



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Napa County Mental Health Board

2021-22 Annual Report

September 2022



Rob Palmer
2021 - 2022 Chair

Table of Contents:

Executive Summary	1
Status of the MHB Meetings Membership Committees	3
Goals & Accomplishments	4
Meet the Board Members	7
Acknowledgements	11



Executive Summary

Napa County's Mental Health Board (MHB) has dedicated, engaged, and diverse members who understand that mental illness is a medical condition affecting a substantial number of our citizens, and supports the provision of effective mental health services, programs, and facilities in our county. Advocating for effective access to treatment and other supportive services, including housing and employment, for people experiencing mental health issues is our chief concern.

Key Concerns and Recommendations:

- 1) **Staffing and Services:** For several years, the Mental Health Division has been challenged by persistent and serious professional staff retention and hiring difficulties. The MHD shares this problem with other public service providers in Napa and elsewhere. MHD staffing shortfalls impose unwise and unfair burdens on staff in place, and threaten timely access to services, case management, and the capacity of the system of care to provide individualized care to those who need it. A Mental Health Board survey of Napa providers in 2022 indicates significant concern about timely access to specialty mental health services and the sufficiency of services. The Mental Health Board recommends that Napa County prioritize fiscal and administrative action necessary to quickly remedy staff retention and hiring problems.
- 2) **Children & Youth Behavioral Health:** There appears to be general agreement that the disrupted social and educational environment during the pandemic has had significant adverse behavioral health impacts on young people of all ages. These adverse impacts—stress, anxiety, isolation, depressions—affect a vulnerable demographic and raise professional and parental concern about negative developmental and social consequences for children and youth that will persist well beyond currently planned pandemic remediation efforts and funding. The Mental Health Board recommends that Napa County make a targeted effort to understand the extent of this risk and develop proactive ways to eliminate or ameliorate it.
- 3) **Housing:** We again emphasize the need for more temporary and permanent supportive housing for individuals and families with children experiencing serious mental health issues. The County's recent investments in Project Homekey projects, together with Heritage House/Valle Verde, will significantly increase the stock of supportive housing in the County once completed. But a shortfall in supportive housing for persons with serious mental illness is projected to persist. The Mental Health Board recommends that expansion of temporary and permanent supportive housing be identified as a key unmet need and first-tier priority for the County across all age groups. Insufficient supportive housing and/or adult residential ("Board & Care") facilities results in out-of-county placements and/or a revolving door between homelessness, jails, hospitals, and transitional facilities. This results in high monetary cost for Napa County and high social costs for the citizens and their families.

Through public meetings, site visits, work groups, speakers, and reports from MH Division Staff and contractors, the MHB works to understand local mental health issues and advise the Board of Supervisors and the Mental Health Director regarding Napa County's mental health offerings and challenges. Napa County Mental Health Board members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. It is part of our mandated duties to provide the Board of Supervisors with an annual report reviewing the needs and performance of the county's mental health system. This report documents our membership and activities for July 2021-June 2022.

Accomplishments of Napa County Mental Health Division

It is also essential to acknowledge the hard work and accomplishments of the Napa County Mental Health Division, under the leadership of Behavioral Health Director Cassandra Eslami, reflected in the Napa County Health & Human Services Agency Strategic Plan Annual Report, FY 2021-22 (<https://www.countyofnapa.org/DocumentCenter/View/26215/HHSA-Strategic-Plan-Annual-Report-FY-21-22?bidId>).

- The Mental Health Division (MHD) prides itself on providing equitable, high quality, community and family-centered services geared toward promoting wellness and recovery for our community. We highlight several notable features of the MHD's work in fiscal year 2021-22.
- In early 2022, the MHD implemented the long-sought goal of a Mobile Response Team comprised of behavioral health professionals, partnering with the Napa County Sheriff and City of Napa Police Department to implement protocols, prioritize community needs, and work on joint responses. The mobile, community focused services of this highly committed team of individuals respond anywhere in Napa County during business hours, with a goal of expansion into evenings and weekends during the coming year as staffing permits.
- MHD engaged in close partnership with the Napa County Office of Education both to ensure continuity of education for Foster Youth and promote mental health resources in school settings, providing \$2.5 million in funding via the Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA) for expanded mental health resources in school settings over the next three years.
- In early 2022, the Health and Human Services Agency started its progress to implement the new California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative, which seeks to streamline mental health and substance use disorder services under a behavioral health model. The integration of mental health and substance abuse services is taking place under the direction of HHSA's new Deputy Director-Behavioral Health.
- Finally, the MHD completed its comprehensive listing of staff who are co-located with other County Departments or community partner organizations and have centrally stored this for review by HHSA Agency Division and Administrative Leadership, updating this listing semi-annually. This promotes a more organized approach to our outreach, engagement, and service availability that can be effectively monitored and adjusted as community needs evolve.

Status of the Mental Health Board

Meetings: Regular MHB meetings were held on the 2nd Monday of each month via Zoom. A notice of all regular and special MHB meetings was made public, and an agenda was followed which allowed for public comment. MHB meeting agendas and minutes are available on the County website. A quorum was established at eleven of twelve meetings. Board member attendance ranged from 93% to 40%, with average attendance: 74%.

In July, we held a public hearing for review and comment on the Mental Health Division's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) FY 21-22 Annual Update to the MHSA Three Year Plan.

Committees & Workgroups:

Executive Committee: Rob Palmer-Chair; Edward Ortiz-Vice Chair; Kristyn Miles- Past Chair. Members at Large: Kristine Haataja, Tiffany Iverson/Kathleen Chance, Beth Nelson

Data Notebook Workgroup (2021): Rob Palmer (Chair), Ed Ortiz (Vice-Chair)

Promoting Integrated Care Workgroup: Ed Ortiz (Chair), Patricia Sullivan, Kathleen Chance, Rowena Korobkin

Annual Report: Rob Palmer (Chair), Kristyn Miles, Kristine Haataja

Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drugs (ABAD): Heidi Van De Ryt, Neil D'Silva

Community Corrections Partnership: Ed Ortiz

In-Home Supportive Services Advisory Committee: Rowena Korobkin

Quality Improvement/Utilization Review Committee (QI/UR): Kristine Haataja

Stakeholders Advisory Committee (SAC): Patricia Sullivan

County Suicide Prevention Council: Kristyn Miles

Cultural Competence Committee: Keri Akemi-Hernandez

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council: Tiffany Iverson

Live Healthy Napa County: Rob Palmer (Chair) & Kristyn Miles

Veterans Commission: Kathleen Chance

California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards/Commissions: Kristine Haataja

Membership: At the close of the fiscal year, membership on the MHB consisted of 15 members, the full number based on the Board Bylaws. In the past year, the Board continues to make progress in adequately representing the ethnic make-up of our community.

This year one new member, Orion Taraban, joined the board. Frank Dolan left at the end of his term, and we thank him for his participation on our board.

Board Member	District at Time of Appointment	Appointment Date	Term Ends	Represents
Keri Akemi-Hernandez	2	12/08/2020	01/01/2024	Family Member
Kathleen Chance	1	01/14/2020	01/01/2023	Family Member
Neil D'Silva	5	12/08/2020	01/01/2025	Concerned Citizen
Zacharia Geyer	4	08/28/2018	01/01/2023	Consumer
Supervisor Ryan Gregory	2	08/28/2018	12/31/2023	BOS
Kristine Haataja	4	11/03/2015	01/01/2025	Consumer
Tiffany Iverson	4	08/28/2018	01/01/2024	Concerned Citizen
Rowena Korobkin, M.D.	1	01/06/2015	01/01/2024	Family Member
Kristyn Miles	5	08/28/2018	01/01/2024	Concerned Citizen
E. Beth Nelsen	1	01/14/2020	01/01/2023	Concerned Citizen
Edward Ortiz	3	02/23/2021	01/01/2024	Concerned Citizen
Robert Palmer	3	01/14/2020	01/01/2025	Concerned Citizen
Patricia Sullivan	1	06/08/2021	01/01/2023	Consumer
Orion Taraban	1	04/05/2022	01/01/2025	Family Member
Heidi Van De Ryt	3	02/23/2021	01/01/2024	Family Member

Goals & Accomplishments

The following objectives and goals for 2021-2022 were developed by the MHB Executive Committee and approved by the MHB. Below are details of the work done by the MHB on each of these goals.

A. Objective: Fulfill the Mandated Responsibilities and Core Purposes of the Mental Health Board

1. **Goal:** *Review and evaluate the community's mental health needs, services, facilities, and special problems [5604.2 (a)(1)] Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC)*

Accomplishments:

- Throughout the year, the MHB hosted a variety of speakers and panel forums related to Napa County mental health issues and services, including:
 - Napa County's CalAIM structure and implementation plan;
 - The Mental Health Court Program;
 - Mental Health Issues affecting school-aged children;
 - Suicide prevention and Youth/Teen mental health;
 - Co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders;
 - Supportive housing for individuals with severe mental illness;
 - MH services available to incarcerated and recently released individuals;
 - The Mental Health Mobile Response Unit.
- The Mental Health Board established a Workgroup—"Promoting Integrated Care, An Opportunity Assessment"—to determine whether there are preventable gaps in serving Napa County Medi-Cal enrollees who have severe mental illness in addition to physical health conditions and/or substance use disorders. The Workgroup conducted a broad survey of community organizations and service providers and consulted extensively with the Mental Health Plan (MHP). Its report and the MHP's response focused on the following:
 - Measures to ensure that DHCS standards for timely access to care are met;
 - Exploration of services delivery options for therapy and case management, and utilizing the MHSA Community Planning Process to gain stakeholder feedback and information;
 - Improvement of health equity in Napa County, especially through efforts to reduce barriers to access to service among Latino/Hispanic beneficiaries (including structural inequities, stigma, immigration status and others);
 - Updating/executing agreements and documentation to ensure appropriate routine coordination between the MHP and other DHCS programs, including Partnership Health Plan.

2. **Goal:** *Review and comment on the county's performance outcome data and communicate its findings to the California Behavioral Health Planning Council (CMHPC) [5604.2 (a)(7)] WIC*

Accomplishments:

- The Board completed the California Behavioral Health Planning Council's 2021 Data Notebook questionnaire after extensive collaboration with Napa County's Mental Health Division and Housing and Homelessness Services, and input from community members. The 2021 Data Notebook inquiries focused on racial and ethnic disparities in behavioral health. It also included questions that are addressed each year to provide monitoring trends to assist in identifying unmet needs or gaps that may occur due to changes in population, resources available of public policy. Key Board observations related to services for persons in Napa County experiencing mental illness follow.
- There are recognized areas of unmet behavioral health needs:
 - Napa continues to lack sufficient community-based Adult Residential Facilities (ARFs) for persons experiencing serious mental illness. The only alternatives are large ARFs outside Napa, remote from home and family support. Community-based board & care facilities in or adjacent to Napa's continuum of care would likely result in improved outcomes and could yield significant cost savings over time.
 - A variety of difficulties face individuals from underserved communities in need of mental health services. These include community stigma, distrust of mental health services, transportation difficulties, and lack of funds and equipment needed to access telehealth services.
- The Planning Council asked for an assessment of disparities in accessing and engaging with mental health services by specified Medi-Cal eligible demographic groups: Alaska Native/American Indian (AN/AI); Asian/Pacific Islander (A/PI); Black; Hispanic; White; Other. The Planning Council also asked for assessment of adult data separately from children-youth data. "Access" was at least one FY20-21 MH services visit; "Engagement" was 5 or more visits. The MHB reviewed available local, statewide, and national data.

- For some cohorts, due to low patient count data was unavailable to protect patient privacy. This was true for all Black or A/PI cohorts as such in Napa. Data was also unavailable to assess the AN/AI and Other children-youth cohorts in Napa.
- For those cohorts for which data was available, in general the data reflected that access and engagement rates of Medi-Cal eligible individuals in Napa approximated or exceeded statewide rates and approximated the nationwide prevalence of mental illness in such cohorts indicated by data published by NIH/SAMHSA. (The NIH/SAMHSA data we found does not separately calculate prevalence for adults and children-youth.)
- There were two exceptions. Access rates for Hispanic adults was significantly lower than the prevalence of mental illness indicated in the NIH/SAMHSA data; and the access rate for Hispanic children-youth in Napa was lower than the statewide access rate for Hispanic children-youth.
 - The Mental Health Division is engaged in targeted efforts to eliminate factors (such as immigration concerns, distrust of providers, cultural beliefs) inhibiting access in the Hispanic community.
- New programs implemented in FY 2020-21 that support persons with serious mental illness include:
 - The Mental Health Division activated its Mental Health Mobile Response Team. Through personnel collaboratively engaged with law enforcement, the MRT provides licensed professional community-based interventions to de-escalate and stabilize individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. In the course of preparing this year's Data Notebook response, MHB members have received very positive feedback about the MRT.
 - In FY 2021-22, Project Homekey funding supported a 62-unit expansion of permanent supportive housing.
- The Mental Health Board identified the highest priority new program, facility, or resource desired within the next three years as:
 - Elimination of professional behavioral health staff retention and hiring shortfalls;
 - Assessment of adverse pandemic-related behavioral health impact on Napa children and youth; and implementation of adequate remedial measures.
 - Expansion of Napa's temporary and permanent supportive housing resources.

3. **Goal:** *Review and approve the procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process [WIC 5604.2 (a)(4)].*

Accomplishments:

- Pursuant to interim pandemic-related rules permitting it, Board kept to its regular meeting schedule by means of on-line meetings using "Zoom" technology.
- Meeting Agendas, with Zoom link information, were and are publicly posted on the Napa County website: <http://www.countyofnapa.org/HHSA/MentalHealthBoard/>
- The public was invited to attend and participate in all monthly MHB meetings. Public comments, concerns and questions were received from members of the public during the year. Overall, the level of public participation in Zoom meetings was minimal.

4. **Goal:** *Review any county agreement entered into pursuant to Section 5650 of the Welfare & Institutions Code.*

Accomplishments:

- Mental Health Division Budget Overview was provided for review by HHSA Fiscal Staff at the June 2022 MHB meeting and MHD staff presented an overview of state and local contracts, providers, and services in September 2021.
- The following specific contracts, agreements, reports, and applications were provided for review during FY 2021-22: PATH and SAMHSA Grant Applications, August 2021; External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) Audit, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), May 2022; MH Division's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) FY 21-22 Annual Plan Update to the MHSA Three-Year Plan, Public Hearing in July 2021.

B. **Objective:** *Maintain an active, involved Mental Health Board.*

1. **Goal:** *Achieve full MHB membership that reflects the diversity of the populations served.*

Accomplishments:

- As of June 30, 2022, the MHB had 15 members, including interested/concerned citizens (40%), consumers (20%) and family members (33-1/3%). The Board recruited 1 new member to fill vacancies during FY 21-22.
- The Mental Health Board continues to work toward adequately representing the ethnic make-up of our community.

Goals & Accomplishments cont'd...

- 2. Goal:** *Maintain a high attendance and participation at all MHB meetings, including all committees and/or workgroups.*

Accomplishments:

- Board Meetings were held monthly without exception and a quorum was established at each meeting except for the meeting on May 9, 2022. Board member attendance ranged from 93% to 40%, with average attendance: 74%.
- The Executive Committee also met monthly without exception and a quorum was established at all meetings.

- 3. Goal:** *Maintain representation on appropriate local, regional, and state boards, committees, councils, etc., and regular reporting to the Mental Health Board (for example: CALBHC, QIC, etc.).*

Accomplishments:

- In FY 21-22, Kristine Haataja served as a member of the governing board of the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards/Commissions (CALBHB/C). CALBHB/C updates, newsletters, [website](#) access, and regional meeting schedules were provided and discussed with the MHB.
- Kristine Haataja and Keri Akemi-Hernandez served as members of the MHSA Stakeholder's Advisory Committee (SAC).
- Kristine Haataja was a member of the Mental Health Division Quality Improvement Utilization Review Committee (QIC).
- Kristyn Miles was a member of the Napa County Suicide Prevention Council.
- Rob Palmer, Neil D'Silva and Heidi Van De Ryt participated in meetings of the Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board (ABAD); Ms. Van de Ryt became a member of the ABAD board during the year.
- Ed Ortiz participated in meetings of the Community Corrections Partnership.
- Keri Akemi-Hernandez is a member of the Housing Commission.
- Tiffany Iverson participated in the meetings of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Committee.
- Kathleen Chance participates in the meetings of the Veterans Commission.
- Kristyn Miles and Rob Palmer participated in the sessions of the HHS "Live Healthy Napa County" convenings.

- 4. Goal:** *Complete 100% of site visits.*

Accomplishments:

- The Mental Health Board completed 5 of 7 scheduled site visits during FY 2021-22. The remaining site visits were completed in August 2022. The visited sites included:
 - Aldea Children & Family Services;
 - Crestwood Crisis Stabilization Unit;
 - Buckelew Supported Living Program;
 - Fresh Start Housing, Napa State Hospital;
 - Hartle Court Supportive Housing.

- 5. Goal:** *Provide training opportunities to MHB Members*

Accomplishments:

- Board members were notified of dates for Mental Health Board and Advocacy trainings facilitated by CALBHC. In addition, Theresa Comstock, Executive Director of the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions (CALBHB/C), provided training to the Mental Health Board at the May 9 meeting. Members participating in training included:
 - Chair Rob Palmer,
 - Kathleen Chance,
 - Neil D'Silva,
 - Kristine Haataja,
 - Rowena Korobkin,
 - Kristyn Miles,
 - Orion Taraban,
 - Patricia Sullivan
- All members completed the on-line Ethics Training required by the State of California.

Meet the Board Members



Rob Palmer is chair of the Napa County Mental Health Board. He is a lawyer in private practice. His practice focuses on litigation matters and, in recent years, on representing at-risk clients in human rights and refugee asylum cases. He and his wife Mary live in Yountville, close to two of their three grown daughters and three grandchildren, who live in Napa. Mr. Palmer practiced law in Arizona for several years, where he also served on the board and is a past president of the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest. He was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2019 .

Edward Ortiz was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2021 and is Vice Chair. He was previously the Chief Network Officer for the Health Plan of San Mateo and is currently a founding partner of Cruz Consulting Partners, a specialty consultancy focused on safety net health care. Mr. Ortiz has deep experience leveraging the resources of Medi-Cal and County-based services/supports to improve beneficiary wellness while optimizing health systems to improve care costs. Some of his notable accomplishments are the DHCS award-winning implementation of housing and health care programming and the development of community supports that are both now integral components of California Advancing and Innovating in Medi-Cal (CalAIM). Mr. Ortiz served in the Illinois National Guard as a veteran of the Gulf War and graduated from Northern Illinois University with a degree in business management.



Keri Akemi-Hernandez (Pronouns: she/her, they/them) is proud of her Native American Heritage, with Mohawk, Seneca, and Apache lineage. She is a successful Indigenous, womxn, entrepreneur of multiple small business ventures, including Real Estate, Design, and Consulting services within the greater San Francisco Bay Area for over 21 years. Ms. Akemi-Hernandez joined the Mental Health Board in 2021 and is an active community leader who helps advocate for those who are often marginalized and underserved. She also serves on the Napa County Housing Commission, the Housing Element Advisory Committee, and the Mental Health Cultural Competency Advisory Committee. Ms. Akemi-Hernandez is motivated by the support of her children, and grandchild.

Kathleen Chance taught at the elementary and middle school levels in the Napa Valley Unified School District, primarily at Browns Valley Elementary School, where she also served as coordinator of the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports Program and trained in Mindfulness for Educators. Concerned about the increase in mental health issues among youth and young adults, she wanted to make a difference for all, especially in the areas of stigma and stereotyping. Ms. Chance holds a BA from UC Davis and a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Dominican University of California. She continues with alum writing workshops and is a member of the California Writers Club, Napa Valley Branch. She and her husband Robert live in Napa. Ms. Chance was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2020.



Neil D'Silva is a long-time resident of American Canyon with a great interest in and passion for mental health. In both his undergraduate career in Los Angeles and his time with the Peace Corps in China, he has been involved in social justice work and mental health peer support networks under the supervision of medical and/or mental health professionals. He has also worked as an EMT-Basic and volunteered at hospitals, schools, and with community organizations. He currently works for the federal government in a programmatic oversight role. Mr. D'Silva was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2020.

Zachariah Geyer has lived experience with both physical and mental challenges. He works full-time as a Mental Health Worker Aide for Napa County Mental Health Division and is co-located two days week at Innovations Community Center running groups and doing peer support work. Mr. Geyer has been trained as a Peer Support Specialist PSS, Wrap Facilitator, Question/Pursue/Refer facilitator, and in both Adult and Child Mental Health First-Aid amongst numerous other trainings. Prior to employment with the County, he had extensive volunteer experience, including, Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital in the Intensive Care Unit as a family support volunteer, as a speaker at National Alliance On Mental Illness (NAMI) meetings, at Buckelew Programs in the Family Services Unit, and at other organizations. Mr. Geyer is a Napa Native and joined the Mental Health Board in 2018.



Ryan Gregory is a third-generation Napa resident and was elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2016. He earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly) in San Luis Obispo and is a Registered Professional Engineer. He worked as Vice President and Owner of the local civil engineering firm RSA+, resigning from the firm to focus on his job as Napa County Supervisor. During his 20-year professional career, Supervisor Gregory was a leader in the local engineering field with a specialty in the planning, design, and construction of residential projects for both nonprofit and for-profit builders. Mr. Gregory's extensive history of community involvement includes service as the former Board Chair for the Napa Chamber of Commerce and Community Action Napa Valley and President of Leadership Napa Valley, Napa Engineers Society, and the Kiwanis Club of Napa. Mr. Gregory was actively involved as a member of the Vine Trail Engineering Committee, Joint City-County Affordable Housing Taskforce, the Airport Industrial Area Blue Ribbon Committee, the City of Napa Housing Element Update Committee 2007 and 2014, Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency's (NCTPA) Highway 29 Citizens Advisory Committee, and the Downtown Napa Specific Plan Steering Committee. He continues to demonstrate his commitment to Napa County through service to the Boys and Girls Club of Napa Valley, the Downtown Property and Business Improvement District (PBID), Brother Can You Spare A Dime Community Baseball Outings organization, and the Napa Composite High School Mt. Bike Team. Mr. Gregory joined the Mental Health Board in 2018.

Kristine Haataja was a Consumer Insights & Strategy Consultant for corporations and consulting firms for over 35 years, retiring in 2015. Ms. Haataja is especially passionate about mental health intervention in early childhood and adolescence, based upon her lived experience raising a child with serious mental health issues. She is a 2017 graduate of Leadership Napa Valley (LNV), and served a term on the LNV Board. Ms. Haataja was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2015, is on the Executive Committee, served as Vice Chair for 2016-2017, and Chair for 2017-2019. She has served on several workgroups, including School-based Mental Health, Member Recruitment, Community Outreach, and the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 Data Notebooks. In 2019, Ms. Haataja was elected to the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions (CALBHB/C) and now serves as Secretary/Treasurer. She has a BA in Sociology from Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota and an MBA from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Ms. Haataja lives in Napa with her husband.



Tiffany Iverson has been on the board since August of 2018. Since joining the Mental Health Board, she led a Work Group engaged in increasing public awareness of the board meetings as a bridge between the Napa County community needs and resources. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist working in private practice in the Napa community. Her work as a therapist has spanned both the private practice and non-profit worlds. As an intern therapist, she worked for Silverado MS and Napa HS and Aldea's Wolfe Center program. Ms. Iverson is passionate about serving underserved youth populations. She currently works with the general public and with out-patient psychiatric patients. Ms. Iverson received an AA in Liberal Arts from American River College, BS in Criminal Justice from Sacramento State University, and an MA in Counseling Psychology from the University of San Francisco. She lives in Napa with her husband and two young children.

Rowena Korobkin, M.D. was appointed to the MHB in 2012. Dr. Korobkin is a Board-Certified Physician Neurologist and Child Neurologist. She received her MD in 1971 from the University of California, San Francisco, trained in pediatrics at Children's Hospital in Oakland, and neurology at UCSF. She is the author of numerous journal articles and books in her field. Dr. Korobkin's current main clinical interest relates to epilepsy and other neurologic issues in people with developmental disabilities, and she is a member of the Professional Advisory board of the Epilepsy Foundation of Northern California. She is the Consulting Neurologist for Sonoma Development Center, the Pediatric Neurologist for the County of San Joaquin at the San Joaquin General Hospital, and the Consultant Neurologist to North Bay Regional Center and Redwood Coast Regional Center. Because of a close family member with serious mental health issues, Dr. Korobkin has been inspired to help influence the mental health delivery systems for Napa County.



Kristyn Miles was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2018. She served as Chair of the Mental Health Board from 2019-2021 and previously served on the Community Outreach Workgroup. Her background as a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) has afforded her insight into both adult and pediatric populations with disabilities and special needs. Having worked as an SLP in various public and private institutions, she is passionate about increasing access and decreasing stigmatization of mental health services for all Napa County residents. Ms. Miles earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Saint Mary's College of California and a Master of Science degree in Speech-Language Pathology from California State University, East Bay. She currently resides in American Canyon with her husband and three children.

E. Beth Nelsen is a local documentary filmmaker, change maker, and conscious shaker. Ms. Nelsen was appointed to the Board in 2017. A Napa Valley College graduate, Ms. Nelsen earned her BA in Philosophy from UCLA and her M.A. in Film & Television at the University of Melbourne; she is a 2017 graduate of Leadership Napa Valley. Ms. Nelsen is an international guest speaker whose films have screened all over the globe. Her passions include advocacy for mental health, Indigenous Rights, LGBTQ equality, adoption, and identity, all of which have been fodder for her storytelling. She seeks collaboration on projects with potential for heavy social impact, not confined to only the screen. Ms. Nelsen resides in Napa with her partner Oriana, their daughter and new baby.



Patricia Sullivan was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2021 to represent those who live with mental health conditions. Her personal life experiences have given her a sense of compassion and empathy for others facing mental health challenges. Ms. Sullivan is a strong proponent of the benefits of peer supports for mental health consumers. Since 2016, she has worked as an Independent Living Advocate at the Napa Office Disability Services & Legal Center, where she assists seniors and people with disabilities. Since 2013, she has been a volunteer with Collabria Care and Hospice. Ms. Sullivan holds a bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management from Nova Southeastern University and has completed both Culinary Arts and Accelerated Wine and Beverage Programs at The Culinary Institute of America.

Orion Taraban earned his master's degree and doctorate in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology. He is a licensed psychologist, serves on the faculty of psychology departments throughout the Bay Area, and has widely published in several APA journals. In his private practice, Dr. Taraban works with adults and adolescent boys, specializing in men's mental health. He is also the executive director of StellarGRE, the world's only empirically-validated GRE test prep company. Dr. Taraban is the creator of PsychHacks, a successful short-form podcast inspired by his clinical practice, available on all major distribution platforms. He was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2022.





Heidi Van De Ryt has lived experience from parenting her son who was diagnosed at age 16 with schizoaffective disorder plus alcohol and drug addiction. At the time, intensive in-patient mental health resources were non-existent locally, so she worked to educate herself about the mental health community and what resources were available nearby. Ms. Van de Ryt was appointed to that Mental health Board in 2021 with a strong desire to contribute her experience and voice as a parental advocate and champion for the mental health community.

Members Leaving the Board During the Past Year

Thank you for serving on the MHB!



Frank Dolan is a California Native raised in the Berkeley hills of the San Francisco Bay Area. He attended college at University of Portland and received his BBA in Business Administration. Frank has been a wealth management advisor with Merrill Lynch for the last 25 years. Mr. Dolan met his wife of 28 years in San Francisco where they were both young professionals. They moved to Napa in 1995 to raise their family. They have two daughters beginning their careers in the Bay Area, and both are Cal Poly graduates. Mr. Dolan's interest in the Napa County Mental Health board was sparked when a family member utilized the County's mental health services. He was appointed to the Mental Health Board in 2019.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Cassandra Eslami, Behavioral Health Director, to Assistant Deputy Directors Valerie Cahill, Meshanette Johnson-Sims, Mike Mills, to LuAnn Pufford, Senior Office Assistant, and to the entire Mental Health Division Staff and supporting agencies.

Thanks also to guest speakers and community members for information and support this year:

Kerry Ahearn, CEO, Aldea
Theresa Comstock, Executive Director, California Association of Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions (CALBHB/C)
Celeste Guinta from Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)
Elizabeth Hernandez, Progress Foundation
Sarah Knox, Director of Prevention & Intervention, NVUSD
Kenneth Minkoff, MD
Kristin Nelson, Coordinator of Student Wellness & Support, NVUSD
Jeni Olsen, Director of Prevention, Mentis
Eric Simonsen, Buckelew Programs
Rob Weiss, Executive Director, MENTIS

Napa County Health & Human Services Mental Health Division Staff:

Felix Bedolla, MHSA Project Manager
Valerie Cahill, Assistant Deputy Director Mental Health
Liset Esqueda, MHSA Staff Services Analyst II
Dolores Flores-Chavez, Supervising Mental Health Counselor
Lynette Lawrence, Provider Services Coordinator
Jennifer Menges, Quality Coordinator
Meshanette Johnson-Sims, Assistant Mental Health Director
Mike Mills, Assistant Mental Health Director
Sandy Schmidt, Staff Services Analyst
Ariel Quijas, Secretary-Mental Health

Napa County Health & Human Services Staff:

Kimberly Danner, Deputy Chief Fiscal Officer
Jim Diel, Deputy Director, Health & Human Services Agency
Amanda Jones, Assistant Director, Alcohol & Drug Services, Napa County Health & Human Services Agency
Dina Jose, Director of Corrections, Napa County Department of Corrections
Jennifer Yasumoto, Agency Director, Health & Human Services Agency

Thank you to everyone in the community who works to provide the best mental health care system possible to the children and adults of Napa County!