



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

Behavioral Health Division

Mental Health Advisory Board

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Salud Mental y  
Tratamiento del Uso  
de Sustancias

#5  
5/20/25

May 15, 2025

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors

701 Ocean Street, Room 500

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Sharing information between the Care Alert program and the Mobile Crisis Response Team

To: Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors

The Santa Cruz County Mental Health Advisory Board has had two presentations regarding two programs, which are designed to respond to people who are in a mental health crisis. The new Care Alert program, which is being developed by the Sheriff's Department, is generally dispatched after a 911 call. This program plans on building a database about their potential clients, which may help to deescalate a mental health crisis situation. Unfortunately, due to privacy concerns and logistical problems, there is no current method to allow sharing this data real time with the Behavioral Health Department's Mobile Crisis Response Team, which is generally called into action after a call to (800) 952-2335 or 988. We recommend that the Board of Supervisors require these two programs to find a way to share this valuable data real time, which may save lives, reduce suffering, and improves efficiency.

Please do not hesitate to contact Xaloc Cabanes, Chair of the Mental Health Advisory Board, should you have any questions.

Santa Cruz Mental Health Advisory Board

#5  
5/20/25

Board Of Supes- for MHCAN

May 20, 2025 a palindrome day: 5202025

I just want to thank you for committing to looking for funding for MHCAN, Gemma, Streets Team and the one other org at the last Board of Supervisors meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Agenda item #8.

I do also want to ask if you have found the funding yet and if not, are you still looking please?

What is the likelihood that you will be able to find the approximately \$590,000 needed to fund MHCAN this year?

That's just 0.59 million out of the proposed \$1.23 billion budget for the County- approximately 0.048 % of this year's budget. Less than half of 0.1% of the budget.

I am asking because during the 3 years that I served on the Mental Health Advisory Board, I was on the Budget committee for 2 of those years and I took a lot of classes, I did research and I sat in on lots of Statewide meetings on Mental Health. All my research and study made it abundantly clear that the "Club House" model that MHCAN -and ONLY MHCAN goes by in north county- is the most effective model for good outcomes for many people who suffer with Mental Health issues-

MHCAN also provides really important services for many people in our unhoused community. Services that help them get well and back on their feet so they can get back to work. In the end, this saves a lot for the County and everyone is happier. I have heard from so many currently and formerly unhoused people about how they are proud to work for the Streets Teams and at other jobs. They have so much hope for their future when they can get a little help.

And we know that we simply don't have enough housing services. MHCAN helps people help themselves. It would be shooting ourselves in our own foot to eliminate one of the few programs that we have that is actually doing something that helps people.

Please find the less than half of 0.1 % of the budget to fund this invaluable program.

Thank you for listening.