

The CAO Weekly Report

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Monterey County Administrative Office

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In this edition:

- Behavioral Health Director to lead state agency after ten successful years in Monterey County



Behavioral Health Director Tapped for State Position; County Bids Farewell to Dr. Wayne Clark

This week, the Board of Supervisors took a moment to honor outgoing Behavioral Health Director Dr. Wayne Clark. After more than ten years with Monterey County, Clark is moving into a leadership role with the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), becoming the agency's Executive Director. His last day at the county will be March 3rd.

Those who worked with Clark over the last ten years agree that he has changed the way mental health services are both viewed and delivered in Monterey County.

“Dr. Clark is the personification of collaboration in Monterey County,” explains Health Department Director Ray Bullick. “During his time with the Department, he developed strategic and supportive relationships with many traditional and non-traditional partners. These relationships have helped to make a significant difference in the development of behavioral health services to residents of Monterey County.”

Dr. Clark says he is looking forward to this new challenge and is proud of his accomplishments in Monterey County.

1. Tell us about your new position at CalMHSA.

For those who don't know, CalMHSA is a joint powers authority made up of county behavioral health agencies.

There are two exciting opportunities with CalMHSA that I look forward to: first, the opportunity to really sustain and enhance one of the most highly regarded mental health promotion campaigns ever launched in the United States and one of only a handful of campaigns in the world. This prevention campaign is my prime reason for joining CalMHSA as Executive Director.

The goal of the campaign is to accomplish for mental illness what has been shown to work with other chronic health conditions: prevent the occurrence rather than wait to treat the illness. We are showing that by using a public health and population-based approach to prevention, you can change public opinion, change public policies and improve emotional well-being at work, in school and in the home.



Clark is pleased with the expansion of services to Monterey county residents, including the openings of two Health Clinics in 2013. Here he cuts the ribbon at the grand opening of the Integrated Health Care Services in Marina, where behavioral health services are co-located with a variety of other community services.



Health Department Director Ray Bullick (left), Byrl Smith (center) and Clark (right) at the Fiesta of Hope celebration of mental health services.

The campaign has been underway for five years and the long-term goals are to eliminate suicides, reduce stigma, improve student mental health and change how we deal with the mentally ill in our society. We are already making a difference and I want to be part of sustaining that effort.

The second challenge is the potential for assisting Counties to act jointly in projects such as implementing drug Medi-Cal treatment programs, developing alternatives to state hospitals and assisting with stipend programs for the behavioral health workforce. Small and medium-sized counties do not have the resources that

counties with populations in the millions have and need to band together. The JPA is an ideal mechanism to do that.

2. How did you begin a career in Behavioral Health?

I started working in Illinois at a state hospital in an alcoholism treatment ward in 1969, working the evening shift while attending graduate school during the day. I moved to California in 1973 and got a job with the San Francisco Health Department in what was the Bureau of Alcoholism at that time. I returned to graduate school, this time at UC Berkeley, studying epidemiology, sociology of medicine and education. I continued working at the San Francisco Health Department, becoming the Director of the Substance Abuse Division and the Assistant Director of the Mental Health Division.

3. You co-founded the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies. What gap were you trying to fill with the creation of this center?

During the AIDS epidemic, a group of researchers from UC San Francisco came to the Health Department and wanted develop a behavioral health center for the prevention of HIV. Since needle use was a means of spreading the disease, I was invited to be one of the five co-principal investigators on the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS). Today CAPS has over two hundred researchers who research and develop AIDS prevention materials around the world.

4. What brought you to Monterey County?

I was at a time in my career where I was looking for a position where I could provide leadership at the helm of a behavioral health agency and the Monterey position became available. My wife and I loved living and working in San Francisco, but we were ready for a kinder gentler environment and Monterey fit the bill.

5. Do you feel you have transformed the way this community views behavioral health and the clients the department serves?

While in San Francisco, I always worked with community groups advocating for services, with non-profits that provided those services and sought out partnerships to create new programs.



Clark and wife Kristi.

In Monterey I found that the partnerships existed, but as I had experienced in San Francisco, the government agency collaboration did not thrive. I brought in a consultant to talk with leadership and financial managers in Social Services, Education, Probation, and Behavioral Health; the main message was that we can blend, braid, and pool our

resources in ways that would benefit clients and produce better outcomes. A culture of collaboration sprang from that, with Behavioral Health finding ways to tap federal funds and other agencies matching that funding. While some of the funding has ebbed and flowed over time, the culture of collaboration has really made a difference.

6. Looking back over the last ten years, what stands out as highlights of your time in Monterey County?

There are many, but here are a few:

- The Master of Social Work program at CSUMB has already and will continue to produce licensed master level social workers for Monterey county and other communities, and many of the graduates will be bilingual.
- We have shown that truly ‘if you build it they will come,’ by opening new Behavioral Health clinics in Marina, King City, Soledad, and Gonzalez. We saw the “not in my backyard’ attitude turned into ‘yes in my backyard’ with communities welcoming and embracing new behavioral health services.
- Behavioral Health assisted in the funding and ongoing support of housing projects for homeless persons with mental health challenges in collaboration with Interim Inc.
- I am proud of my participation in forming the Community Alliance for Peace (CASP). Here again, is an example of a collaboration that is making a difference in our community. Key leaders from the Board of Supervisors and other public officials, Superior Court, Probation, Social Services, the District Attorney’s Office and Behavioral Health gave the critical, ongoing support for this 7:00 a.m. biweekly meeting of community leaders, family members and others dedicated to reducing violence in Monterey County.



Clark played a key role in the creation of CASP. Here he is with the founding core team of the Children’s Council Violence Prevention Committee. Pictured (l-r) are Clark, Judge Jonathon Price, former Probation Chief Manuel Real and Social Services Director Elliott Robinson. This committee eventually transformed into the CASP program of today.

