



Consumer Affairs Newsletter

Wellness and Recovery in Room & Board? California Coalitions Make It Happen!

by Lorraine Zeller

That's the good news. But first, why do we need to make this happen? The bad news is conditions in many "room and board" also called "independent living" homes that cater to mental health consumers on extremely limited incomes are, at the very least, sub-standard. There is ample opportunity for abuse with no oversight or accountability because these homes are not licensed. Examples of living conditions include overcrowding, drug use, safety hazards (no smoke alarms, blocked exits due to overcrowding, no fire extinguishers), lack of sanitation, bug infestations, threats of eviction as retaliation for

complaints, and many forms of abuse (including verbal, physical, financial, sexual).

Too many of these homes are the choice of last resort considered by some as "at least they have a roof". Behavioral health providers have a legal, ethical, and professional responsibility to provide safe and affordable housing resources to clients living on a fixed monthly income; however, consumers, family members, and providers have little to no decent, affordable housing choices in our county. This leaves many settling for sub-standard independent living facilities. Homelessness, re-

peated hospitalizations, and incarceration too frequently result.

But, some independent living (IL) operators truly do care for their tenants and have decent homes to offer. And, locally we are jumping on board a movement, initiated by coalitions in San Diego and San Bernardino counties, to develop solutions where everybody wins. Our local coalition in Santa Clara County is the Community Living Coalition (CLC). Following in the footsteps of the Independent Living Association of San Diego (ILASD) and the Peer Driven Room & Board Advisory Coalition of San Bernardino, we invite inde-

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Santa Clara County Resources

SUICIDE & CRISIS HOTLINE 24/7	1-855-278-4204
Emergency 24/7 (police/fire/ambulance)	911
ask for a C.I.T. officer who is trained in mental health issues	
Mental Health Urgent Care	408-885-7855
Information & Referral 24/7	211
Police (non-emergency) 24/7	311
ask for a C.I.T. officer who is trained in mental health issues	
Call Center for mental health services	800-704-0900

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pendent living owners to become members. Owner membership requires that their home passes our site review meeting our quality standards, and the operator agrees to work with the coalition to maintain their high-quality homes. In return, their homes are listed in our Community Living Coalition directory and they receive training, networking, resources, and support by the Coalition and the community. Training for members includes: "Understanding Mental Illness & the Recovery Model", "Landlord/Tenant Rights & Responsibilities", "Crisis Intervention and Working with Law Enforcement", and "Bedbug Prevention and Eradication".

The San Diego and San Bernardino coalitions have enjoyed great success! They each boast over 30 member homes on their lists with more on the way. The County of Alameda is also developing a fourth Independent Living Associa-

tion in our state with professional technical support supplied by the ILASD. You are encouraged to visit www.ilasd.org for more information and a short video about the benefits of their coalition for both residents and operators.

Like the San Bernardino Room & Board Advisory Coalition, Community Living Coalition is peer-driven. The Coalition was founded by consumers and will remain consumer-led. We consider this essential for consumers to redefine long-established relationships – and inherent power differentials – with providers and operators.

Community Living Coalition is recruiting member operators. Please contact Lorraine Zeller, CPRP at 408-792-2132 or lorraine.zeller@hhs.sccgov.org for more information about how you can become a member operator or support the Coalition.



Our Mission

Community Living Coalition exists to empower, educate, promote self-advocacy and ensure safe and supportive community housing for behavioral health consumers. The Coalition builds connections and collaboration equally partnered by consumers, family members, providers, community housing operators and advocates.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE OUR VOICE NEWSLETTER

This newsletter reaches out to consumers, clinicians, mental health leaders, family members, and the greater community. We want to empower consumers to tell their stories with the goal of humanizing and de-stigmatizing the experience of mental illness, inform consumers, service providers, and families about peer support groups, activities, events, and services; and educate consumers about opportunities to get involved, promoting advocacy for themselves, their families, and their consumer peers.

We want to hear from you! Contributions and suggestions are always welcomed. Please contact Lorraine Zeller, newsletter editor, at lorraine.zeller@hhs.sccgov.org or 408-792-2132 if you have questions or want to learn more about submitting an article, poem, or piece of artwork. All contributions are subject to publication guidelines.

The views expressed by contributors to this newsletter are those of the writers and are not necessarily endorsed by the Office of Consumer Affairs or by the County of Santa Clara.

Sen. Beall Proposes State Certification of Peer Providers

January 17, 2018

SACRAMENTO – A proposal allowing qualified peer providers – people who have lived experience as clients, family members, or caretakers of individuals recovering from mental illness or addiction – to be certified by the state to deliver services to patients with such disorders was introduced today by Sen. Jim Beall, D-San Jose.

“Because of their life experience, peer providers who have personally dealt with mental disorders possess a level of expertise that professional training cannot replicate,” Beall said. “This legislation allows the Department of Health Care Services to establish a new category of trained and qualified providers who can connect people in need to services.

“Peer providers can be especially effective because they personally understand the fears that people grappling with alcoholism or mental illness are going through. They’ve been there.”

Research studies show peer support can reduce hospitalizations, improve client functioning and client satisfaction, and alleviate depression and other symptoms. One study found the effect of peer providers to be transformative, helping mental health clients “move beyond the patient role into one of empowerment.”

Senate Bill 906 requires the Department of Health Care Services to establish a certification program that includes guidelines, a code of ethics, defining the range of a peer provider’s responsibilities, the required training, continuing education, clinical supervision, and a process to revoke certification.

Secondly, the bill authorizes the department to amend the state’s Medicaid program by adding the peer support providers as a reimbursable category. It also directs the department to seek any federal waivers to offset costs. The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid have established guidelines for certification for states to set up programs and have offered a 50 percent match in federal funding.

Approximately 40 states have instituted peer provider support programs and services.

Jessica Cruz, NAMI California Executive Director, said peer providers can augment available treatment to increase healthy outcomes.

“Peer certification is essential to the behavioral health care continuum,” Cruz said. “Peer providers can enhance the level of treatment provided by medical professionals, and in most cases the rate of reduced hospitalization is reduced ten-fold.

“Because families and individuals are experts out of their own experience, they are able to leverage their knowledge and expertise to help others through their journey. NAMI California stands in strong support of California becoming the 41st state accepting peers as certified professionals. We need to catch up with the rest of the country.”

Beall’s proposal arrives at a time when the state anticipates that there will be substantial demand for peer support specialists, although there are no statewide standards, training or supervision processes in place.

SB 906 has drawn bipartisan support. Senator Joel Anderson, R-Alpine, is a joint author. Senators Robert Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys and Dr. Richard Pan D-Sacramento, are co-authors.

“We look forward to working on this important issue with these legislative champions,” said Maggie Merritt, Executive Director of the Steinberg Institute, which is sponsoring the bill. “Peer certification has been shown to be hugely beneficial in mental health care. It’s time peers are certified and are recognized for the role they play in the course of someone’s healing.”

My Experience Quitting Smoking

by Alison Daniel

My name is Alison and I smoked for about 25 years, not including my years as a social smoker in which I only smoked at parties.

My addiction to cigarettes developed when I was about 28 years old at a time when I was first diagnosed with a mental illness. I began to be obsessed with losing weight and thought nicotine would help curb my appetite. At first, nicotine did curb my appetite and I quickly lost 25 pounds.

When I was 31 years old, I was hospitalized for major depression and cigarettes became a way for me to develop a comradery with

other consumers during group therapy breaks and during social visits with other smokers. Smoking felt like a bonding shared experience with other smokers.

Before I knew it, I was smoking a pack and a 1/2 a day. I smoked when I was angry, bored, anxious, manic or depressed. However, I think that the main reason I smoked was to deal with anxiety. What I didn't realize was that, as one of my case managers pointed out to me, nicotine was possibly making the anxiety worse because I was in a constant state of withdrawal. This constant state of withdrawal was

the result of waiting for the next fix of nicotine, thus creating a cycle of anxiety-temporary satisfaction-anxiety.

By the time I was fifty years old, cigarettes were taking a toll on my health and my pocket book. I looked about 10 years older than my chronological age, had lost many teeth and was frequently out of breath. It to a point that I couldn't stand how nicotine was destroying my face and my body and I was tired of never having enough money to do anything else but survive day-to-day. When I decided to quit, I used the lozenges as a way of weaning off

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May is Mental Health Month Focus on Whole Health!



The theme for May is Mental Health Month is "Fitness #4Mind4Body".

A toolkit ---<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may> --- from Mental Health America provides loads of information on how we can make changes – both mentally and physically – to make a big difference in our overall health. Mental health too! There are fact sheets on how mental health is affected by diet and nutrition, exercise, the gut-brain connection, sleep, and stress and worksheets to help you make changes that will improve overall health. And, if you are struggling with your mental health, you can visit www.mhascreening.org to check your symptoms.

As the forward of the toolkit says, "We can't just focus on heart health, or liver health, or brain health, and not on whole health. This is a great time to make small changes that will create huge gains for our mental and physical fitness!"

Interested in learning more about the brain-body connection? Sign up for [MHA's 2018 Annual Conference. Fit for the Future.](#)

Quitting Smoking

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the ritual of lighting up a cigarette. I as still getting the nicotine, but at least I was giving my lungs a chance to heal. Also, I didn't have to worry any more about sneaking off to smoke a cigarette in a corner where smoking was allowed. The lozenges worked very well for me. Gradually, I learned to deal with my anxiety and depression through exercise and meditation along with my medication and support from friends and health professionals. I finally, after about six months quit nicotine altogether and I have been nicotine free for about 4 years. I realize that I can't smoke even one cigarette, not even one puff. It will start me up again. The best way for me to deal with the

stressors of life is to eat as well as I can on my budget, exercise and have plenty of positive emotional support from others.

I feel that some of the damage that I acquired through my nicotine addiction has been reversed, but it has taken time and persistence. I couldn't just quit overnight. I hope those who read this paper can quit successfully too!



2018 County Behavioral Health Board & Committee Meetings * You are Invited!

2 nd Monday – 9 a.m.	5/14 6/11	Older Adult Committee
2 nd Monday – 12 p.m.	5/14 6/11	Behavioral Health Board
3 rd Monday – 12 noon	4/16 5/21 6/18	Cultural Competence Advisory Committee
2 nd Thursday – 2 p.m.	5/10 6/14	Family, Adolescent, & Children's Committee
3 rd Thursday – 9 a.m.	5/17	Adult System of Care
1st Friday – 9 a.m.	5/4 6/1	System Planning & Fiscal Committee

You may email the BH Board at BHB@hhs.sccgov.org or check out the SCC Behavioral Health Board webpage at www.sccmhd.org

Contact Llolanda Ulloa at Llolanda.Ulloa@hhs.sccgov.org, by phone at 408-793-5677, or by fax at 408-885-5788. Please call or check the webpage for location info. Locations may change.

Resources to Help You Quit

California Smokers' Hotline:

Support has proven to double chance of quitting. Trained health line counselors are available. Call and request phone counseling. Hours are 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekends. <http://www.nobutts.org/> -- 1-800-NO-BUTTS (1-800-662-8887)

Ash Kickers

is a six-session smoking cessation program based on the trans-theoretical model of behavior modification.

<http://www.lungsrus.org/BreatheCA> – 408-998-5865

Santa Clara Valley Medical Center

Free 30 minute support group meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month from 10:30am-11:30am. Walk-ins welcome. 751 S. Bascom Ave, San Jose, CA 95128. Valley Specialty Center in Basement, Conference Room BQ160. (408) 885-2075. More info also at www.sccphd.org/tobacco.

Hope

ZEPHYR SELF HELP CENTER

SPRING 2018

*Call for information
about our computer lab
and to sign up for
computer classes

1075 E. SANTA CLARA STREET
San Jose, CA 95116
(408) 792-2140
Center Hours Tuesday-Friday 9-3pm

Consumer Resource Desk is now
available for free, confidential
peer support and resources.
Se habla Español. Ofrecemos ayuda
individual y recursos comunitarios.

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00	Computer Lab 9-3 9:15-10:00 CHECK-IN	Computer Lab 9-3	Computer Lab 9-3	Computer Lab 9-3
10:00	10:00 - 11:00 ARTS & CRAFTS 10:00 - 11:30 MINDFULNESS MEDITATION	10:00 - 11:30 WRAP Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Ongoing 12- week series)	10:30 -11:30 BEADING	10:30 -11:30 MONTHLY WORKSHOP Call for details
11:00				
12:00			12:00 -1:30 WOMEN'S GROUP	12:00 -1:00 POSITIVE THINKING
1:00	1:00 - 2:00 DUAL RECOVERY		1:00 -3:00 MOVIE	
2:00		2:00 -3:00 MEN'S GROUP		

Santa Clara County Mental Health Call Center 1-800-704-0900
Santa Clara County Suicide & Crisis Hotline: 1-855-278-4204
For Emergencies please call 911 & Ask for a CIT Officer



ESPERANZA SELF-HELP CENTER

SPRING 2018

1235 First Street, Gilroy, CA 95020

www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/info/PeerSupport/Self-HelpCenters

Weekly Schedule

Time, Date & Facilitator(s) are Subject to Change.

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10:30 - 11:30 Healthy Boundaries	10:30 - 11:30 Compassionate Communication	10:30 - 11:30 Men's / Women's Support Groups	10:30 - 11:20 Let's Get Moving
1:30 - 2:30 Positive Thinking	1:00 - 2:00 Healthy Choices 2:00-2:45 Uno/Games	1:30 - 2:45 Arts & Crafts	1:30 - 2:30 Bingo y ¡Loteria!

For information on upcoming events,
please call during business hours.



Our Voice

Distributed by the Santa Clara County Mental
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NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS / COMMENTS ALWAYS WELCOME!



Many thanks to all who submitted material, proofed, and helped
prepare this issue of "Our Voice" for mailing!



Please send submissions for our summer issue by Friday, May 25th
All submissions received by Friday, May 25th will be considered for publication.

Lorraine Zeller - lorraine.zeller@hhs.sccgov.org



Zephyr Self-Help Center Annual Consumer Art Show



SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY, May 11th, 2018
10:00 AM—2:30 PM

**Artist must register for the Art
Show from May 8th-10th, 2018.**



Come display your artistic talent with acrylics,
pastels, pencil, pens, charcoal, computer graphics,
needlepoint, quilting, jewelry, ceramics, crafts,
photography, poetry, and performance
arts (i.e., music, song, dance...)

Art Show will be held at
Zephyr Self-Help Center
1075 E Santa Clara St. (Back of bldg.)
San Jose, CA 95116
(408) 792-2140
www.sccbhd.org



Zephyr and Esperanza Self-Help Centers present Musical Theatre Play Workshop Using ExpressArte™ Technique by Maestro Vargas

Workshops held at

Learning Partnership 2nd Floor

1075 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95116
(408) 792-2140

Esperanza Self-Help Center

1235 First Street
Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 852-2160

Friday, May 11th, 2018
1:30 - 2:30PM

Friday, May 25th, 2018
1:30 - 2:30PM



Performing In Day of the Dead
Theatrical production:
"Calaveras de Colores 2009"

ExpressArte™

Participants will:

- Learn the meaning of "Musical Theatre Play"
- Be able to explain the meaning of "release" and "Life's Dramas" in relation to real reality and play reality.
- Understand the meaning of an "intended or unintended Prat-Fall" and why release for both is necessary
- Receive information about the upcoming "Recreational Wellness & ExptresArte™ Musical Theatre Play" Workshop

