

# Community Wellness Response Team

[FORMERLY KNOWN AS WELLNESS CRISIS CALL CENTER & RESPONSE TEAM]

## **Summary Description:**

Sacramento's Behavioral Health Services (BHS) includes services that meet the cultural, ethnic and language needs of the community and promotes health and wellness; resilience, wellbeing, and healing from traumatic experiences; prevention, support, and treatment for mental health and/or substance use challenges; and support of those who experience and/or are in recovery from these conditions, along with their families and communities.

The Community Wellness Response Teams, mental health counselor and a peer with lived experience, receives Mobile Response Requests from 988 that may benefit from in-person de-escalation services, assess needs and risks, and create safety plans. This includes identifying and leveraging individual strengths and natural supports; coordinating with existing Mental Health Plan (MHP) and Substance Use Prevention and Treatment (SUPT) providers as appropriate; linking to ongoing services; voluntary transport to urgent/emergency resources and accessing Mobile Crisis Support Teams or other emergency responders when necessary.

## CWRT Goals:

- Safely de-escalate crises.
- Provide linkages to accessible culturally responsive behavioral health resources to decrease repeat crises and emergency department visits.
- Offer a response team that meets the cultural, ethnic and language needs of the community and does not include law enforcement staffing.
- Ensure the model is community-based.
- Decrease criminalization of mental health and homelessness

The CWRT Advisory Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to Behavioral Health Services staff as a process to increase transparency and accountability to the broader community through the sharing of information about the CWRT design and planning process at regular intervals and consideration of advisement received by this advisory committee.



# Community Wellness Response Team

## Project Plan – Monthly Updates

### TAKING A NEW APPROACH

#### June 2023

- Response Team status update:
  - County & BACS are actively recruiting counselors and peers:
  - Response Team continues to recruit, onboarding one Mental Health Counselor, interviews continue
- Response Team staff attend Hiring Outreach Events June 9<sup>th</sup> at Peer Conference, June 9<sup>th</sup> Councilmember Katie Valenzuela Union Job Fair, June 11<sup>th</sup> at Pride Event, June 13<sup>th</sup>, CWRT Advisory Subcommittee meeting, June 14<sup>th</sup> Sacramento County Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board Meeting presentation given by Response Team, June 15<sup>th</sup> African American Council Juneteenth event, June 17<sup>th</sup> Manned a booth at Sacramento's Juneteenth event, June 21<sup>st</sup> and June 23rd Afgan Support Center outreach event at Convention Center.
- Data Collection
  - 988 Calls April 27<sup>th</sup> -June 28<sup>th</sup>
  - Total number of requests for Response Team – 34 calls, 27 RT mobile responses
- Marketing
  - Draft marketing plan continues

#### May 2023

- Response Team status update:
  - County & BACS are actively recruiting counselors and peers:
    - Response Team is onboarding 2 Mental Health Counselors and 1 Sr Office Assistant and continue interviewing for vacancies.
    - Response Team staff attended Hiring Outreach events May 19 at Sac Valley Psych Convention and on May 21 at Midtown Church
    - Current available Teams: 2 teams operating Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 3:30 pm
- Data Collection
  - 988 Calls April 27<sup>th</sup> – May 24<sup>th</sup>
  - Total number of requests for Response Team – 7 calls
- Response Team staff attended:
  - Turning Point Grand Opening of the Community Outreach Recovery Empowerment (CORE) program in Elk Grove on May 17, 2023 and the NAMI Walks Event "Mental Health for All" May 6, 2023.
- Marketing
  - Complete a draft marketing plan tentatively by July 2023



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#### April 2023

- 24/7 988 Behavioral Health Crisis & Life line is in full operation.
- Response Team status update:
  - County & BACS are actively recruiting counselors and peers:
    - Current available Teams: 2 teams operating Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 3:30 pm
- Marketing
  - Finalizing contract with Edelman [Marketing firm]
  - Deliverables will be in alignment with the recommendations from the community input sessions.
  - Tentative timeline for marketing will begin once CWRT is operating 24/7
- Data Collection
  - 988 calls March 13<sup>th</sup> – April 26<sup>th</sup>
  - Total number of requests for Response Team – 10 calls
    - Sacramento County Research Evaluation Performance Outcome unit is working with Behavioral Health Link and WellSpace on developing future reports.

#### March 2023

- Recruitment continues for counselors for the mobile response teams, currently there are 2 teams available to deploy Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.
- Soft launch went live on 3/13/2023.
  - Definition of soft launch: Daily check ins between 988 and Mobile Dispatch to review capacity for each day
  - As of 3/29/23 CWRT received 2 calls for service, teams were dispatched each call resulted in a successful outcome.
- 3/28/2023 Sacramento County Board of Supervisors approved the expansion of the Crisis Navigator Program, operated by BACS. BACS, Crisis Navigator Program (CNP) program will join CWRT in partnership with Sacramento County and WellSpace 988 Crisis Life Line. This expansion will include 6 mobile response teams and 6 dispatchers operating 24/7 365 days a year.



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### TAKING A NEW APPROACH

#### **March Cont.**

- The Source will not be a component of CWRT team at this time. The Source will be a resource for the CWRT, as they have been for 988, for individuals in crisis between the ages of 0 up to age 26 and/or their caregivers. The Source may also adjust how services are provided to align with the MediCal Mobile Crisis benefit.

#### **February 2023**

The Board of Supervisors approved funding to develop and implement a 24/7 Behavioral Health Call Center and Response Team in June of 2021. Since that time the Behavioral Health team deployed tremendous efforts to actively recruit for well over a year to staff this program, which included the following strategies;

- Developed flyers and job announcements for all available positions that were posted on the BHS webpage and widely distributed at various community events and email distributions including the MHSA and Mental Health Board (MHB) email lists.
  - Job descriptions were written to attract mission driven individuals invested in community mental health.
- Created and posted a webinar on how to apply for a county job.
- Marketed at dozens of community outreach events.
- BHS hosted a 2-day job fair, creating an opportunity for interested candidates to apply and be interviewed on the same or next day. The job fair was supported by staff across county departments for a true collaborative effort.
  - Published Press Releases announcing the job fair.
  - KCRA ran the job fair announcement through multiple news cycles.
- Advertised the job fair on multiple media outlets.



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TAKING A NEW APPROACH

### February Cont.

Despite these efforts there was not enough candidate interest to staff a 24/7 call center and response team. As a result, BHS is proposing a new approach, which forms a multi-partnership collaboration with 3 of our existing community partners who are currently providing similar services. This partnership joins WellSpace, BACS, Sacramento Children's Home, and BHS County mobile crisis response teams to operate Sacramento County Community Wellness Response Team, CWRT.

- The Mental Health Board approved the program name change from Wellness Crisis Call Center and Response Team to Community Wellness Response Team on 2/1/2023.
  - Hiring and recruitment continues: Efforts to recruit are ongoing.
  - Dispatch software: Draft workflows have been developed and are now being tested to ensure all technical processes flow correctly.
  - Facilities:
    - Cubicle panel replacement is pending for completion.
    - All network jacks have been activated.
  - Workflows: The proposed roles and workflows for 988 section and Dispatcher section have been updated and are pending for review and approval.
  - Tentative soft launch is planned for early March.

### January 2023

- The Mental Health Board subcommittee voted on the new program name. It will soon go before the Mental Health Board for final voting. The subcommittee is recommending the name that received the highest community votes: Community Wellness Response Team.
- Hiring and recruitment continues:
  - Continued efforts being explored to address workforce shortage, including exploring other avenues.
    - Program Hiring Status Updates:
      - Response Team: 35% of positions filled plus 13% in hiring process.
- Dispatch software:
  - Mobile dispatch line has been successfully created, which will help support dispatching activities when a dispatch request is received from our 988 line. The county team is working with BHL/Dialpad team on testing.

Timeline is subject to change due to: timelines for other county departments and labor organizations; delays in equipment procurement, staff recruitment and hiring, and facility acquisition and implementation.