

**Discussion Regarding Changing the Name of the
Yolo County Local Mental Health Board to the
Yolo County Behavioral Health Board**

April 30, 2018

ISSUE: Throughout the State of California, local mental health boards are renaming themselves Behavioral Health Boards. Does Yolo County Local Mental Health Board (LMHB) choose to rename our organization accordingly as well?

ARGUMENT FOR THE CHANGE:

The term “Mental Health Board” reflects a focus solely on those in our community who have psychological or psychiatric issues for which they seek treatment from the County. In addition to review of issues relative to those who receive mental health services, LMHB has an ongoing responsibility for reviewing issues affecting individuals with Substance Use Disorders and those who are currently conserved under the Office of the County Conservator.

The term “mental health” has a stigma attached to it. While we are deeply concerned about reducing stigma in the community, we must also recognize that the stigma remains. This stigma may prevent individuals from seeking treatment. This term may also create an environment which diminishes the support from family and friends if they realize that the individuals receive treatment.

The determining factor in assessment of wellness is determined by behaviors exhibited, not by the specific thoughts an individual has. In both the clinical and service arenas, we are obligated more to be concerned about their behaviors than what is happening in their thoughts. Laws are developed because of what people do, not what illnesses they have. We can reduce suffering by evaluating behaviors in all three major areas of our concern, mental health, substance use disorders, and conservation.

In growing numbers, county mental health boards are changing their identities to behavioral health boards. Because boards throughout California have multiple areas of concern, they are choosing to rename themselves accordingly.

The state association which guides all mental health boards in California, now is named the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions. In recognition of the changes seen throughout California, the State Association has renamed itself to reflect these responsibilities.

ARGUMENT AGAINST THE CHANGE:

The phrase “mental health board” may be clearer for some people, and consistent with what they’ve known all along.

RECOMMENDATION:

We update our identity to become the Yolo County Local Behavioral Health Board, updating our Bylaws accordingly, and notifying the Board of Supervisors and the Health and Human Services Agency of this change.