

Better Health for All

DATE: March 9, 2022

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors
 Jeffrey V. Smith, M.D., J.D., County Executive

FROM: René G. Santiago, Deputy County Executive/Director, Health System
 Sherri Terao, Director of Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD)
 Paul Lorenz, Chief Executive Officer, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC)

SUBJECT: Improved Referral Management for Withdrawal Management Beds

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During the Board of Supervisors Meeting on January 25, 2022 (Item No. 19), Supervisor Lee requested an off-agenda memo to address how to improve and expedite referrals for withdrawal management beds.

Among the array of Substance Use Treatment Services (SUTS) that the Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD) offers is Withdrawal Management 3.2 (WM-3.2) Detox, which follows the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) based on the American Society of Addiction Medicine Level of Care (ASAM-LOC) manual. WM-3.2 Detox is a moderate withdrawal service that provides 24-hour support in a residential setting to complete withdrawal management and increase the likelihood of continued engagement in treatment and recovery services. The length of stay for WM-3.2 Detox is three to seven days with discharge and placement into either residential or intensive outpatient services. However, on occasion individuals may not be appropriate for WM-3.2 Detox because of the risk for adverse reactions from withdrawal without medical supervision.

Screening and referral services for individuals seeking SUTS is processed through the BHSD Gateway Call Center. BHSD has improved care coordination and made in-roads by offering a direct referral pathway to withdrawal management beds from Emergency Psychiatric Services (EPS). Additionally, the BHSD Inpatient & Residential Services Division has a staff person at EPS designated to coordinate with the SUTS provider to conduct screening and initial assessment prior to the individual's discharge from the hospital.

To improve and further expediate referral management, the BHSD is participating in a workgroup with the Valley Homeless Health Program (VHHP) to work on strategies to create a same day placement option for individuals who are willing and ready to enter treatment immediately and create walk-in opportunities for screening substance use intake assessments. Walk-in screening availability will help mitigate the technological challenges of individuals accessing services by telephone. In addition, the BHSD has engaged the current provider in a discussion on increasing the bed capacity from 28 to 44 beds (an addition of 15 beds). The

BHSD will work to address any future gaps in service to assure that services provided in a seamless and timely manner.

Miguel Marquez, Chief Operating Officer
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