ACBH NEWSLETTER
Community Connections

ISSUE NO 1 | MARCH 2021 | VOLUME 1

Alameda County ac♥bh
Behavioral Health Care Services
MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

Mission, Vision, & Values... *We envision a community where all individuals and their families can successfully realize their potential and pursue their dreams; and where stigma and discrimination against those with mental health and/or alcohol or drug issues are remnants of the past.*

Plan Administration Edition

ACBH Director's Message

ACBH Director's Message:

Welcome to the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services' (ACBH) first Departmental Newsletter! We are thrilled to begin this journey with you and highlight the accomplishments, initiatives, and updates impacting our department and you as our shared community member.

Special appreciation to our Plan Administration Team. Please enjoy and stay tuned for more updates. As always, on behalf of our Executive Leadership Team, we wish you all Health, Wellness, and Safety during these challenging times.

Karyn L. Tribble, PsyD, LCSW │ ACBH Director

"My Experience Volunteering at a COVID-19 Vaccine POD"

By Cheryl Narvaez, MPA, Program Specialist, Mental Health Services Act Division

I recently volunteered in the role of "Registration" at one of the Alameda County Public Health COVID-19 Vaccine Point of Dispensary (POD) at Lake Merritt BART and wanted to share my experience. After doing a little research on my own, processing some of my anxieties and concerns, and getting the OK from my supervisor, I decided to sign up. There are many roles in which ACBH staff could do, without specific medical or public health training. In order to be prepared for the day, I asked some fellow ACBH colleagues, who I knew had volunteered, what to expect. (Thank you to Lori Delay, May Fung, and Cathy Powell.)

This is what I gathered:
- ➢ *Arrive on time to get orientated. (Especially since this was my first-time volunteering.)*
- ➢ *Be prepared to work for the entire shift. (wear comfortable shoes)*
- ➢ *Lunch will be provided. (I brought my own snacks and water bottle)*
- ➢ *Wear your own mask(s) and your Alameda County/HCSA county ID. (I wore a surgical mask under my cloth mask ala Dr. Fauci and the new CDC guidelines).*
- ➢ *Review the JAS role descriptions.*
- ➢ *Bring your own County laptop if indicated in your role (They provided me one when I arrived.)*
- ➢ *Volunteers are offered a vaccine dose at the end of the shift.*

Upon arrival, most of vaccination stations were already set up. I signed in, found my fellow Registration volunteers, and was given a brief orientation for my role. The morning was extremely busy and I was a bit nervous figuring out the PrepMod computer system and what to write on the COVID Vaccination Record Cards. However, as the day went on I got more clarity and instructions All of the volunteers I encountered were friendly and helpful and when I needed more guidance, the POD manager was available for consultation.

That day the POD gave a 2nd dose to about 1,000 people (a mix of older adults, first responders, and health care workers) and many were so appreciative of this service. With this experience under my belt, I plan to volunteer again since I know the County will be holding these local clinics in the future. If you have any questions about volunteering yourself, please feel free to reach out to me at Cheryl.Narvaez@acgov.org.

Finance Updates

eCURA Accounts Payable System

The eCURA accounts payable system will soon be upgraded to a new version called Incedo. This system is used to process the Mental Health Plan Fee-for-Service (FFS) (aka Level III) network claims for individual, groups, organizational and hospital providers.

With this upgrade, workflow and multiple processes will be streamlined. Providers will have the capability to enter claims and follow-up on claim status directly in the Incedo system. More details will be shared as the implementation process gets underway.

Payment Transformation Initiative

In 2017, ACBH started the Payment Transformation Initiative Pilot to improve access and quality through a phased approach of Quality Incentive Payment Program and the Multi-Year Transition to a Fee-For-Service Payment Model.

Budget and Financial Strategic Plan

As ACBH continues to explore opportunities to identify savings and potential reductions to mitigate the revenue deficit and solutions that not only address budgetary shortfalls, but more importantly reposition ACBH to be a more viable system beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, ACBH developed a Budget and Financial Strategic Plan.

The Plan included forming three Budget Teams comprised of the Budget Executive Committee, Budget Work Group, and Budget Stakeholder Advisory Committee. In November 2020, the Budget Teams started their meetings focusing on the FY 21-22 budget reduction targets to align the ACBH revenue budget with the State allocations. The Budget Teams will continue to meet through the end of June 2021 until completion of the Alameda County's Final Adopted Budget.

Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) Implementation

Finance is implementing a CLM software that works in conjunction with Salesforce (web-based system). The CLM will develop an electronic process for generating and executing contracts; storing and centralizing contracts in one system; automating tracking and producing real-time status dashboards; and standardizing contract language requirements and deliverables for effective program monitoring.

The project implementation to build the CLM is a three-year process with new contract templates rolling out each year which started on September 2019. Currently, ACBH has completed the design and implementation of the interim master CBO contracts, services-as-needed contracts, and Mental Health Plan (Fee-for-Service) contracts to improve efficiency of the contracting administrative process for both County and Providers. ACBH is in the process of implementing other internal forms such as the budget modifications, board letters, and standard service agreements. The estimated completion of the project

ACBH has transitioned 5 Full-Service Partnership Providers composed of 11 programs and provided calculation rates on cost-based and fee-for-service methodologies. This will prepare changes to the Providers' business practices from a utilization-based payment towards a value-based reimbursement model that aligns with the national standards. In addition, ACBH is establishing a plan to align the Payment Transformation Initiative with the goals of California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) to support quality strategies and cost efficiencies for both our providers and our clients.

Billing and Revenue Cycle Management Replacement

ACBH is in the process of replacing the ACBH legacy INSYST Billing System and is proud to have selected a billing replacement vendor. We are currently in contract negotiations and look forward to a fully integrated platform that includes inoperability with other Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems.

We will have a robust billing and revenue cycle management functionality. The new billing system incorporates and integrates all the functionality necessary to ensure collaboration between staff, contracted providers, and partners to promote work across organizational boundaries to advance healthcare for individuals and communities.

We are expected to begin Pre-Implementation Project Planning (PIPP) with the vendor starting in April 2021 and have devoted the most knowledgeable staff to lead this implementation that will positively impact the county for years to come. The PIPP phase will include initial discovery, gap analysis, system training, and specification development so that we will be ready to kick off the implementation by July 2021.

Coinciding with the estimated pre-implementation start in late spring 2021, ACBH will be implementing a moratorium on changes to the existing systems included in the replacement project except for changes that are mandated by law or policy. More information regarding the specific details and guidelines of the system moratorium will be distributed when available.

The implementation is expected to last two years and we plan the Go-Live date to be July 2023. We look forward to including our community providers to drive the key system functionality and test the system for feedback when the appropriate time comes. We are excited to be the pioneers for this innovative billing replacement system.

For questions contact Jade Phan at Jade.Phan@acgov.org.

Coming Soon - New African American Wellness Center and Two Modular Building Additions to Alameda County Jail
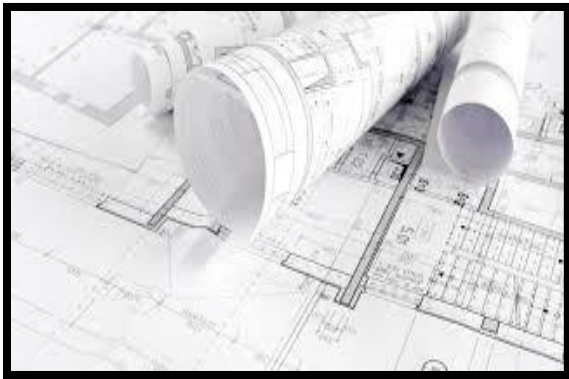

ACBH Facility Development unit oversees ACBH capital projects from the planning stage through occupancy.

Currently, ACBH is working on building an African American Wellness Center and Two Modular Buildings for Adult Forensic Behavioral Heath staff expansion at the County's Santa Rita Jail in Dublin.

In addition to the building projects mentioned above, Facility Development disseminates COVID-19 facility safety updates including the implementation of temperature scanners and hand sanitizing stations, and installation of appropriate signage for staff and visitors to maintain social distancing and safe practices.

COVID-19 Vaccination Information and Frequently Asked Questions May Now Be Found on The Intranet:
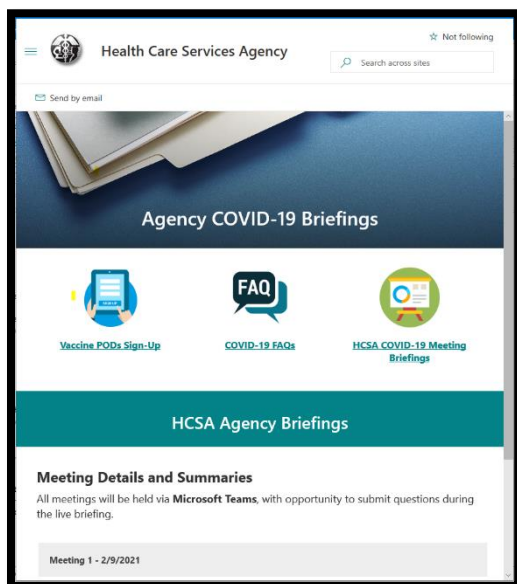
ACBH recently met with HCSA leadership and Public Health's webmaster Linda Wong to design, build, and promote a vaccine presence for our intranet. After gathering requirements and content, we created three new web pages that will allow ACBH to get the latest info on staff sign ups, HCSA COVID-19 Agency briefings and a FAQs page for general questions and answers. Together with Public Health, we also have urgent Vaccine Sign up banners on the front of every department landing page, which is being updated continuously to make sure that our staff is able to access the latest information on our COVID-19 Point of Dispensing Sites.

Since the start of the pandemic, ACBH has worked closely in collaboration with HCSA and Public Health to make sure that all of our websites have the critical information and documents that our staff needs.

To view our new vaccine pages, you can click on the icons at the top of the HCSA Intranet homepage or view these pages by selecting one of the links below:

Vaccine PODs Sign Up Page   **COVID-19 FAQs**   **Agency COVID-19 Briefings**

Contracts Renewals for FY 21-22 Coming this Spring!

The contract renewals with the Community-Based Organizations (CBO) is upon us! The contract packages are estimated to be released in the Spring, and as a reminder to complete all required information within the time requested. ACBH will continue to hold the Annual Spring Provider Meeting virtually. Additional information to follow. For questions, contact the Program Contract Manager (PCM) or Fiscal Contract Manager (FCM) or the Contracts Unit mailbox at contracts@acgov.org.

Medi-Cal Updates!!!

Medi-Cal Eligibility Help Desk

The Medi-Cal Eligibility Help Desk staff at **(888)-346-0605** continues to provide the CBOs with interpreting beneficiaries' Medi-Cal eligibility responses and assisting with the Medi-Cal application process. The Help Desk is now expanding their support to include:

- Assistance to both Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder CBO's with the intercounty transfer process for beneficiaries with out-of-county Medi-Cal, but reside in Alameda County; and

- An email address to contact the Medi-Cal Eligibility Help Desk staff, and send follow up forms to: Medi-Cal Help Desk email: **EligibilityHelpDesk@acgov.org** monitored Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm.

Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (MAA) Incentive Program

Starting in July 1, 2021, Providers will have an opportunity to participate in the MAA "Share the Savings" Incentive Program providing incentivized revenue generation and benefits to our community partners.

The MAA Plan allows reimbursement for administrative activities, including outreach and enrollment, referral to Medi-Cal services, and other specific administrative activities that improve and support Medi-Cal services to children. Programs participating with a MAA Plan

Quality Management Initiatives in Partnership

The ACBH Quality Management (QM) Program is comprised of Quality Assurance (QA), Quality Improvement (QI), and Utilization Management (UM). The ACBH QM mission is to ensure timely access to appropriate, cost-effective quality behavioral health care services. This system work is carried out in accordance with the ACBH priority framework (i.e. communication, alignment, and organizational structure) and True North Metrics.

Under the umbrella of Plan Administration, QM prioritizes the goal of strengthening intradepartmental and interdepartmental partnerships and collaboration. Below are current QM initiatives:

1. Keep abreast of applicable new/revised Federal and State Policies and Regulatory Requirement Notifications and Guidance, which is necessary in order to provide written guidance, technical assistance, and provider trainings.

2. Create tools to adequately track, monitor and render timely deliverable to State/ State-contracted entities in response to Audits and Reviews:

3. An Integrated (i.e. MHP; DMC-ODS) Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) was created including both ACBH and external stakeholders to provide feedback on and oversight for ACBH's quality improvement activities, including PIPs, quality improvement projects, and performance measurement and monitoring.

4. QM/QI and Office of Ethnic Services (OES) Partnership have collaborated to create effective system assessment and improvement of access, appropriateness and quality of behavioral health care services for Alameda County's cultural and linguistic-specific populations.

5. Focus on the Documentation Improvement Project where the County documentation standard is relaxed to meet minimum State requirements for services rendered in both the ACBH Mental Health Plan (MHP) and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS).

6. Clinical Quality Review Team (CQRT) Revision Project.

7. Ensure system ability to meet and collect/analyze/report data on network adequacy standards and network adequacy certification requirements for both the MHP and DMC-ODS.

8. Develop, implement, and monitor implementation of four federally/state-mandated performance improvement projects (PIPs) for mental health and substance use disorder.

9. California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) Initiative Involvement.

10. Final Rule System implementation of federal managed care regulations for both MHP and DMC-ODS.

For questions contact Karen Capece, LCSW, Quality Management Program Director, at: Karen.Capece2@acgov.org.

"SUD COVID-19 Hotel Tracking - Salesforce Application"

By Hazel Weiss, Senior Program Specialist, Substance Use Continuum of Care

In partnership with the Substance Use Disorders (SUD) team, the Information Systems (IS) Development group created a SUD COVID-19 Hotel Tracking Salesforce Application tool. This application was developed to support the provision of on-site substance use services at Alameda County's COVID-19 short term housing for homeless individuals and families.
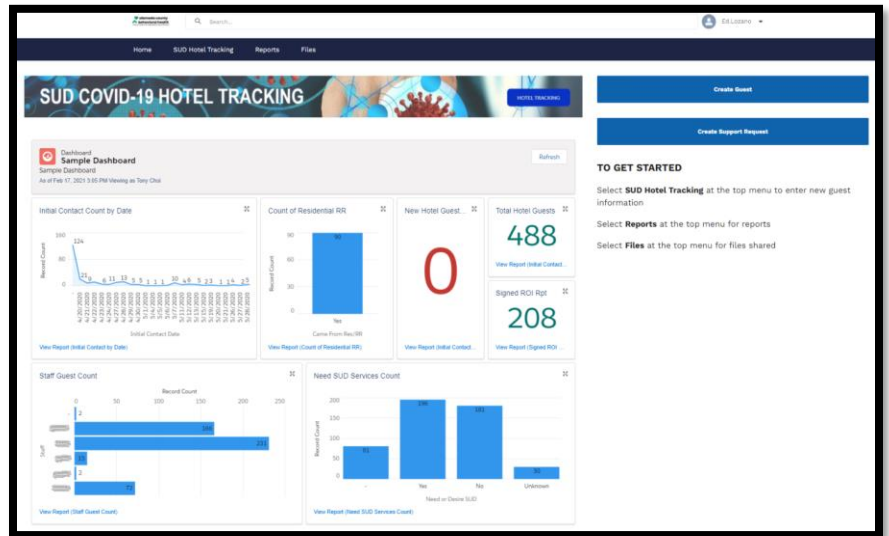
Background:

The Alameda County Substance Use System of Care (SUSOC), a program of Alameda County Behavioral Health Services (ACBHS), organized and coordinates on-site substance use services at Comfort and Safer Ground Hotels in Oakland and in Livermore. Substance Use Counselors from three community-based agencies (Options Recovery Services, La Familia Counseling Services, and Horizon Services - Project Eden) work on-site at the Hotels. Services include brief engagement, substance use treatment, connection to treatment, and coordination with a range of County-contracted Substance Use Treatment Programs. These include residential and outpatient treatment, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) at Opioid Treatment Programs and Recovery Residences. Central to this work is coordination with the County Substance Use Access and Referral Helpline (844-682-7215).

Salesforce Application:

The SUD COVID-19 Hotel Tracking application is used by the Substance Use Hotel Counselors to track the needs of guests who engage with Counselors as well as the number and types of services provided. A high priority is placed on engaging guests who were active in treatment programs before they entered the Hotel. In addition, the Salesforce application generates reports for Substance Use System of Care administration for program oversight and monitoring purposes. These reports show that a total of 488 hotel guests received substance use services from the Hotel SUD Counselors from April 2020 through January 2021. Medication Assisted Treatment services were initiated and/or coordinated for 67 Guests who were at high risk for Opioid use-related negative consequences. Counselors worked with 82 Guests who came directly from Residential Programs, encouraging and supporting a return to the program. They documented the return to Residential Programs for 47 of those Guests and introduced all the Guests they engaged with to the Substance Use Access and

Referral helpline. Lastly, Hazel Weiss, a Senior Program Specialist on the SUD team said that "the SUD COVID-19 Hotel Tracking application is user-friendly and allows for timely access that helps guide the focus of services and facilitates SUSOC support to the Counselors."

The success of this project was a result of an outstanding collaboration and partnership between the SUD and Information Systems Development teams. Thank you to Theresa Ly and Nathan Hobbs from the Substance Use Disorder team and to Tony Choi, Ed Lozano and Natalie Courson from Information Systems.

Streamlined Workload Feature Added to Clinicians Gateway (CG) for Annual Mental Health (MH) Assessments:

With the purpose to streamline the workload for CG users, in partnership with ACBH Quality Assurance and Systems of Care, Clinicians Gateway staff have programmed a new Assessment MH Annual Renewal template which will be pre-populated with designated data from prior MH Assessments. We are also currently in process of programming a pre-populating Assessment MH Psychiatric Annual Renewal template for our psychiatrists. These new templates will allow for historical data to be carried forward, saving much time and effort for clinicians. Of course, any data that has changed will need to be modified or added and certain designated information, such as the Mental Status Exam, must be newly collected at the time of the annual update. ACBH Information Systems Department is happy to respond to this request to serve our clinicians in reducing their workload.

Watch for the implementation notification! ACBH QA will announce the launching of these two new templates with more specific guidance in the near future.

Yellowfin Dashboards for CBO Partners
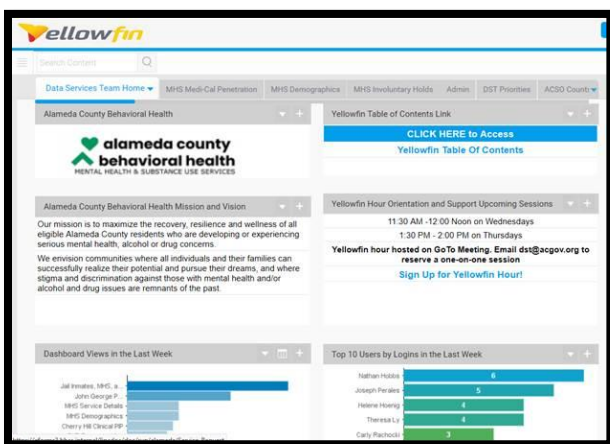
Data Services Team is collaborating with Information Systems Network team and our Data Governance committee to improve access to dashboards. Our pilot access project was successful. Two of our CBO partners have access to live dashboards that are filtered by their organization. Depending on each CBO staffs' role, we are also able to automate drill through access to client level data; thus, prioritizing protecting Health Information while also allowing Case Workers access to pertinent data needed to assist our clients.

The ACBH-IS Team is committed to expanding access to our CBO Stakeholders. Proposed expanded access includes aggregate data as approved by the ACBH Privacy and Security Team. ACBH Information Systems is prioritizing getting the right data to the right people.

Department of Health Care Services Triennial Short Doyle/Medi-Cal Inpatient Hospital Audit

(DHCS Triennial SD/MC Inpatient Hospital Audit) FY20/21

July 21-August 4, 2021

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) conducts triennial inpatient hospital audits for the nineteen (19) designated Short Doyle/Medi-Cal (SD/MC) Inpatient Hospitals in the state of California. John George Psychiatric Hospital (JGPH) is one of these SD/MC Inpatient Hospitals. The audit is comprised of the following two components: chart review and utilization review. The latter includes, but is not limited to the review of the Utilization Review Plan, Utilization Review Committee (URC) meeting minutes, and Medical Care Evaluation (MCE) studies.

The 2-week review period is to provide more flexibility for chart review completion and coordination of necessary meetings between DHCS, and county and hospital staff. This is a revision to the historic onsite 1-week review period. ACBH significantly improved its overall compliance percentage to 81% (FY17/18) from 32% (FY14/15). ACBH Utilization Management looks forward to the partnership with ACBH Executive Leadership and John George Psychiatric Hospital Leadership and Utilization Management towards achieving favorable results in the upcoming audit in July.

External Quality Review Organization Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System

(EQRO DMC-ODS) FY20/21

March 8-10, 2021

The United States Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requires an annual, independent external evaluation of State Medicaid Managed Care Organizations by an External Quality Review Organization (EQRO). ACBH's Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System will be participating in its annual review on March 8 – 10, 2021. Behavioral Health Concepts, Inc (BHC) is the contracted EQRO and will focus Access to Care; Timeliness of Care; Quality of Care; Beneficiary Progress/Outcomes; and Structure and Operations for ACBH's Substance Use Disorder Continuum of Care.

The three-day review will be virtually conducted with County and Community Based Organization staff, as well as a consumer focus group from a residential treatment program. ACBH Quality Improvement completed the documentation submission to BHC on February 8 and looks forward to the execution of the review in March.

Welcome

New Additions to the Quality Management Office
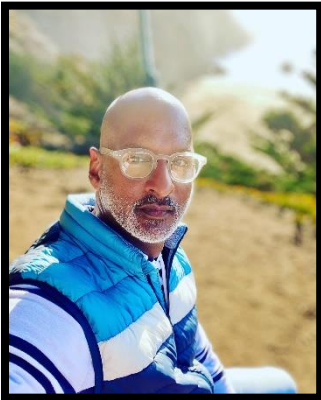
We are pleased to announce the appointment of Krishna Henry as Administrative Assistant to the Quality Management office. **Mr. Krishna N. Henry** joined the Quality Management team on January 25, 2021.

Krishna had 11 years of experience with ACBH working in the Housing Services Office with Dr. Robert B. Ratner. Prior to joining Alameda County, he had over 18 years of work experience in residential and collegiate housing at a number of colleges and universities. During his time at County, he has most enjoyed the positive impact that our work in ACBH has on the community and has worked to support everyone's access to health and important resources like housing.

Krishna is a third generation Californian and maintains a physically active life style of daily walks and weekend hikes. He is an avid reader and has enjoyed zipping through nearly a book a week.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of a Management Analyst to Quality Management. **Gabriel Orozco** transitioned from Information Systems/Data Services Team (IS/DST) to Quality Management (QM) on January 1, 2021.

Gabriel was born in Oakland, raised in Berkeley, and is now a longtime Oakland resident. He has nearly 20 years of experience in data and evaluation services, and has been a Management Analyst with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBH) since 2012. As a member of the Data Services Team for eight years, Gabriel helped ACBH meet the data needs of the mental health system. As a part of Quality Management, Gabriel will continue to support mental health quality improvement projects, but will also help ACBH meet its expanding substance use disorder information and reporting needs. Gabriel has a bachelor's degree from UCLA in International Development Studies, and a master's degree in Social Welfare Management and Planning from UC Berkeley.

New Additions to the Quality Management Office continued...

We are pleased to announce the appointment of a Management Analyst to Quality Management. **Jenny Wong** transitioned from Data Services Team (DST) to Quality Management (QM) on January 1, 2021.

As a Quality Management team member, Ms. Wong will focus previous data solution and visualization creation energies on program improvement and state mandated projects, increase her scope of experience in data analytics and applications, and serve as a liaison between QM and IS/DST.

Ms. Wong began working with Alameda County in 1998 and has since served in many – and, oftentimes, multiple concurrent – roles in various county agencies. She accredits her diverse experience to the opportunities inherent in working for fledgling departments and looks forward to utilizing that knowledge to affect a positive impact on any department she joins along her career path.

Job Openings at ACBH:

- Clinical Review Specialists
- Behavioral Clinician I & II

For more details visit: Current Job Opportunities - County of Alameda (jobapscloud.com)