

de la Guerra, Sheila

Public Comment

From: Susan Horne <susanhorne@cox.net>
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To: sbcob
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Hi- Please submit attached letter to the BOS before the Budget workshop tomorrow- thanks!

Dear Board of Supervisors:

I have been following the programs of the Behavior Wellness (BWell) Programs for about 5 years thru the NAMI Public Policy Committee.

I am grateful that there has been real progress in getting services to clients.

Still, with the current efforts to divert people with Mental Health (MH) problems to Treatment, I see a few holes. A serious one is where is AOT now? (Assisted Outpatient Treatment program). I can't find it in the BWell current budget and I remember that BOS was so impressed with the successful evidence –based pilot program that it received funding from the General Fund. We hoped BWell would continue it later. But , so far – no interest .

Families of perfect candidates for AOT are frantically trying to get services for their loved ones in MH crisis and can't. The AOT program is languishing and there is a wave of experienced dedicated staff exiting BWell now.

The result is that the trauma of the revolving door resumes – MH crisis to street , to ER , to Justice system, to Jail , to release without treatment and back to the street.

Another huge issue is Data transparency. Getting the Data continues to be a severe problem in BWell, in order to find the problems and address them. For examples, how many MH clients are in Jail , how many get BWell help on release? How soon? How long?

Please be aware of these issues, especially the impending loss of the formerly successful program of AOT for the hardest to reach.

Many thanks for your amazing work on Diversion issues- getting needy people the help they need instead of getting them enmeshed in the Court and Jail systems.

Are Judges the current big barrier ??

Sincerely yours – Susan Horne