pacific Clinics](#)
3. The MHB sent a letter to the Board of Supervisors in June 2024 in support of the budget for Behavioral Health Services for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25, including support for growth proposals with an emphasis on the county departments that address the following areas, including Behavioral Health Services (BHS) programs:
 - Expanding Access to Equitable Mental Health Services for Children, Youth, and Families
 - Homelessness and Housing
 - Behavioral Health Crisis Care Continuum
 - Jail Population Reduction and Alternatives to Incarceration for Individuals with Mental Illness
 - Behavioral Health Services Administrative, Technical, and Non-Technical Support
4. Formed an ad hoc workgroup dedicated to the establishment of a Behavioral Health Commission in accordance with the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), which seeks to integrate the examination of mental health services with substance use prevention and treatment services in the related advisory board.

5. Reconsidered and approved the Community Wellness Response Team (CWRT) Advisory Committee's bylaws with reconsideration of membership exclusion criteria.
6. The MHB hosted a Public Hearing on the Draft Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Two Year Plan Annual Update at a meeting held on 4/03/2024.
7. The MHB completed the 2024 Data Notebook, "Homelessness in the Public Behavioral Health System," as required by WIC Section 5604.2(a)(7) and approved it at its 11/06/2024 meeting. The Data Notebook is a requirement of the California Behavioral Health Planning Council for gathering information on performance data from county mental health programs and for obtaining interpretation of that data from local mental health boards.
8. The MHB Chair attended and participated in the "SEMINAR-GAMING" FOR SOCIAL PROBLEM-SOLVING Behavioral Health Crisis Response in Sacramento facilitated by UC Davis, a half-day convening of an interdisciplinary group of representatives to work collaboratively & problem-solve hypothetical, but realistic, social problems related to behavioral health crisis response, held on 7/30/2024.
9. The MHB Chair participated in monthly meetings with BHS Director; provided quarterly briefings to the County Supervisors' Chiefs of Staff; remained in regular communication with County Counsel assigned to the MHB; and participated in meetings with relevant system partners, as needed.

MHB Annual Retreat

- The MHB held its Annual Retreat on January 20, 2024 from 9:00am to 3:00pm in-person at Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services 7001-A East Parkway Conference Room 1. A team building presentation and exercise was facilitated by Adèle James; a MHB member orientation training was presented; MHB committee and liaison assignments were updated; MHB 2024 goals were identified; and a training

on how to be an effective Mental Health Board was presented by Adèle James.

Status of MHB Goals for 2024

Adult System of Care Committee

Goal 1: Research implementation of SB 43 (a change in State mental health conservatorship laws that expands the eligibility requirements to compel people struggling with severe substance use disorder to get the care and support they need) in Sacramento County, scheduled for January 2025.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 2: Research implementation of CARE Court (connects a person struggling with untreated mental illness and often also substance use challenges with a court-ordered Care Plan for up to 24 months) in Sacramento County, scheduled for December 2024.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 3: Study effectiveness of Full Service Partnerships (FSPs) in Sacramento County.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 4: Monitor and Make Appropriate Recommendations regarding the Implementation of Psychiatric Advance Directives (PADS) throughout Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services' programs.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Presentations:

- BHS on Full-Service Partnership Program Overview
- Received testimony and Q & A from Consumers regarding FSP experiences
- Received testimony and Q & A from family members & supporters regarding FSP experiences
- BHS on Full-Service Partnership Programs
- BHS on SB 43 implementation
- BHS on Psychiatric Advance Directives implementation
- BHS on the Intensive Placement Team (IPT) and higher levels of care

- Overview of SUPT Programs by BHS SUPT Division Manager
- Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic Overview by Turning Point Community Programs

Budget Committee

Goal: Review the Sacramento County Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, evaluate how it aligns with the policy and fiscal recommendations that the MHB has made in the past, and bring forward a recommendation for the MHB to make in support of growth proposals for county departments with an emphasis on Behavioral Health Services (BHS) programs.

Status: Completed. MHB approved a set of Budget Recommendations at its 6/03/24 Special Meeting and was submitted to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors as a received and file item.

Children's System of Care Committee

Goal 1: Monitor and Make Appropriate Recommendations Regarding Behavioral Health Services Provided to Sacramento County Foster Youth with Complex Behavioral Health Needs

Status: Ongoing.

Goal 2: Monitor and Make Appropriate Recommendations Regarding Behavioral Health Services Provided to LGBTQ+ and Gender-Nonconforming Youth Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 3: Monitor and Make Appropriate Recommendations Regarding Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Behavioral Health Services for Youth in Sacramento County.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 4: Collaborate with Sacramento County Behavioral Health Youth Advisory Board.

Status: Ongoing.

Presentations:

- Project T.A.K.E. (Trafficking-Awareness-Knowledge-Empowerment) Youth Program Addressing Dangers of Sex Trafficking by Leia Schenk of EMPACT

- Essence of Black Girlhood Story Circles by Essence of Black Girlhood Project Directors
- Programs and Services Offered by Sacramento Native American Health Center (SNAHC)
- Behavioral Health Services Provided by FosterHope
- Behavioral Health Services Provided by Heartland Child & Family Services
- “Getting System-Involved Youth the Support They Need” from California Children’s Trust
- “Youth Suicide Prevention Coalition” by BHS & Public Health
- Behavioral Health Services provided by The Source, a program of the Sacramento Children’s Home

Community Wellness Response Team (CWRT) Advisory Committee

Goal 1: Ensure Fidelity to the Community Stakeholder Workgroup Input in the Implementation of CWRT as a Program and Its Related Advisory Committee.

Status: Ongoing.

Goal 2: Monitor CWRT Program Operations and Review Outcomes

Status: Ongoing.

Goal 3: Make Program Recommendations Regarding the CWRT.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 4: Assist BHS with Transparency and Accessibility by Providing Public Awareness and Updates Regarding CWRT.

Status: Ongoing.

Goal 5: Serve as a Forum to Receive Input Regarding the CWRT Program from Community Stakeholders.

Status: Ongoing.

Presentations:

- Advocates for Kaylin Footman on Community Feedback regarding CWRT Program Implementation
- CWRT Marketing Plan by Edelman
- Sacramento Sheriff's Office (SSO) Liaison to CWRT Advisory Committee on Sacramento Sheriff's Office Training and Policies Regarding Welfare Checks and 5150's
- BHS on Medi-Cal Mobile Crisis Benefit pertaining to direct phone line to CWRT
- "How Would You Define Community Safety?" by Community Corrections Partnership Advisory Board (CCPAB)
- Sacramento County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)'s Goal related to Mental Health from Sacramento County Public Health
- CWRT Budget Update from BHS Division Manager for Adult Outpatient, Forensic & Crisis Continuum
- Albuquerque Community Safety Department
- California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) 988-Crisis Care Continuum Advisory Groups & Workgroups Update
- Recommendations from the UC Davis Social Gaming Seminars Pertaining to Sacramento County Behavioral Health Crisis Response from BHS Deputy Director
- CWRT Marketing and Communication Plan

Executive Committee

Goal 1: Complete, review, & approve MHB 2023 Annual Report & Performance Report.

Status: Completed. MHB 2023 Annual Report was approved at 8/07/2024 MHB General Meeting and submitted to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors as a received and filed item. MHB 2023 Performance Report was approved at 12/04/2024 MHB General Meeting and submitted to BOS as a received and filed item.

Goal 2: Identify and coordinate relevant site visits in accordance with ASOC and CSOC goals, in addition to MHB members' interest.

Status: Completed. MHB conducted 5 site visits relevant to MHB standing committee goals in 2024.

Goal 3: Recruit and recommend MHB appointees to County Supervisors to fill current vacancies.

Status: Ongoing.

Justice Committee

Goal 1: Research, monitor, and make appropriate recommendations regarding implementation of CARE Court in Sacramento County.

Status: No recommendations made to date, continue to monitor.

Goal 2: Monitor and make appropriate recommendations regarding behavioral health services provided to individuals interacting with the justice system – including, but not limited to: incarceration, collaborative courts, probation, etc.

Status: Ongoing.

Presentations:

- BHS Substance Use Prevention and Treatment on Substance Use Disorder & Mental Health in the Jail system
- Pre-release and Re-entry Services Offered by Divisions under the Department of Health Services

Ad Hoc Workgroup Dedicated to Formation of Behavioral Health Commission

- 9/25/24 Pre-Meeting with Facilitator) & BHS Director
- 11/12/24 Meeting with Facilitator, BHS Director, & Alcohol & Drug Advisory Board Ad Hoc Committee

Presentations Made at MHB General Meetings

At each general monthly meeting of the MHB, there is a report from the Behavioral Health Services Director as well as updates from advocates and peer partners, the association of behavioral health contractors, and other system partners. In addition, the following presentations were received by the MHB from the following system partners:

2/07/2024 MHB Meeting:

- Presentation by Sacramento County Counsel Assigned to MHB on Brown Act Requirements (Part 1)

3/06/24 MHB Meeting:

- Presentation by Sacramento County Counsel Assigned to MHB on Brown Act Requirements (Part 2)
- Presentation by Sacramento County BHS Program Manager with the Administration, Planning, and Outcomes team on Psychiatric Advance Directives Implementation among Sacramento County BHS
- Presentation by Sacramento County BHS Program Manager for Forensic Behavioral Health (FBH) Services on Sacramento County Forensic Behavioral Health Services

4/03/2024 MHSA Public Hearing Hosted by the MHB:

- Presentation by MHSA Health Program Manager and Program Planner on Overview of the Draft Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Two Year Plan

5/01/2024 MHB Meeting:

- Presentation by representatives of the California Health Care Foundation Project on the Behavioral Health Housing Continuum
- Presentation by representatives of the Community Corrections Partnership Advisory Board on its “How Would You Define Community Safety?” survey

6/05/2024 MHB Meeting:

- Presentation by the Executive Director of the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions (CALBHB/C) on Proposition 1 Updates for Mental Health Boards/Commissions Taking Effect January 1, 2025
- Presentation by Chairperson of the Sacramento County Behavioral Health Youth Advisory Board (BHYAB) on Behavioral Health Youth Advisory Board’s (BHYAB) Quarterly Update

8/07/2024 MHB Meeting

- Presentation by Sacramento County Counsel Assigned to MHB on Brown Act Update

- Presentation by representatives from Sacramento County Adult Correctional Mental Health on Behavioral Health Services for Individuals Detained in Sacramento County Jails

10/02/2024 MHB Meeting

- Presentation by Director of Consumer Self-Help Center's Office of Patients' Rights on Patients' Rights Advocates in Sacramento County

11/06/2024 MHSA Public Hearing hosted by MHB

- Presentation by Sacramento County BHS Health Program Manager for BHS SAC Team on Behavioral Health Services Screening and Coordination (BHS SAC) Team, formerly known as Access Team

12/04/2024 MHB Meeting

- Presentation by Presentation by Chairperson of the Sacramento County Behavioral Health Youth Advisory Board (BHYAB) on Behavioral Health Youth Advisory Board's (BHYAB) Quarterly Update

BHS Committee Membership and Liaison Activities

MHB members serve as members of BHS committees and as liaisons to BHS committees and to community-based organizations. These members provide the MHB perspective on the committees on which they are members, and they report back to the MHB on the important policies discussed and adopted by these committees. The liaisons to committees and community-based organizations monitor the activities of these entities and report back to the MHB so that it can stay abreast of those activities and concerns in the community.

Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board

MHB Liaison: VACANT

Purpose: Promotes a healthy community and reduces the harmful effects associated with alcohol and drug use.

Behavioral Health Racial Equity Collaborative (BHREC)

MHB Liaison: Kesha Harris

Purpose: Established to bring together key stakeholders of the Sacramento

County behavioral health system to build Racial Equity Action Plans (BHREC Action Plans) to improve behavioral health outcomes in the Sacramento community, especially for those communities of people who identify as African American/Black/of African descent.

BHS Cultural Competence Committee (CCC)

MHB Liaison: Mallika Walsh

Purpose: A subcommittee of the Quality Improvement Committee. Acts as an advisor to BHS on cultural competence issues, including outreach, accessibility, linguistic requirements, human resources, and strategies to improve penetration rates. The CCC takes an active role in the continued monitoring of current state-mandated Cultural Competence Plans (CCPs) and the development of subsequent CCPs in Sacramento County. The CCC also reviews all services and programs, Quality Assurance Annual Workplan Reports, and MHSA Annual Update plans with respect to cultural competence issues.

Human Services Coordinating Council

MHB Members: Corrine McIntosh Sako

Purpose: Serves as an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors on matters relating to health and human services planning and policy issues.

BHS Mental Health Services Act Steering Committee

MHB Member: Patricia Wentzel

Purpose: Makes recommendation to BHS for MHSA programs and funding by: Engaging clients, family members, and other community stakeholders to develop MHSA plans; Reviewing and ranking proposals developed with stakeholder input; Making specific program recommendations consistent with MHSA goals, guidelines, and requirements.

Older Adult Commission

MHB Liaison: Maria Padilla-Castro

Purpose: The Older Adult Coalition (OAC) provides an educational forum regarding Sacramento County community-based services and supports to promote older adult mental health recovery. The OAC meets every other month, including at the Annual Mental Health & Aging Conference. The OAC is comprised of a broad cross-section of the mental health, health, and social service professional

community in the public and private sector. Its voluntary membership also reflects public citizens, consumers, family members, retired professionals, and mental health and older adult advocates.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

MHB Liaison: Brad Lueth

Purpose: A grassroots organization that provides a community of support, education, resources, and outreach activities to families, friends, and persons with mental illness so as to improve their general welfare and to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

BHS Quality Improvement Committee

MHB Member: Patricia Wentzel

Purpose: The Mental Health Plan (MHP) Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) is chaired by the Mental Health Plan (MHP) Quality Management Program Manager. The QIC meets on a monthly basis. It includes consumers; family members; representatives of the contracted service provider system; Mental Health Access Teams; Research and Evaluation, Quality Management; Cultural Competence; psychiatry; pharmacy; and Alcohol and Drug Services Unit. The QIC structure is the umbrella for standing subcommittees, ad hoc subcommittees, and/or workgroups that are developed to meet the changing needs of the MHP. Subcommittees report to the monthly QIC meetings where information is reviewed and comments are received from all parts of the system. These deliberations result in approval, new initiatives, and recommendations for new directions and constitute a critical communication forum for the MHP.

First 5 Sacramento Advisory Commission

MHB Member: VACANT

Purpose: Makes strategic investments based on best practices and a community-driven plan. Investments are made into programs that meet the highest needs of children and families in Sacramento County.

Sacramento County Maternal Mental Health Collaborative

MHB Member: VACANT

Purpose: Increases knowledge of maternal mental health disorders and resources available to address them among mothers, healthcare providers, policy makers, and other stakeholders.

Sacramento County Mental Health Board Members



Corrine McIntosh Sako (she/her) is chair of the Sacramento County Mental Health Board (MHB). She was born and raised in South Sacramento and she is a licensed psychologist and a licensed marriage and family therapist. She has over 20 years of experience providing mental health services in a variety of settings (i.e., school, community mental health centers, group home, intensive outpatient treatment program, private practice), and she has provided direct clinical services in her private practice since 2006. Corrine was appointed to the MHB's District 2 Public Interest seat in May 2021 and she has held multiple leadership positions since serving on the MHB. She also serves on the Mental Health Board's Community Wellness Response Team (CWRT) Advisory Committee. Corrine's lived experience as a consumer of mental health services, as well as being a family member of those who are consumers of mental health services, drive her personal and professional commitment to advocate for equitable and inclusive systems of care. Corrine shows up and speaks out on the impact of systemic and structural oppression on mental health, at the individual and the collective levels. She is passionate in her work to decriminalize mental illness and transform our county's behavioral health crisis response system so that a mental health crisis receives a mental health response.



Patricia J. Wentzel was appointed as the Consumer Representative for District 2 on the Sacramento County Mental Health Board in 2022. On the Board she serves as Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee, she is the chair of the Adult System of Care Committee, and

the Board representative to the Mental Health Services Act Steering Committee. In the past she has held a position on a Committee of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission. Patricia holds a B.A. in Psychology with Honors from UC Davis and she works for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Sacramento as their Helpline Coordinator and Peer Advocate. She is also a NAMI Sacramento support group facilitator and teacher in both peer and family programs. She worked for six years as a Peer Advocate Case Manager, working with consumers to overcome barriers and access behavioral health services in Sacramento, Yolo, Placer and El Dorado counties. In addition to being a consumer, she is the parent of three adult children with behavioral health conditions. Her experiences both personally and professionally have made her a fierce advocate and exceptional resource for individuals, families, caregivers, providers and professionals in navigating the behavioral health system and the challenges of living with a behavioral health condition or of being a supporter. A published poet, she often writes about her experiences to help break the stigma of severe mental illness and combat stereotypes that hinder the full participation of people with behavioral health conditions in our community. She strives to represent the interests of all the people served by the behavioral health system including members of the LGBTQIA+ community to which she belongs.



Mykel Gayent was appointed to the MHB's District 2 Family Member seat in 2023 and he is a Veteran. He serves on the Community Wellness Response Team (CWRT) Advisory Committee and he is the chair of the Justice committee. Mykel is a proud U.S. Army veteran with lived experience who dedicates his life to empowering individuals and families on their journey to mental wellness. Through his leadership with *SouthSac Wellness Alliance* and active involvement with the *National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)*, Mykel serves as a trusted advocate, educator, and voice for healing in the Black/African ancestry community. Over the past 12 years, Mykel has earned recognition as a trained facilitator for NAMI support groups and as a teacher of several of NAMI's premier programs, including *Peer-to-Peer*, *Family-to-Family*, and *Homefront*—a course specifically designed for families of veterans. In addition to his direct service, Mykel serves as a member of the Sacramento County Mental Health Board, offering guidance and insight shaped by both professional training and personal experience. He is also a proud board member of Leaders of Men, Inc., a nonprofit youth mentorship organization committed to uplifting young Black men. Mykel's mission is rooted in community, culture, and compassion. He continues to provide culturally relevant education and peer support, helping individuals understand, access, and sustain mental wellness—especially within communities that have historically been underserved.



Laura Asay-Bemis (she/her) was most recently appointed to the MHB's District 5 Consumer seat in 2024. She serves on the Adult System of Care committee. She is a mental health advocate and Certified Peer Support Specialist. She has served on the Mental Health Board since 2014 with required assents between terms and represented two districts as a consumer. Now, Laura provides services as a Peer Support Specialist at an augmented board and care. Laura also works for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Sacramento as a facilitator for support groups and educational classes. She is a speaker for the Stop Stigma Sacramento Speakers Bureau where she shares her challenges and successes. Laura is one of the founders of a unique art exhibit called Journey of Hope, Real Life Stories of Living with Mental Health Challenges Portrayed Through Art. This art show pairs mental health stories with talented local artists who find inspiration from the story to create a compelling work of art. Laura's personal story has been published in a book called "Faces of Mental Illness," and she has been featured on the radio and podcasts. For over 30 years, Laura was a professional photographer and photojournalist. For several years she taught photography to adults and still enjoys photographing nature, events and doing portraits.



Kesha Harris was appointed to the MHB's District 1 Family Member seat in 2023. On the Board, she serves as co-chairperson of the Children's Systems of Care Committee.



Theresa Riviera was appointed to the MHB's District 5 Family Member seat in 2020. She serves on the Children's System of Care committee. Theresa is a Community Strategic Influencer. She is retired after 35 years of public and private service. She is interested in cultivating equal opportunity, access, and the advancement of equity for all economic, ethnic, language, and cultural communities. As a result, once identifying and assessing a specific need, she cultivates effective cooperative working relationships and provides support by facilitating referrals and advocating for equitable opportunities. Serving on various City and County Boards and Commissions has given Theresa insight into the issues and concerns of residents that she did not know existed. In addition, she has learned about processes and restrictions. She finds that this has also been a great opportunity to meet other board or commission members, hear points of views and work in subcommittees to present solutions and recommendations.

She is a resident of Sacramento, along with her husband and two sons. She is currently mentoring others to develop their skills and sharing her love of skills and knowledge where helpful in all economic, ethnic and cultural communities.



Mallika Walsh was appointed to the MHB's District 5 Public Interest seat in 2023. She serves as Member-at-large on the Executive Committee and she also serves on the Adult System of Care committee. Mallika brings over 20 years of experience in acute mental health care to serve on the Mental Health Board. A passionate advocate, she joined the Board to elevate the voices of underserved communities and support more inclusive, community-based services. Mallika has dual Master's Degrees in Clinical Psychology and Counseling. Her work has focused on wrap-around and Full-Service Partnership programs, with an emphasis on culturally responsive care — particularly for South Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Mallika also works with forensic behavioral health through competency restoration for IST populations. Mallika is trilingual and an active domestic violence advocate. She is also a member of the Camellia Society of Sacramento and a lifelong student of Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement.



Patrick Kennedy, a fourth generation Sacramentan, was first elected to represent District 2 on the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors in June, 2014. He was re-elected in 2018 and 2022. As a member of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Kennedy is a leader on homeless issues, law enforcement oversight and reforms, affordable housing, mental and behavioral health, climate action, flood protection, and transit. In addition to serving on multiple other boards and commissions, Supervisor Kennedy is the MHB's member of the local governing body and he has served on the MHB since 2015.



Maria Padilla-Castro was appointed to the Sacramento County Mental Health Board in 2017, serving District 1 as a Public Interest member. Her educational background includes a Master's in social work, as well her credentials as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Maria's commitment to volunteer work dates back to her early years as a Peace Corps volunteer in South America. This volunteer spirit has continued to this day, such as her grassroots community organizing all over California with the aim of improving the lives of marginalized and under-served groups. She was co-founder of a community-based non-profit organization that provided educational, employment and vocational training to disadvantaged communities in Sacramento. Maria also spent many years working in children's and family services for the County and the State, as well as in the healthcare field where she was heavily involved on the side of labor advocating for improved wages, benefits, and working conditions. She currently specializes in treating individuals with co-occurring diagnoses. Of particular interest to Maria is access to readily available mental health care to our unhoused population and other marginal communities. She served as Vice-Chairperson of the MHB in 2024. Her second term ended 12/31/24.



Evan Minton (he/they) was appointed as the Consumer Representative for District 1 in 2023 and he served as Secretary on the Mental Health Board in 2024. He also served on the Community Wellness Response Team (CWRT) Advisory Committee.



Brad Leuth was appointed to the MHB's District 4 Family Member seat in 2021. He serves on the Adult System of Care committee.



Melinda Avey was appointed to the MHB's District 3 Public Interest seat in 2024. She serves on the Adult System of Care committee.