



California Council of Community
Behavioral Health Agencies

CBHA POLICY PLATFORM

2023

Executive Summary

The California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA) is a statewide association of mental health and substance use disorder non-profit community agencies. We believe Californians deserve an adequately funded, comprehensive, community-based behavioral health system.

We value outcome-based, data-driven, and culturally responsive approaches to service provision.

Our Policy Platform provides a snapshot of public policy initiatives we support that address disparities within the healthcare system and create systemic change for communities across our state.

We support the integration of behavioral health, substance use disorder, physical health, housing, education, and vocational rehabilitation services for children, youth, adults, and older adults regardless of their insurance status.

Key Policy Areas:

CBHA supports policies that expand California’s behavioral health safety net. Below are some of the areas of greatest opportunity to strengthen that safety net through collaboration with CBOs across the state. Together we can help improve the health and wellbeing of all Californians.





Equity in Practice

CBHA believes achieving equity aligns with our mission to empower people through behavioral health services. In many cases, social inequities contribute to behavioral health challenges, and by creating more equitable health systems, we can begin to address those obstacles. Community-based organizations (CBOs) have long played a significant role in advancing health equity and wellness for individuals and families in the community. CBOs are directly connected with the populations they serve, providing opportunities for partnerships with health care organizations and the government to improve outreach and engagement in care. CBOs commonly address an array of overlapping clinical and social service needs and can also offer critical wellness interventions to high-risk groups.

CBHA recognizes the impact of health disparities in the communities our members serve. In particular, racially and ethnically diverse, along with LGBTQIA+ community members, continue to suffer from behavioral health conditions at disproportionate rates yet receive a lower standard of care. CBHA supports efforts to make our behavioral health system more equitable while ensuring our workforce is more inclusive and representative of the communities our members serve. CBHA is exploring ways to address these inequities through innovative projects spearheaded by its Race and Social Equity Task Force. In partnership with our sister organizations, Community Behavioral Healthcare Association (CBHA) of Illinois and Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP), we also established a BIPOC Affinity Group to help BIPOC behavioral health leaders build more inclusive health systems. CBHA also works to create an inclusive environment for our members and employees.

Nature of Our Advocacy

CBHA represents our members' interests in diverse and multi-faceted settings. When matters require new or amended legislation, CBHA works directly with elected officials and their offices to identify ways the state can implement innovative measures that grow our behavioral health safety net. Whatever the challenge, CBHA works with key stakeholders to ensure Californians get the behavioral health care they deserve, with CBOs leading the way.

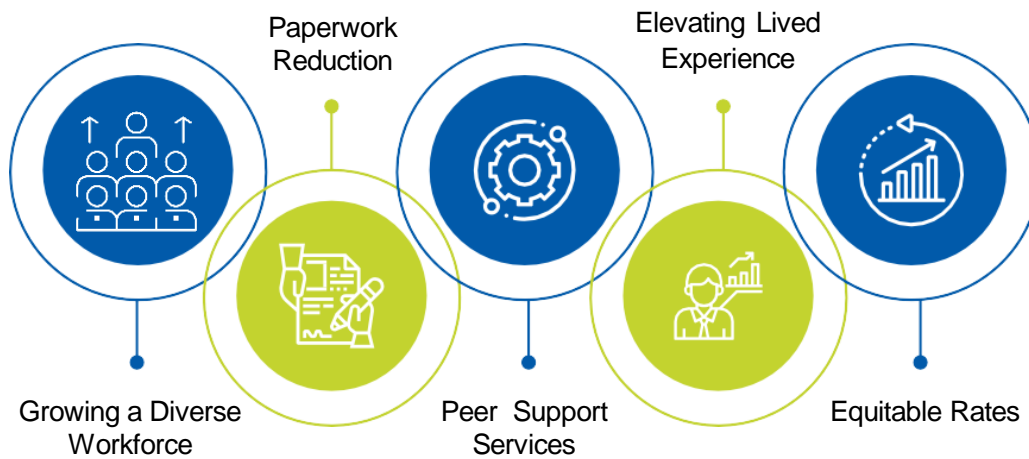


Who Are Our Members

CBHA members are community-based, non-profit behavioral health providers collectively serving over 1 million Californians. These providers deliver mental health and substance use disorder services to children, families, older adults, people re-entering the community after incarceration, and countless other community members. CBOs are the backbone of California's behavioral health system, and that's why CBHA brings them together to help strengthen the state's safety net.

Behavioral Health Workforce

Developing the behavioral health workforce, which includes adequately resourcing, recruiting, training, and retaining staff, is a top priority for CBHA. California is experiencing a workforce crisis in which CBHA members statewide consistently struggle to fill open positions at all levels. This is partly because payment rates are not enough to draw workers away from competitive private markets and other public entities. CBHA is committed to supporting initiatives that help adequately resource and expand our behavioral health workforce. CBHA is establishing a statewide apprenticeship program in partnership with the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards to grow the number of behavioral health professionals in California.



Equity & Social Drivers

Care does not need to be complicated; it needs to be inclusive. And in a state as diverse and complex as California, community members often have unique needs. Providing adequate behavioral health services requires that everyone has a seat at the table and that their needs are considered. CBHA members provide services in-community and often at the intersection of various social issues. By uplifting member voices and those of the people they serve, we can help address social inequities at the source. We can also partner with elected and appointed officials to build better legislation that encourages systems to improve care outcomes for all.



Behavioral Health System

As California leads the nation in building a robust behavioral health system, CBHA and its members remain committed to helping expand the infrastructure required to meet the growing need for services. One of the most critical components of that expansion is adequately resourcing and investing in the organizations and professionals providing services. Without meaningful payment reform, we will continue to see significant wait times, and workforce shortages. Additionally, as 988 and the crisis continuum of care receive greater investment from the state, CBOs will remain a vital partner in delivering care. Other new systems like the CARE Act and the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) will require ongoing technical assistance and legislative action, which CBHA will continue to provide.

988 Implementation



Crisis Continuum of Care



CYBHI



CARE Act
Implementation



Payment Reform



School Based
Behavioral Health

SUDS Expansion

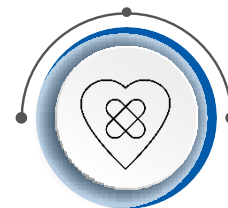
CBHA members include organizations that deliver services across the behavioral health field, including mental health services, substance use disorder services, and other health and wellbeing programs. We support the expansion of all of these programs, and we also recognize that there is a unique and growing substance use epidemic across the state, which often intersects with each of these sectors. Our systems are not adequately prepared or resourced to respond, and as a result thousands/millions of Californians do not have access to the services they need. CBHA supports expanding investment in SUDS services, and initiatives that remove barriers and increase access. We also support enhanced coordination between primary care, mental health, and SUDS systems.



Opioid Epidemic



Youth SUD System



Increasing Funding
& Access to SUDS

Person Based Care

Behavioral health care should be tailored to the needs of the person receiving care. CBHA and our member organizations serve diverse communities, all ages, and people of all identities and life experiences. We remain committed to ensuring people have access to behavioral health supports that meet them where they are in life. CBHA will stand with leaders working to expand person centered care for youth, older adults, children and families, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ people.

Youth & Young Adults (YYA)



Supporting LGBTQIA+



Supporting BIPOC



Older Adults



Children & Families

Behavioral Health Innovation

Since its founding, CBHA has been committed to helping California be a leader in behavioral health innovation. From spearheading Prop 63 with our founder Rusty Selix, to helping California roll out new programs like CCBHCs and 988, CBHA has advanced the behavioral health field over the years. As national attention for behavioral health issues increases, and the Governor's Office and State Legislature make unprecedented investments in expanding programs and services, we have an opportunity to drive change in the field. CBHA will continue to support new ideas, community driven practices, and innovative behavioral health programs that help the state and CBOs improve the wellbeing of all Californians.



Expanding Technology & Telehealth



Community Driven Practices



Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)



Cal AIM