



CALHHS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND TASK FORCE MEETING
Discussion Highlights
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 10AM – 1PM

This document provides a summary of key input provided by Behavioral Health Task Force (BHTF) members. This summary of participants input is an accompaniment to the full meeting summary, presentation slide deck, and meeting recordings, all available for review on the [BHTF webpage](#), along with other meeting materials.

BHTF Members and Members of the Public participated in breakout discussions to inform the work of the State's [Master Plan for Aging](#). Informed by the Panel presentation and their experiences, BHTF Members and members of the Public were asked to address two questions in their small group discussions:

- (1) What are the best practices that the State can adopt to raise awareness and elevate older adult behavioral health issues?
- (2) How can you incorporate what you have learned from the Panel into your work?

Key themes from the breakout discussions and report outs are summarized below.

Question one: What are the best practices that the state can adopt to raise awareness and elevate older adult behavioral health issues?

- Integrate aging services, suicide rapid response program, and behavioral health services into the healthcare system and community-based services.
- Cross-pollinate efforts across the state, applying technology-equity to services for older adults, and addressing the workforce shortage.
- Increase availability of higher levels of care for older adults with serious mental health symptoms.
- Provide resources on coping with stress and trauma in languages that elders prefer to speak and promote cultural competence in the provision of behavioral health services.
- Address stigma and discrimination towards specific groups, such as LGBTQ+ elders.
- Raise public awareness by collaborating with pharmacies, food banks, libraries, doctor offices, emergency departments, police and fire departments to advocate for policy, engaging non-traditional partners who work with older adults, and conducting public information campaigns with a focus on early intervention.
- Develop toolkits to help deputize awareness campaigns, addressing ageism through campaigns at the state and local levels, and creating awareness campaigns that target specific communities, such as rural or low-income areas.
- Support board and care operators with capital and operational needs assessments to be addressed through funding from public and private partnerships.
- Address lags in behavioral health/suicide data, address confusion among practitioners regarding dementia as a behavioral health issue and provide referral for more assessments and screening.



CALHHS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND TASK FORCE MEETING
Discussion Highlights
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 10AM – 1PM

- Address the issue of low-income seniors who don't have a support network or a good system in place to help them, increasing the availability of assisted living facilities and board and care, and supporting field-based care and substance use treatment.

Question two: How can you incorporate what you have learned from the panel into your work?

- Make services available in appropriate languages during emergency response, outreach, enrollment, utilization, and retention, especially for older age groups who are underserved.
- Engage with State agencies, community-based organizations, community leaders, and cultural brokers to ensure that initiatives and programs are developed in collaboration with the community they serve.
- Advocate for sustainable funding for temporary programs and coordinating with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to ensure that funding from CalAIM and behavioral health modernization budget is used effectively.
- Collect data on patients screened who have reported behavioral health concerns and utilize research and data to inform policies that improve outcomes for populations of focus when working to reform existing programs.
- Develop a campaign called "Senior Lives Matter" similar to other campaigns based on race to better connect people to available services, encourage and promote services, make them easy to access and use, and elevate knowledge/advertisement of evidence-based practices.
- Apply for grants on mental health programs and grants for workforce development.
- Utilize the West Health grant in local hospitals on the continuum of care and working with acute care to ensure that it is made more robust as well.
- Improve internal collaboration with other divisions and programs that share similar goals.
- Engage a diverse stakeholder community for collective impact. This includes engaging with State departments, community-based organizations, community leaders, and cultural brokers to ensure that initiatives and programs are developed in collaboration with the community they serve.