



California Community Colleges

SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (May 2024)

This [webinar](#) focused on ways that the California Community Colleges (CCC) can advance equity in support by strengthening partnerships around behavioral health services. Guest presenters included Autumn Boylan, Ashley Covington, Gabby Lyttle, and Kenna Cook of the California Department of Health Care Services, and Lynnette Sullivan, Hannah Gamez, and Hanna Metz of Moreno Valley College.

What are Recent Changes in Students' Behavioral Health?

- Prior to the pandemic, one in four CCC students had a diagnosable mental illness, and 40% of these students did not seek help.
- As the pandemic started in 2020, 67% of CCC students reported a higher level of mental health distress, and mental health was the number one need they expressed during the fall 2021 listening tours.
- In a fall 2022 survey, 30% of CCC students reported having to drop or withdraw from courses to prioritize their mental health.
- The 2021 Budget Act provided the CCC system with \$30 million in annual funding to expand [mental health](#) services. Every college now offers some level of services, and the systemwide mental health counselor-to-student ratio has improved from 1:3,060 to 1:2,292).

What is the Children & Youth Behavioral Health Initiative?

- The [Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative](#) (CYBHI), established through the Budget Act of 2021, is a multiyear investment to reimagine behavioral health delivery systems for California's children and youth.
- The CYBHI includes provisions for reimbursement for school-based outpatient mental health or substance use disorder services delivered to *eligible students up to age 25 and covered by Medi-Cal, a commercial health plan, or a disability insurer*.
- Implementation of the CYBHI fee schedule program is under way, serving an initial cohort of TK-12 local education agencies. Applications will soon be available for select CCCs, expanding to all in 2025. Colleges will be required to undergo a vigorous onboarding process before they can submit claims for reimbursement.
- The program aims to increase access to school-based services for students, expanding the types of practitioners eligible for reimbursement and easing administrative burdens via state-established rates for included services and a centralized clearinghouse for claims.

- There will be a minimum rate established for each service, and third-party administrator Carelon Behavioral Health will accept claims from colleges and their designated providers/practitioners, collect payment from the relevant insurance providers, and send the payments back to the colleges/providers. Carelon will manage the provider network, and will help colleges to develop their provider networks where needed (including verification of appropriate credentialing).
- Reimbursable services will include psychoeducation, screening/assessment, therapy/treatment, and case management. Reimbursement can only be provided for eligible students, but the funding may be helpful to colleges in building up their services/networks for the benefit of other students as well.
- Capacity grants will be available to build the necessary capacity, infrastructure, and partnerships to build operational readiness to participate in the program, with grants to be administered by the Chancellor's Office.

How Can Partnerships Help Colleges Expand their Services?

- [Moreno Valley College](#) (MVC) provides mental health services that focus on prevention, early intervention, and treatment. To expand its services, MVC has developed partnerships with area providers.
- Riverside County partners with the college through Riverside University Health System, including placing a therapist at the college full time to expand the college's ability to provide [crisis mental health services](#) for students. The partnership also focuses on suicide prevention best practices and provides training and materials related to recognizing and supporting students in distress as well as self-care for faculty and staff.
- MVC also has partnerships with nonprofit agencies. A clinician from Operation Safehouse comes to campus weekly to offer treatment for depression and anxiety. The Wiley Center sends a provider to campus for parenting support. The Riverside Area Rape Crisis Center offers women's self defense classes on campus every semester and helps college staff with weekly women's empowerment groups.
- MVC has a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMHSA](#)) that has allowed the college to create suicide prevention newsletters, support videos, presentations, materials, and a peer-to-peer outreach program. The college partners with Inland United Way to offer 24-hour suicide prevention, with college support phone lines forwarded to the helpline after hours.
- MVC recommends that colleges looking to expand their mental health services develop a "people plan" that identifies various community stakeholders that offer behavioral health services, and lists actions the college can take to develop partnerships with those stakeholders to better support the mental health needs of its students.