

TO: Chairman Matt Rexroad and members of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Marilyn Moyle, Yol, and members of the mental health board

## **LMHB 2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

During 2008, the Yolo County Local Mental Health Board (LMHB) experienced, along with the CAO, the Board of Supervisors, and ADMH staff, the impact of drastic budget cuts and mental health staff layoffs. We appreciated the opportunity to be involved in this difficult process, and during the year had numerous meetings with County Administrator Sharon Jensen, budget director Pat Leary, special consultant Phil Batchelor, interim ADMH director Richard DeLiberty and special deputy administrator Ed Smith as they struggled to think "outside the box" in order to continue to provide adequate mental health services to Yolo County residents. The LMHB also participated in the interview process that resulted in the hiring of Kim Suderman, as new ADMH Director.

In 2009 County Administrator Sharon Jensen retired. The new County Administrator, Patrick Blacklock, faces the necessity of even more drastic budget cuts. The LMHB appreciates the hard work of Mr. Blacklock and Ms. Suderman who, along with the Board of Supervisors, are faced with decisions that no one wants to make.

In January 2009 ADMH Director Suderman informed the

LMHB about the state legislature's proposal to use MHSA (Mental Health Service Act) funds to help pay for the state budget deficit. If this were to happen, most county mental health services state-wide would be destroyed. MHSA funds already are diminishing because of the economic crisis. The LMHB sent a letter to Governor Schwarzenegger opposing the use of MHSA funds for other budget needs.

Crisis Intervention Training took place in Woodland March 3-6 at the Woodland Community Senior Center. 35 law enforcement personnel attended the training. CIT training is scheduled to continue on a regular basis. This training can prevent the kind of lawsuits that occurred as a result of the taser/suffocation death of a mental health client in 2008. The LMHB strongly supports these training opportunities for emergency and law enforcement personnel.

## **ONGOING CONCERNS**

The after hours crisis line has been a concern for years. In October of 2009 ADMH Director Suderman announced that ADMH has contracted with YCCC for after hours (weekends and evenings) calls that will replace the previous transfer of calls to County Dispatch. This new program seems to be working well, since YCCC staff are familiar with many of the clients who call and can direct them to the appropriate services.

The LMHB continues to hear from Yolo County residents who have family members in crisis and are struggling to find effective care. The budget crisis is keeping many people out of the residential treatment and/or 24/7 community support they need.

The LMHB is also concerned about the survival of Yolo

County community based organizations such as YCCC (Farmhouse, Safe Harbor Crisis House, Homestead Co-op, and other co-op housing), Pine Tree Gardens in Davis, Suicide Prevention, and children's services provided through EPSDT funding by community organizations such as Families First, Communicare Clinics, Family Service Agency, and others. Community-based organizations have been recognized by family members and professionals to provide evidence-based treatment that is effective to recover and remain stable in the community. This is the mental health care that a civilized community should deliver to residents to avoid any type of institutional and more costly care.

The impact of furlough days and layoffs on ADMH staff is also a huge concern. We value the training and dedication of all of these professionals and know that volunteers cannot provide the same quality of care.

In 2009, after months of discussion, the collaborative volunteer effort between the mental health board and NAMI-Yolo became a reality. YoloCANVAS (Connecting All Neighbors to Volunteers and Services) began a model program at Homestead Co-op in Davis, a residential community managed in part by YCCC (Yolo Community Care Continuum) for 20 mental health clients.

YoloCANVAS volunteers organized daily drop-in events from December 26, 2009-January 2, 2010. The goal was to provide support to individuals during the holiday furlough period when ADMH staff was not available. YCCC housing support staff was available to volunteers in case problems arose. Volunteers signed confidentiality forms for YCCC and promised to respect client privacy at all times.

The ultimate goal for YoloCANVAS is to connect mental

health consumers with the same kinds of community activities everyone enjoys. The YoloCANVAS website ([YoloCANVAS.org](http://YoloCANVAS.org)) will be a way for community organizations such as Rotary, Oddfellows and faith-based congregations to locate needs in the mental health community and help when needed.

Those of us who have volunteered with YoloCANVAS have an increased appreciation for the hard work ADMH and community-based professional staff have provided for so many years.

The LMHB strongly opposes further cuts to mental health services in Yolo County. Police, fire and emergency room personnel will be adversely affected by further cuts to ADMH and community providers; costly long-term hospitalizations and increased incarcerations will offset any savings the county might anticipate.