

## Mobile Support Team Expanding Services to West County and Sonoma Valley on January 15

The Sonoma County **Mobile Support Team (MST)** is a crisis response program that exclusively supports local law enforcement when responding to individuals who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. MST aims to provide support, link individuals to needed resources, decrease negative outcomes of law enforcement contacts, increase the safety of law enforcement and individuals in crisis, and connect individuals to the lowest level of care that will meet their needs.

MST consists of both licensed mental health clinicians and certified substance abuse disorders counselors that respond to calls alongside law enforcement that are mental health and/or substance use related. MST staff provide assessment, resources, and referrals to members of the community as well as following up with individuals to help them connect with the services they need. The expansion of MST to West County and Sonoma Valley ensures residents have an accessible and equal system of care regardless of where one lives in the County.

MST currently works in Windsor, Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Petaluma, and takes calls from Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, Santa Rosa Police Department, Santa Rosa Junior College District Police, Rohnert Park Police Department, Cotati Police Department, and Petaluma Police Department. On January 15, 2019 MST will expand its services to include Kenwood, Glen Ellen, Boyes Hot Springs, Sonoma, Sebastopol, Graton, Forestville, Rio Nido, and Guerneville.

Since its inception, MST has improved response to individuals in emergency mental health crises in Sonoma County and has helped individuals experiencing behavioral health emergencies from mental illness or from using drugs and alcohol. MST represents real progress in the County's efforts to increase public safety and provide more positive outcomes for families and community members when confronted with behavioral health emergencies. MST is a model for crisis intervention that allows those experiencing behavioral health emergencies to get the much needed services, which reduces strain on law enforcement when responding to such call and prevents individuals in crises from impacting the jail system.

For more information about MST click here:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Behavioral-Health/Community-Response-and-Engagement/Mobile-Support-Team/>

## MHSA Public Hearing Held on 12/5/18



A **Public Hearing** was hosted by the Mental Health Board on 12/5/18 to review the **Draft Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) 2018-19 Plan Update and Annual Update for 2016-17**. The hearing was well attended, with a number of community members, providers, and those receiving MHSA services taking the opportunity to deliver public comment to the Board. The MHSA Plan is now scheduled to go the Board of Supervisors for their approval in January.

## Behavioral Health Contractors Convening



*DHS Director Barbie Robinson (center right) hears concerns from contracted providers.*

The Department of Health Services (DHS) hosted the **Behavioral Health Contractors Convening** on November 27 at the Glaser Center in Santa Rosa.

The purpose of this convening was to provide contracted providers with an update on recent changes within the DHS Behavioral Health Division. The meeting also served to solicit feedback from the contractor community regarding communications and inform

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## Apply Now to Serve on the MHSA Steering Committee

The **Sonoma County Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Steering Committee** will lead the community in creating a comprehensive, integrated, culturally responsive system of mental health services that promotes resilience, recovery, wellness and stigma-free integration into the fabric of the community.

The primary role of the Steering Committee will be to assure that the recommended MHSA Plan:

- Reflects local needs and priorities
- Contains the appropriate balance of services within available resources
- Meets the criteria and goals established by the State Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC)

To apply, go to [www.sonoma-county.org/mhsa](http://www.sonoma-county.org/mhsa) and scroll down to the Steering Committee menu and click on the MHSA Steering Committee Member Application link. The last day to submit an application is **January 4, 2019**.

## Bill Carter to Lead Behavioral Health Division



The Sonoma County Department of Health Services (DHS) has selected Bill Carter, LCSW, as its new Behavioral Health Division Director after a competitive recruitment process.

Carter, a state recognized expert in mental health, brings a wealth of experience from Napa County, where he served the past four

years as the Mental Health Director of the Napa County Health and Human Services Agency. He was the agency's compliance officer the four years prior.

"I am eager and excited at the opportunity to work in Sonoma County. I believe in the work that our behavioral health clinicians do every day and will seek opportunities to enhance the system of care through operational and fiscal supports to ultimately better serve our clients and community," said Carter.

Carter has more than 30 years of experience in mental health and social services programming as a provider and administrator for both private and public sectors. He was an administrator at the California Institute for Mental Health (CIMH) from 1998 to 2010, designing and implementing program improvements and leading efforts to circulate evidence-based practices in the field.

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attendees of the Department's commitment to fulfilling its mandated core services. The meeting also addressed changes to ways the Division and contracted providers can work together.

It was attended by nearly 70 and was well appreciated by those who participated. More such meetings are planned throughout 2019.



*DHS Behavioral Health Division staff listen to contracted providers in a break-out session.*

## Upcoming Each Mind Matters Webinars

### ***Is Suicide Preventable?*** (2/12/19 at 1 p.m.)

Comprehensive suicide prevention approaches, including postvention after suicide, and how to maintain energy and hope when the going gets tough.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6632742715152024065>

### ***Community Engagement for May is Mental Health Awareness Month*** (3/26/19 at 1 p.m.)

Introduces the 2019 Each Mind Matters Toolkit and features Mental Health Awareness Month activities and strategies.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4358905389909356546>

### ***Suicide Prevention Week 2019: Tools, Activity Ideas and Resources*** (6/18/19 at 1 p.m.)

Materials available to support your suicide prevention efforts during National Suicide Prevention Awareness Week (September 6-12, 2019), World Suicide Prevention Day (September 10), and throughout the month and year.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/362006900106480130>

For more information about MHSA programs and services, or to submit updates, events, success stories, or other content for this newsletter, please email [MHSA@sonoma-county.org](mailto:MHSA@sonoma-county.org). To sign up for this newsletter, go to: [www.sonoma-county.org/mhsa](http://www.sonoma-county.org/mhsa).