

SAN DIEGO BUSINESS JOURNAL

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH 2022



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HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE

An Informative Q&A With the Region's Top Behavioral Health Professionals



Yvette A. Aguayo, LMFT
Clinical Program Manager II
Kaiser Permanente, Psychiatry
 and Addiction Medicine



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Dr. Calvin Stone
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Psychiatrist
Neighborhood Healthcare

**neighborhood
HEALTHCARE**



Don Myers
*Palomar Health's District Director of the
 Center for Behavioral Health*
Palomar Health

**PALOMAR
HEALTH**
 Reimagining Healthcare



Benjamin Maxwell, MD
*Interim Director, Child and Adolescent
 Psychiatry, Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego*
*Associate Clinical Professor, UC San Diego
 School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry*
Rady Children's Hospital

**Rady
Children's**
 Hospital
 San Diego



Laura Josh
Area President
Gallagher on behalf of California Schools
VEBA



CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS
VEBA



HEALTHCARE

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

California Schools VEBA

California Schools VEBA is a non-profit health care trust that delivers high quality, affordable and accessible health care for education, municipal and public agency employees. Formed in 1993 — through the combined efforts of school superintendents and school labor leaders — VEBA currently serves more than 65 participating employers and over 150,000 members, throughout Southern California.

To continue improving health care for its members VEBA launched the VEBA Resource Center (VRC) in 2019 to help members assess, identify and remove barriers to achieving optimal health. The VRC provides an extensive range of programs, classes, services and events for members to take a holistic and proactive approach to their overall well-being.



Kaiser Permanente

At Kaiser Permanente, San Diegans are supported by our top doctors, leading workforce health programs, and award-winning disease management. With more than 9,000 staff and more than 1,400 physicians, we offer a full range of services at 30 facilities throughout the county, including the Kaiser Permanente Zion Medical Center and the San Diego Medical Center in Kearny Mesa.

Our unparalleled size and scale, combined with the industry's leading electronic health record system, allows us to deliver high quality, fully integrated care.



For more than 50 years, we have brought high quality, affordable care to San Diegans when and where they need it. Our Mobile Health Vehicle can deliver care to any community throughout the county. Our partnership with retail giant Target provides the opportunity to seek medical care at convenient locations. Kaiser Permanente members have access to care through video and tele-health appointments with a physician and can also download our mobile app to make appointments, contact their physician, view their lab results, find our locations, and research health and wellness topics — anytime, anywhere.

Neighborhood Healthcare

Neighborhood Healthcare provides quality, compassionate, whole-person care to everyone, regardless of their circumstance, throughout San Diego and Riverside Counties. This includes delivering integrated behavioral health services in each of our primary care clinics. Our entire treatment team works together, sharing information to ensure our patients get the best quality care. Neighborhood's behavioral health services include a range of treatments for individuals with such health disorders, including substance use.



In doing so, we dedicate ourselves to improving community health so everyone can live happy and healthy lives.

Palomar Health

Palomar Health's Center for Behavioral Health meets the diverse and complex psychiatric and mental health needs of adults 18+ years old, as well as older adults with a comprehensive range of services. These services include crisis intervention, inpatient care and intensive outpatient services. While Palomar Health provides care far beyond North County San Diego, The Center for Behavioral Health is the only North County Hospital-based provider of Crisis Stabilization Services, Acute Inpatient Psychiatric Care and 24/7 onsite psychiatrist coverage of the Palomar Medical Center Escondido Emergency Department. With a vast suite of services and decades of experience behind them, the team at the Center for Behavioral Health has the ability to meet the changing needs of the community. At all Palomar Health facilities, patients are met with individualized care, advanced technology, and a group of world-class professionals who are dedicated to their community and enhancing the lives and wellbeing of patients.



Rady Children's Hospital

Innovating to Improve Mental and Behavioral Health

Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego is the largest children's hospital on the West Coast, one of the nation's top pediatric health care systems, and is leading the way in whole child health for children and adolescents in Southern California and beyond. Confronting the escalating pediatric mental health crisis, Rady Children's is transforming mental health across the care continuum:

- Early activation – prevention, early identification, and intervention
- Academic foundation – evidence-based treatment, such as trauma-informed counseling, education, and cutting-edge research
- Integration – mental health therapists embedded in the pediatric primary care offices with regional referral hubs
- Crisis treatment – Copley Psychiatric Emergency Department and behavioral health urgent care facilities

For more information, visit www.rchsd.org/tmh.



HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE

How is your organization addressing mental health in the community?**Dr. Calvin Stone, Neighborhood Healthcare:**

Early identification and treatment can often change the course of psychiatric illness. Therefore, at Neighborhood Healthcare, we routinely screen for psychiatric and substance use disorders. We provide integrated care with behavioral health professionals in primary care settings, allowing for prompt referral, assessment and treatment. We understand the social and structural drivers impacting mental health and address these by providing assessment, navigation assistance, referral and linkage to essential social service resources available in the community. We provide mobile services to seniors and homebound patients, whereby medical assistants drive to patients' homes to complete vitals, labs, exams, education, and provide digital literacy to help patients connect with their providers virtually. We also provide enhanced care management services for our most vulnerable patients to connect them with behavioral health, primary care and essential social needs, while removing care access barriers. Lastly, we provide medication assisted treatment for individuals with substance use disorders, which is an evidence-based treatment that is much needed in our communities.

Dr. Ben Maxwell, Rady Children's Hospital:

Over the past several years, Rady Children's has established several behavioral health programs aimed at improving community access and early identification of mental health concerns. During the pandemic, we opened the region's first pediatric psychiatric emergency department, the Copley Psychiatric Emergency Department, for kids in psychiatric crisis. We continue to operate a busy inpatient psychiatric unit on our main campus focused on kids that are struggling with more severe behavioral health concerns. On the early identification and intervention side, we started embedding behavioral health expertise in community primary care clinics over the past couple of years. This program, which we call Transforming Mental Health, aims to catch issues early in children and adolescents and prevent the need for crisis-level services.

Don Myers, Palomar Health:

While Palomar Health provides care far beyond North County San Diego, we are the only North County hospital-based provider of Crisis Stabilization Services, Acute Inpatient Psychiatric Care and 24/7 onsite psychiatrist coverage of the Palomar Medical Center Escondido Emergency Department.

Additionally, as we have seen an increase in the use of substances related to the social isolation, fear, anxiety and depression during the pandemic, Palomar Health developed another way to support the community. Palomar Health opened The Recovery Center at Poway to provide outpatient substance use disorder treatment services to the community. We also support the community through various outreach efforts, including health fairs on different mental health topics.

Are we experiencing a mental health "crisis" and why or why not?**Dr. Calvin Stone, Neighborhood Healthcare:**

The mental health "crisis" existed prior to the pandemic. There has been a progressive rise in mental health disorders that began long before COVID. The pandemic then served to amplify this trend due to increased social isolation, anxiety and financial stress—issues which disproportionately impacted historically marginalized and underserved communities. Mental health is also becoming less stigmatized, while previous barriers to care for our underserved communities are being addressed by the increased utilization of telehealth. All of these factors have led to a dramatic growth in both the amount and diversity of patients seeking psychiatric services.

Neighborhood Healthcare continues to grow our mental health and addiction treatment teams throughout our organization in order to meet today's increased need and any future need that may arise. We also work hard to provide trauma informed care that is sensitive to the needs of our diverse clientele.

What are some of the more recent trends that have emerged post pandemic in mental health?**Laura Josh, Gallagher on behalf of California Schools VEBA:**

One of the positive things to come out of the pandemic is the growing availability and acceptance of virtual care, a trend that we believe is here to stay. During the pandemic, there was a dramatic increase in the need for VEBA services—especially around social and emotional well-being—which forced us to shift how we deliver support. Our previously in-person-only well-being resources are now available as a virtual option; we offer over 200 monthly classes, programs and events online. This shift allowed us to meet our members



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Don Myers, MSW, MBA

District Director of Operations
Center for Behavioral Health
Palomar Health



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Calvin Stone, D.O.

Addictionologist
Neighborhood Healthcare



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The prolonged effects of our economic crisis due to COVID-19 have increased the number of psychiatric disorders.

Yvette A. Aguayo, LMFT
Clinical Program Manager II
Kaiser Permanente, Psychiatry and
Addiction Medicine



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With the stress and trauma of the last two years has come a notable change in the public discourse around mental health, as more people begin to speak openly about their own struggles.

Laura Josh
Area President, Gallagher
On behalf of California Schools VEBA

where they were, and resulted in a dramatic 200% increase in resource utilization. While we have started to resume in-person activities, we will continue to offer virtual options for all of our members moving forward.

Another trend we have noticed, and hope will continue, is the reduced stigma around mental health. For years, having mental health disorders was considered a weakness or serious impediment to work and life. This perception left millions of Americans experiencing behavioral health challenges feeling isolated and undervalued. However, with the stress and trauma of the last two years has come a notable change in the public discourse around mental health, as more people begin to speak openly about their own struggles. The collective stressors we all faced, from social distancing to moments of anxiety and grief, motivated people from all walks of life to share their experiences, look for help, and encourage others to do the same.

Yvette A. Aguayo, Kaiser Permanente:

The COVID-19 pandemic is unique in that the disaster was not limited to only one community being traumatized nor is there an end date. Mental health professionals were just as affected, impacting our resources to provide mental health services to the public. Monitoring healthcare workers for mental health illnesses and providing early support will remain crucial in the aftermath of the pandemic. Since the pivot to virtual care, we can expect to see more primary care physicians treating more uncomplicated depression and anxiety as well as sleep disorders. Additionally, there has been an acceleration of smartphone mental health apps and web-based assessments. Kaiser Permanente has improved both the design and implementation of the Treatment Progress Indicator alongside Feedback Informed Care, a model used to track and improve care quality, access and effectiveness while also giving the patient a voice in the progression of their care.

Are we seeing an increase in people experiencing anxiety and depression over the past several years of COVID?

Yvette A. Aguayo, Kaiser Permanente:

The prolonged effects of our economic crisis due to COVID-19 have increased the number of psychiatric disorders. In addition to anxiety and depressive disorders, there has been a spike in homelessness, suicide rates and substance abuse. Our mission has been to anticipate a wide demand for mental health services and to be prepared to supply those needs with additional staffing and an increase in our technology assets.

Are we seeing an increase in people experiencing substance use disorders as a result of COVID, and how is your organization responding to that?

Dr. Calvin Stone, Neighborhood Healthcare:

Yes, substance use has increased during the COVID pandemic, for many of the same reasons that caused increases in other mental illnesses. Unfortunately, substance use disorders often thrive in social isolation, which was often required during the pandemic. Estimates have also reported increases in overdose deaths as high as 30% during this period. This can be attributed to both the increased use of substances and the recent abundance of fentanyl and fentanyl-laced illicit products in our communities. Neighborhood Healthcare is committed to meeting this issue head on.

We provide a combination of behavioral health therapy and medications to treat numerous substance use disorders, including opioid and alcohol use disorders. We begin by performing a thorough evaluation then work collaboratively with the patient to identify a treatment plan that best works for them. Our goal is to support individuals to make positive choices to improve the quality of their life.

How have the options for treatment, such as video telehealth, changed as a result of COVID?

Dr. Ben Maxwell, Rady Children's Hospital:

Like many organizations, COVID pushed us to pivot to telehealth quicker than we thought possible! For our behavioral health programs, telehealth has been an essential tool to not only maintain services to the community, but actually improve access and decrease “no show” rates. Moving forward, we believe telehealth will remain a major part of the way we deliver accessible care to our patients and families.

Yvette A. Aguayo, Kaiser Permanente:

At the onset of the pandemic, Kaiser Permanente behavioral health widened the scope of modalities to include video and telephonic sessions, including psychiatric medication evaluations and intensive outpatient programs. Presently, our options for treatment have expanded to virtual groups and webinar classes i.e. anger management, ADHD, DBT, couple's communication. Today, Kaiser Permanente offers social media apps i.e. Calm, My Strength, and Ginger to many receiving mental health services as part of their treatment plan. It has become the norm to start your



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More and more, research is supporting the numerous lifestyle choices that can improve mental health conditions. [These include] exercise and movement, healthy diet, social connection, time spent in the outdoors, meditation, breathing techniques, practicing gratitude ...

Benjamin Maxwell, M.D.

Interim Director, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego



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Telehealth has been an exceptional improvement in the delivery of healthcare services for patients that face significant barriers to accessing treatment. Telehealth has been a lifeline for patients ...

Calvin Stone, D.O.

Addictionologist
Neighborhood Healthcare



morning with a quick 20-minute meditation or to end your day with a digital gratitude journal. Anyone with a smartphone can now have access to hundreds of resources for decreasing depression and anxiety, learning cognitive behavioral skills as well as having a personal life coach provide support in real time.

Dr. Calvin Stone, Neighborhood Healthcare:

With COVID came many unanticipated secondary effects resulting from isolation, loss of employment, illness, increased anxiety and uncertainty. Our collective communities saw a rise in need for mental health and substance use services, while at the same time programs that provided treatment were shutting down temporarily or only accepting a fraction of individuals so the programs could safely socially distance. In response, telehealth services were able to expand to meet this need. Telehealth has been an exceptional improvement in the delivery of healthcare services for patients that face significant barriers to accessing treatment. Telehealth has been a lifeline for patients, especially for patients with mental health and substance use conditions that have little to no ability to access care. At Neighborhood Healthcare, providing telehealth mental health counseling, psychiatric and addiction services for patients of all ages has become a routine and vital avenue of treatment.

Can people stabilize a mental illness with medication alone?

Don Myers, Palomar Health:

Mental illness affects about 1 in 5 adults. Mental health recovery is a dynamic process and varies based on factors such as severity and duration of illness, diagnosis, accompanying physical condition, healthcare access, and food and financial security. Mental health medication needs can sometimes be managed by a primary care physician, while others require specialized outpatient care, short-term crisis and residential services, or inpatient hospitalization.

Outcomes are generally best with a combination of medication and therapy support. Palomar Health provides a continuum of mental health services including 24/7 psychiatric emergency consultation in the Emergency Department and Medical Floors, inpatient services, crisis stabilization services, and outpatient referrals. After considering those needs, the Palomar Health team collaborates with community providers and agencies to support continuous recovery after discharge.

Dr. Calvin Stone, Neighborhood Healthcare:

Medications can be profoundly helpful in treating mental illness, though often they

are just one component of a holistic care approach. It is important to assess and address all lifestyle factors that may be contributing to a person's mental illness. Factors as simple and common as poor sleep or limited exercise can exacerbate many underlying psychiatric disorders. It is necessary to address these issues to give the patient the best chance at success. At Neighborhood we work to create personalized treatment plans around each patient's disorder that can include medication, therapy, counseling, and/or alternative treatment modalities. Our program focuses on offering well-rounded, empathetic and culturally sensitive treatment for all of our patients.

In addition to/other than medication and therapy, what can help a person with mental health struggles?

Dr. Ben Maxwell, Rady Children's Hospital:

More and more, research is supporting the numerous lifestyle choices that can improve mental health conditions. Exercise and movement, healthy diet, social connection, time spent in the outdoors, meditation, breathing techniques, practicing gratitude, limiting screen time and time spent on social media, learning something new. The great thing about many of these activities is they are fun!

Laura Josh, Gallagher on behalf of California Schools VEBA:

Providing wraparound services and integrating behavioral health care into a broader support network is necessary to help individuals struggling with their mental health. California Schools VEBA has long been a proponent of holistic approaches to healthcare, including mental health. We do not believe health care is one-size-fits-all, so we work one-on-one with our members to develop personalized plans allowing them to become their healthiest selves.

To help members achieve that goal, we launched our VEBA Resource Center (VRC) in 2019. The VRC partners with health care, well-being, and community service providers to create tailored roadmaps that support members on their journey to well-being. These resources include on-site and virtual services such as acupuncture, yoga, meditation sessions, healthy cooking classes, financial workshops and more. By creating an integrated health care system that treats both physical and emotional needs, we have improved patient health outcomes, increased care quality, and reduced employer costs.



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Founded on values like collaboration, compassion, and integrity, the Neighborhood culture celebrates diversity and empowers personal growth. We are each unique and yet all united under a shared vision: a community where everyone is healthy and happy.

Neighborhood employees enjoy exciting opportunities for personal and professional growth while helping to serve patients. We are hiring for clinical and admin positions in San Diego and Riverside counties.

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At Neighborhood, we get to know our patients and their families over time. The best part of my job is seeing a patient's face light up when I walk in the room.

— Melissa Bishop, MD
Medical Director of Quality



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Cultural Humility trainings for our staff have taught us that through continued learning and accountability we can improve our empathy and compassion toward one another.

Yvette A. Aguayo, LMFT
Clinical Program Manager II
Kaiser Permanente, Psychiatry and
Addiction Medicine



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The future of mental health is also quite promising with the noteworthy, ongoing research in genetic screening to determine the most effective medications, use of psychoactive medication-assisted psychotherapy, and Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation.

Don Myers, MSW, MBA
District Director of Operations
Center for Behavioral Health
Palomar Health



From your perspective, what barriers and/or solutions exist to reduce the disparity related to mental health care?

Laura Josh, Gallagher on behalf of California Schools VEBA:

There are persistent disparities in behavioral health status and access to care based on race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. For example, non-white individuals struggling with mental health or substance use disorders are less likely to receive treatment services than their white counterparts. Members of the LGBT community are also more likely to experience mental health and substance use challenges, while having lower overall rates of health insurance coverage.

One important step to fight these disparities is reducing the stigma associated with seeking mental health support. However, combatting stigma alone is not enough. Once a person decides they are ready to find treatment, it can be virtually impossible to access services that are available in a timely manner, affordable and culturally appropriate. As demand for care increasingly outpaces supply, waitlists to see a therapist are growing longer; often providers are out-of-network, creating an insurmountable financial barrier for patients; and not all practitioners can provide the language skills or cultural awareness that an individual patient needs.

VEBA is working to address some of these challenges for our own population. For example, we are looking for opportunities to bolster the pipeline of young mental health professionals working in Southern California who reflect the demographic makeup of our membership. We are still in the early phases of this work, but are hopeful about the potential to positively influence care quality and accessibility.

Don Myers, Palomar Health:

Social determinants of health like poverty, disability, unemployment, access to healthcare, stigma, discrimination, race and gender all result in barriers and disparity in healthcare. Telehealth has significantly increased access to care amid many social determinants of health.

While the prolonged mental health crisis has been exacerbated by these social determinants of health, the severity of the crisis has increased due to social isolation, fear and anxiety related to the pandemic.

Further advancement and access to mental healthcare with the use of Telehealth is possibly the most exciting and quickly adapting technology. The future of mental health is also quite promising with the noteworthy, ongoing research in genetic screening to determine the most effective medications, use of psychoactive medication-assisted psychotherapy, and Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation.

How has equity, inclusion and diversity played a role in mental wellness today?

Yvette A. Aguayo, Kaiser Permanente:

The acts of racism and violence that emerged during the pandemic and the disparity in access to mental health care in communities of color can no longer be ignored. Kaiser Permanente responded by developing an equity, inclusion, and diversity department. Leaders and managers are responsible for increasing racial awareness among staff and continuously tracking engagement to keep the pulse of employee morale. Cultural Humility trainings for our staff have taught us that through continued learning and accountability we can improve our empathy and compassion toward one another. We remain committed to this very important issue by creating a safe space to discuss diversity in our daily huddles and weekly team meetings. Some of these conversations can be uncomfortable, yet we hold the space to explore opportunities for improvement and personal growth understanding the impact equity, inclusion and diversity can have on everyone's mental health.

Is there anything built into your policies and procedures to support the mental health and well-being of both your employees and the population you serve?

Don Myers, Palomar Health:

At Palomar Health, our mission is to heal, comfort, and promote health in our communities with values of compassion, integrity, teamwork, excellence, service and trust. These values are what make up the foundation of all that we do to promote the health of our Palomar Health employees and patients. In addition to the care Palomar Health provides to the community, we offer multiple levels of support to our staff. Our policies and procedures guide us in our commitment to the health and wellbeing of everyone.

Laura Josh, Gallagher on behalf of California Schools VEBA:

As I mentioned above, VEBA has long been a believer in a holistic approach to healthcare and provides tools and resources to our membership so that they may live their healthiest lives. By launching our VEBA Resource Center (VRC) we were able to bring together mental health support, wellness education, movement, stress reduction, nutrition, and cooking resources in a convenient, one-stop shop that is available to all 150,000 of our members with both in-person and virtual offerings.

In addition to the individual resources that are provided through the VRC, we provide well-being services that are designed to support our school districts' specific needs. Our educators are on the



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Bringing children's
mental health into the light
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The last thing we want is for someone to finally feel ready to receive care only to open the door and run into a brick wall of wait times and bureaucracy.

Laura Josh

Area President, Gallagher
On behalf of California Schools VEBA



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It is hard to imagine how our mental health care system can improve without proper investment and support of programs that ensure all kids appropriate access to quality care.

Benjamin Maxwell, M.D.

Interim Director, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego

front lines of supporting our community through the pandemic, and the toll on their own, as well as their students' well-being has been profound. We recently held an event with one of largest districts with over 300 participants that allowed our educators to take a moment of reflection, peace and recovery. Through our well-being offerings, we provide tools and resources for our districts to help their employees deal with stress and anxiety to reduce stress, increase connections and build resilience.

How has your company responded to the mental health needs of First Responders?

Yvette A. Aguayo, Kaiser Permanente:

Kaiser Permanente understands that first responders are under extreme physical and psychological stress. This constant stress and the physical strain of working long hours on little to no sleep can have an overall negative impact on their mental health. For this reason, a series of trainings tailored to understanding the first responder culture are provided to our clinicians. There is a workflow in place that streamlines the first responders' initial contact with our Behavioral Health department, allowing for ease of scheduling with a trained mental health clinician. Risk assessments, safety planning, and interventions are all focused on the unique factors of first responders.

Don Myers, Palomar Health:

Palomar Health supports our frontline staff's mental health needs related to highly emotional or intense situations at work by offering multiple levels of support, including a rapid response, telephonic counseling, and formal mental health services. The initial response to an acute situation would include initiating a "Code Care," which alerts our Spiritual Care department to immediately respond and provide group and individual emotional support. Palomar Health employees needing additional support have access to two formalized telephonic counseling sessions with a licensed professional. Personnel with ongoing mental health support needs are connected to community mental health services and are managed through our Employee Health department.

What are some critical changes that you think need to be made to the health care system to address mental health care?

Dr. Ben Maxwell, Rady Children's Hospital:

It is hard to imagine how our mental health care system can improve without proper investment

and support of programs that ensure all kids appropriate access to quality care. Too often in the current environment, these behavioral health programs are not financially sustainable. We need payment reform to ensure this type of work can be sustained and available for years to come. And now is our golden opportunity. We see daily in the media the crisis we are facing, in emergency rooms nationwide, and we have leaders taking action. Whether that is California's \$4.4 billion Child and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative, the U.S. Surgeon General's call to action, or President Biden's state of the union address highlighting that now is the time for change.

Laura Josh, Gallagher on behalf of California Schools VEBA:

America's current healthcare infrastructure forces a person to navigate a challenging and complex system at the time when they are least able to advocate for themselves. Some of the immediate challenges that VEBA is focused on in the mental health space are access, representation and financing.

First, we need to tackle access barriers to ensure that people asking for help can get it in a timely manner. The last thing we want is for someone to finally feel ready to receive care only to open the door and run into a brick wall of wait times and bureaucracy. Secondly, we need to cultivate a diverse mental health workforce that more closely represents our own diverse community. As I mentioned earlier, we hope to tackle the root causes of these issues by strengthening the local mental health workforce. We are also searching for ways to make financial incentives align with patient need. Our current fee-for-service health care system, which rewards higher volumes rather than better outcomes, does not give providers the time and resources necessary to treat the whole person. That is why VEBA encouraged the California state legislature to pass AB 1124 last year. This groundbreaking piece of legislation will allow us to establish a payment system based in value, making mental and social needs a top priority for clinicians treating patients across the care continuum.

What is new or exciting on the horizon in mental health?

Dr. Ben Maxwell, Rady Children's Hospital:

Here at Rady Children's, we are excited to work with the County of San Diego to construct a behavioral health pavilion in Kearny Mesa. The pavilion will fill a major gap and help support families in the region by expanding the number of available inpatient beds and providing crisis stabilization for kids who are struggling with severe mental health concerns. We also look forward to forming more community partnerships focused on developing a system of care, and training clinicians to get kids and families the support they need.



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VEBA Resource Center

Centered Around the San Diego Education Community

The VEBA Resource Center exists to partner with members on their individualized health journeys. We provide free classes, services, and programs to empower San Diego's educators and school staff to make well-being a part of their every day lives.

We are here to support our education community so that they can support San Diego's students. Get to know more about us by visiting vebaresourcecenter.com or calling 888.276.0250.



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At Palomar Health, We are Reimagining *Mental Wellness*

By Focusing on a *World-Class Patient Experience*

Everyone has or will experience some mental health crisis personally or peripherally, through relationships with family, friends, coworkers, or community. Mental health is an integral part of our lives and impacts virtually every part of our being. We often take our mental health for granted, not realizing that our mental health fluctuates on a continuum between illness and wellness. All of us experience stressors on a continual basis and our mental health is key to managing these stressors.

At Palomar Health, we focus our care on mental wellness, emphasizing personal and collective strengths. This focus is evident through the compassion of our employees throughout our organization and particularly in our Behavioral Health team and programs. We take pride in recognizing diversity of mental health recovery and meeting people where they are.

Our Crisis Stabilization Unit is a state-of-the-art facility designed specifically for people in a mental health crisis. This unit was developed in partnership with San Diego County Behavioral Health. It is a welcoming and healing environment where people can receive crisis intervention and referral. We welcome walk-ins and self-referral as part of our commitment to serve the North Region of San Diego County and beyond.

We are also pleased to now offer substance use disorder outpatient treatment services at The Recovery Center at Poway. This service provides outpatient treatment for drugs and alcohol and is part of the Hazelden Betty Ford Patient Care Network. The staff and services provide outpatient individual and group therapy, education and support to assist individuals to engage in recovery. We take great pride in being able to enhance the mental health of our patients and improve their lives and wellbeing long-term.



Sincerely,



DON MYERS, MSW, MBA

District Director of Operations, Center for Behavioral Health

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Reimagining Mental Health and Wellness

PalomarHealth.org