

Thank you for hiring Michelle the Security Guard. She is wonderful and an effective deterrent to many outbursts that might otherwise take place.

My greatest thanks to my clinicians/therapist Karina E. She is absolutely brilliant and inspired when it comes to helping me work out my issues, I would not be as far along in my recovery without her. She is outstanding, as is Dr. Dawson.

Thank you for hearing me out last year and for all the changes made I may or may not even know about. Thanks to Riverside County Behavioral Health I have not only been provided with housing and SSI, but also a unique opportunity to be heard. I have shared my story with youth in Government desiring to go into the field of psychology, to voice my concerns and have them addressed, to publish a newsletter, to present brochure needs suggestions, and more. I am thrilled by how proactive everyone is, with special thanks to Jim Grisham for making it happen.

Thank you for the annual art show, I believe it is critical to our recovery as well as an opportunity to break stigma and share our creative expressions through art. It also improves the self-esteem of everyone involved and the tireless efforts that went into overdrive at this year's event did not go unnoticed by me. All I can say is wow! Thank you. Thank you, Richard Divine for your art supply donations throughout the region for the art show. They were greatly appreciated by all who used them.

My thanks to Jim Grisham and everyone on his staff who has helped with and continues to help with the Desert Sage transitions which hasn't been necessarily an easy one. Thank you for IEHP's LYFT service because that resolved the big transportation issue so I just wanted you to know that, I put it all in writing.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your personal testimony and gratitude toward our hard working service staff. Your support of the Annual Art Show during May is Mental Health Month is a wonderful testament to the power of recovery. We appreciate your partnership in promoting wellness within our community.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

- (25) **Comment:** I just saw the plan today so I just started reading it today. But that is something that needs to be addressed also in terms of marketing, letting people know what is going on. In this room alone there should have more people who are actually using the services, not that you guys aren't lovely. Something like this plan, send a copy to Desert Sage because there is 50 people there – that's a population right there that even if they cursory look at it just to see what is happening with their own mental health status and what the government is trying to do to help us.

I just move in the first week of March, so they have been amazing. The groups have been awesome, kudos to everyone in charge of them Kathy and Christine. A few topics I wanted to mention: I do think there should be a grief/ bereavement group here because it has been very difficult for me to find one that works for me. I did find one at Southwest Church but of course not everyone wants something that is religious based so that's an issue.

Also the groups here since it was mentioned that they are going to reduce the times from 2 hours to an hour and a half. They need to start on time and finish on time, and have a 15 minute break not a 20 minute break, people usually leisurely come back and that needs to be addressed so people are on it. The Lyft thing that was mentioned having IEHP use Lyft has been amazing it has worked for me so perfectly, they come on time, leave on time, they're there for you.

The way it is set up right now just in terms of logistics for this building, the nonsmoking area with the overhang is right near by the building and then in front where we get picked up is the smoking area. I have a problem with that because I haven't been here in the summer yet, looking forward to it. It is going to be an issue in my opinion because the overhang where there are benches is a smoking area. Any time someone comes over the smoke I get up and go stand in the sun. That's is in the cool 100 degrees when it is in the 125's it is going to be a different conversation. So if there is a way to put a

smaller bench and overhang. I was also thinking if you want to be really lovely, water misters just when it's over a certain temperature, I don't want to perpetuate the drought problem. If you're having a hiring freeze I will spend your money in a different way.

Michelle does an amazing job, during the incident happened yesterday she was on it. She made sure everybody went where they were supposed to go, scooped everybody to the children's section, but kept everybody calm about it not just "oh my god something is happening!" that was amazing to me.

The schedules for the groups here, when I first got here it was March like I mentioned, I handed the December schedule. I was coming to groups on the wrong day and they were like "on no that's not the schedule" oopsie, so when you are using IEHP transportation it is nice to actually come when the groups really are.

The Art Show adventure was amazing to me, the people who put that together that was just mind boggling. And I've done a lot of groups, I'm a librarian so I've done a ton of groups and it was mind boggling. Another 2 kudos things is for Cara at CRT is amazing, Kylie I don't remember her last name she is awesome. The Palm Springs Psychiatric Care Unit situation, they were super helpful I was very impressed with that, they told me just go straight there and suggested not having to deal with the emergency room people because they are not really up to the same level. If I could have known about you then, again another marketing thing, this needs to be publicized more.

And since I am a librarian I want to offer my services here to create a Mental Health resources library for this building. Because I think it is needed the public library is great, I am a public librarian but we need something where people can feel in their own environment where they are coming multiple days a week. There has to be some space in this building all I need is a few shelves, I can make it happen. All I need is a small amount of money and I know where I can get donations. I've gotten hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants. I know how to negotiate, I think if we can make that happen. I know how to find resources in every nook and cranny, I know how to do the research. Other people don't have that skill set, nothing against them but I got a master's

degree for a reason. I think it is needed here and I think people would appreciate it. And it's in a situation where the major problem with a Public Libraries is the whole stigma that person was talking about previously. People don't feel comfortable going to the front desk the information desk and saying "I'm depressed, I need help, I tried to commit suicide, and I need help". That's a hard conversation to have especially with a stranger who you think might judge you but if it already in the location where you're coming for mental health services with a big sign I think you would be more prone to use the resources.

RESPONSE: Over the past year, MHSA Administration has increased examination of the stakeholder process and is developing tools and greater access points for stakeholders to provide feedback. This year we piloted MHSA Forums, education spaces for the community on the MHSA Plan, at the May is Mental Health Month fairs in Perris and Riverside. Unfortunately, our offer to host a forum in the Desert was declined. These Forums were well received by the community and we plan to continue and expand them. Your suggestion to provide copies of the draft plan to our residential communities will also be included, alongside public libraries and county clinics, for distribution.

Stakeholders are also encouraged to participate in regional Behavioral Health Commissions and the related committees. A description of the committees can be found here: <http://www.rcdmh.org/Mental-Health-Board-Committees> . For membership details, agendas and calendars, please contact the Behavioral Health Commission Liaison at (951) 955-7141.

Though MSHA may fund an overall plan or model, the specific development and implementation of a service is typically done at the clinic or program level. Your suggestions for resource development and logistics have been provided to the Desert Region Administration.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

(26) **Comment:** I apologize I did not read your annual plan but when I heard trauma informed it caught me ear. There is a new sense of crisis out there because of the current environment as we all know. So there are people that were never depressed or never in fear that are now depressed and now in fear. Not only of accessing any kind of social service for help but also of losing their families and other types of issues that are helping in the Coachella Valley. So what is happening is that they are choosing between getting their medications, getting the help they need on the medical side versus going in and applying for medi-cal. There are all these new sense of traumas that are happening on a daily basis that were seeing so you said that the trauma informed system was in the works? What does that mean with regards to the plan? Are you collaborating with some of the local agencies or programs that are currently working on this system? Or is there going to be funding? Is there going to be training for not only the police department but also other public service entities that are working with these people who might not know what's going on?

RESPONSE: RUHS-BH is partnering with RUHS-Public Health in this effort. Public Health has been charged with leading the Riverside Resiliency project aimed at transforming Riverside County into a trauma informed County. There are regular town hall meetings and an ongoing committee, which RUHS-BH participates. As a part of this effort, RUHS-BH plans to begin trainings and consultation with experts in transforming systems into a trauma informed care system. We will begin within Behavioral Health, transforming our service delivery system, while at the same time continuing to collaborate with Public Health and the other partner County agencies participating in this effort to better inform our partnerships through a trauma informed lens.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

(27) **Comment:** I've been with Riverside County for 15 years now and I've seen change is good and change is bad. Sometimes here in the Valley it's very difficult for us up there in the front line in the front at the Navigation Center and when we were RLC working with

our members who are on a fixed income that cannot get apartments because they've gotten in trouble with their financial situations or they've been homeless or their being judged because they have mental health issues. To see these people walk in and say they need help, and to turn around and tell them look we have a year to four year waiting period. We do not have enough board and cares, we have 1 board and care here. That's not enough. A lot of our people cannot live on their own, they can't manage their money, and they cannot live day to day by themselves. And there should be a place for them to go. We did it for the Vets, why can't we do it for our people who have mental health challenges. Now there are board and cares that aren't even licensed from my understanding, taking peoples moneys and not getting the services that they need. From what I heard of its going on right now. I know our members have to beg and plead to get Desert Sage cleaned up just so it can be livable. I wouldn't let my dog live there. Our hearts go out to these members.

We had a program that worked that was called the Recovery Learning Center, Jason was one of my first people that I went with the CREST/REACH team that reached out to us and I'm going to let him tell how he was helped. If this community speaks out we can get what everyone else gets. I go to Riverside and I see their big beautiful buildings, remodeled, everything just perfect. Then you go to the Desert, you go to Blythe, and you realize hey we are the step children we get everything last, everything that is left over. We want to be proud of our clinics too. But most of all these members who get individualized care from a peer support that has been through something, that understands where they are coming from, to take programs away that give them hope like the Recovery Learning Center, that's is not good. I was going to have Jason tell his story of how he was able to get Mental Health help.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your commitment and service to our communities and the people that you serve. It is always a helpless and discouraging place to see needs that go unfulfilled. It is a testimony to your dedication that you advocate for those that may not feel as empowered to use their voice.

Please see Written Comments, Question #1, Comments #2 and #4 regarding housing. Your comments have been shared with the Manager of Housing Programs.

Department planning for the Crisis System of Care, the new expanded services under Substance Use and Prevention, Transitional Age Youth Centers, programs for Parent Education and Support – just to name a few – have all included equal representation for the Desert Region in service availability. The location, coordination and approval to house programs are sometimes delayed due to restrictions placed by local city governments. We continue to advocate for the needs of people with mental health challenges to have the same access to resources no matter where they live.

Your comments have been shared with Desert Region Administration, as well as, the Manager for Consumer Affairs.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

(28) **Comment:** I just have a short comment, I would like to thank Kathy and Christine also, the University of Riverside Behavioral Health, also RI International who have been very instrumental in my recovery. Also commenting on the housing requirement for the mentally challenged especially independent housing. In my case I've been at the Desert Sage for almost four years and they could not provide for me an apartment or housing. In the past I have been a real estate broker as well as a real estate agent and I would hopefully be in a position to be able help the mentally challenged in the future get housing and come up with programs to help. Work with MHSA come up with programs to help the mentally challenged.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your personal testimony. Please also see Written Comments, Question #1, Comment #4.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

(29) **Comment:** I just wanted to say that they helped me a lot. 3-4 years ago my mom died and it was heartbreaking and at that same time we were kicked out of our house

because we could no longer afford the place anymore. I did not know what to do. I found these 2 people help me, offered a place for me, and helped me get off the streets. Not to mention a meal too, I owe them a lot. They helped me with everything with housing, food, a phone and even a job.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your personal testimony. Your success inspires us.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

- (30) **Comment:** I would just like to say if the Desert PNC can go back to an RLC model somehow, I don't know if that's possible.

RESPONSE: Though both programs are peer oriented intervention models, Peer Navigation Center and the Recovery Learning Center are two distinct programs with different service objectives and populations. The Desert Region Adult System Administrator will meet with the current Navigation Team members to review that the former RLC goals are still a part of their process but they also are tasked to assist consumers throughout the treatment process. Peer Navigation extends the goals of the RLC to a greater majority of consumers that we serve, some who would not otherwise receive the outreach necessary to engage them. The former RLC focus was more exclusive and much more narrowly centered on fewer consumers. Please also see response to Written Comments, Question #3, Comment #3.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

- (31) **Comment:** I think we are all still grieving the RLC here, we know that that grant is gone but the difference between the housing situation out here is we used to be able to grab a county car and take the member out who was working on a housing goal and make a connection with the apartment managers. We got to know some of them around here. So sometimes it helped to sit right there and assist and support. It might help little more, now were just passing out papers here. That's the difference.

RESPONSE: The Peer Navigation Center is still in early implementation and may have room for further evolution and development. Though MHSA may fund an overall plan or model, the specific development and implementation of a service is typically done at the clinic or program level. Your comment for has been provided to the Desert Region Administration.

BHC RECOMMENDATION: The Behavioral Health Commission recommended no change to the MHSA Annual Update FY 18/19.

Riverside University Health System – Behavioral Health

MHSA Administration

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