



October 6, 2025

Jan Cobaleda-Kegler, PsyD,
Director, Behavioral Health Division
Sonoma County Department of Health Services
2227 Capricorn Way, Suite 207
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

Re: Support of Bond BHCIP Round 2: Unmet Needs

Dear Dr. Cobaleda-Kegler,

On behalf of the Lived Experience Advisory & Planning (LEAP) Board, we are writing to express our support for Sonoma County's Bond Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (Bond BHCIP) Round 2: Unmet Needs application. The addition of a Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) and Peer Respite Center will help Sonoma County's Department of Health Services, Behavioral Health Division to address complex needs of clients in local supportive settings.

There's a great need for acute psychiatric care in Sonoma County. There is one county-owned 16 bed PHF. However, it is at capacity with clients frequently requiring months of extensive treatment. The County must provide mental health crisis services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries who need specialty mental health services. When PHF beds are at capacity, the county contracts private psychiatric hospitals, often at a high cost to the county. Reinvesting those resources into a second public PHF would enable the Sonoma County Behavioral Health Division to coordinate care more effectively as well as assure high-quality care to its clients.

Sonoma County's behavioral health continuum includes a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) for clients experiencing psychiatric crisis as well as mobile crisis response services for people experiencing a behavioral health crisis in the community. There are times that clients need a level of care that fits between those two options. Clients may not need the level of care of a CSU but returning home after a crisis may not be the best option. To fill that gap, Sonoma County Behavioral Health will add a Peer Respite Center to support clients in a therapeutic, nurturing, and healing environment and provide an alternative to psychiatric hospitalization.

In closing, the LEAP Board supports the Sonoma County Department of Health Services adding a Psychiatric Health Facility and Peer Respite Center with Bond BHCIP Round 2 funding. If we can provide further information, please don't hesitate to contact us at sonomacountyleap@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

The Sonoma County LEAP Board