

Behavioral Health Highlights

AUGUST 1, 2021



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August is Overdose Awareness Month

One person in America dies of a drug overdose every 11 minutes.

Read that again.

Addiction is a widespread and sometimes fatal problem in the U.S. and here in Lake County our community has been heavily impacted. Compared to other California counties, Lake is in the top 25% of overdose death rates.

Fortunately, Lake County Behavioral Health Services, in partnership with many other community agencies, is on the frontlines providing critical services that save lives. Recovery happens!



Organizations like [Hope Rising Lake County](#) and [Safe Rx](#) work collaboratively to combat addiction and prevent overdose deaths by offering FREE public and private Narcan/Naloxone trainings.

Lake County Behavioral Health Services Substance Use Disorder Services (SUDS) offer a variety of services to treat addiction and promote recovery, including individual and group counseling and life skills support. Individuals seeking help receive a full assessment to determine the most appropriate level of care.

If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction and/or mental health challenges, know there is help!

September is National Recovery Month

National Recovery Month, now in its 31st year, is a national observance held every September to educate Americans that substance use treatment and mental health services can enable those with mental and substance use disorders to live healthy and rewarding lives. Recovery is a process of change through which people improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential. There are four major dimensions that support recovery: **Health**, overcoming or managing one's disease or symptoms and making informed, healthy choices that support physical and emotional wellbeing; **Home**, having a stable and safe place to live; **Purpose**, conducting meaningful daily activities and having the independence, income and resources to participate in society; and **Community**, having relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love and hope.

For more on recovery month, visit: <https://www.recoverymonth.gov/>



Hope Rising Lake County/Safe Rx



“Hope Rising is an amazing group of community decision-makers that is making a positive difference in Lake County. It is truly an honor to work with these folks in an advisory capacity as I sit on both the Hope Rising Governing Board and its Executive Committee.

Without the work, passion and dedication of all involved, we wouldn't have Hope Center, SafeRx, Narcan trainings, Find Your Way opioid reduction program, and the Smart Start Bright Future initiative. I look forward to many more future projects driven and guided by Hope Rising that will continue to improve the overall health and well-being of Lake County!”

-Todd Metcalf

Director of Lake County Behavioral Health Services

Hope Rising is a coalition of 15 local agencies that are working together to improve Lake County.

Some of the agencies include LCBHS, Lake Co. Office of Education, Lake Co. Department of Social Services, Sutter Health and Adventist Health, Redwood Community Services, Lake Family Resource Center, Woodland Community College, North Coast Opportunities, and Tina Scott, member of the Board of Supervisors.

Hope Rising is focusing on the top health and wellness needs facing our

County: Substance misuse treatment and prevention, homelessness and housing stability, cancer screenings and prevention, and community engagement.

Hope Center, located at 3400 Emerson Street in Clearlake, offers housing and case management for individuals experiencing homelessness. Smart Start/Bright Future is a transformational initiative that will address the impacts of poverty and deliver lasting positive outcomes from cradle to career for our youth.

Safe Rx was born from Hope Rising in 2013 following data showing that Lake County had the highest rate of overdose in Cal-

ifornia and also the highest amount of prescribed opiates.

In August 2015, Safe Rx held their first opiate meeting and launched their initiative to rewrite the prescribing guidelines and work towards better patient care. This initiative led to a dramatic decrease in opiate prescriptions in Lake County.

Safe Rx provides naloxone/narcan kits which can halt an overdose and prevent death. Safe Rx has also partnered with a syringe exchange program to help reduce the spread of diseases such as hepatitis and HIV. In 3 months, Safe Rx distributed 1,060 narcan kits to the public.

Hope Rising and Safe Rx are leading a Campaign of Compassion to help change the negative stigma surrounding those with the disease of addiction, and helping to educate the public in order to encourage a general respect and concern for our neighbors experiencing these hardships. They are determined to provide education and support for our community's youth, and they are working hard to break the cycle of

intergenerational abuse and trauma:

“The kids we don't save, will be the adults we have to rescue.”

Part of the youth education effort is the Youth Opiate Response grant, where a committee of Transitional Age Youth get to take an active role and provide their input about what changes need to be made to stop the cycle of trauma and substance abuse in our community.

Kim Tangermann, who is the coordinator for Safe Rx believes in empowering youth, “not talking about them without them,” enabling our community's youth to have an active voice in changing the trajectory of their lives.

For more information about Hope Rising, Safe Rx and their other programs and resources, you can find them at:

www.hoperisinglc.org



A Story of Recovery & Success

In March 2020 the unthinkable happened in the life of Mirasta and her children: her partner, their father, passed away unexpectedly due to his alcoholism. Her grief was overwhelming and she was unable to picture her life without her children's father. She started to drink and soon felt that she could not go on living. Mirasta survived a suicide attempt in September of 2020. Thankfully, she was connected to LCBHS services. Due to the state of her mental health at the time her children were removed from her care by CWS. This event lit a fire in her heart and Mirasta devoted her life to getting them back. Mirasta said that her motto is "try everything once" and she did. She not only engaged in a Mental Health program, she also committed to SUDS, Drug Dependency Court, and NA meetings where she got a sponsor and started working the 12 Steps, following the plan developed with CWS to regain custody of her children. In April 2021, her children were placed back in her care and she has not stopped working on herself. Mirasta stated that in SUDS she learned the Theory of Positive Behavioral Response, which was extremely helpful since she knew people were always watching her to see how she would react to things considering her past mental health issues and alcohol use.

A Happy Family: Mirasta, her partner and her two children.

Mirasta is currently on Step 4 with her NA sponsor and is learning how to work through all the "baggage" she has been carrying around her entire life. As a former foster youth, she had to learn how to survive and now she is learning how to live. She has graduated from SUDS and also graduated Drug Dependency Court (DDC) on July 14th.

Mirasta feels like a changed person who can tackle life's obstacles because now she has the tools to do so. Her choices were to fight for her life or run away—she chose to fight to save her life and keep her family together. She said, **"It's worth it. It's hard and it's a long process, but when you find that the quality of life is more than the superficial numbness, it's worth it"**.





LCBHS

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[CLICK HERE TO VISIT WEBSITE](#)

Lake County Behavioral Health Services (LCBHS) provides Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services (SUDS) for both youth and adults.

LCBHS offers several SUDS programs including: Outpatient, Dependency Drug Court, DUI, and Co-Occurring disorders as well as a Mental Health program which provides recovery-oriented care including crisis resolution, assessment, counseling, medications, and access to hospital and residential services for adults experiencing serious mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbance.

“To improve the quality of life for the people of Lake County experiencing mental illness or substance abuse by offering recovery-oriented services”

A Message from April Giambra

“Hope is on the Horizon”

Substance use treatment is evolving, and Lake County Behavioral Health Services is at the forefront of the movement to bring more resources and opportunities to our community.

It is easy to forget why many of us chose this field as a way to be of service. Let this month’s success story be a reminder that we do make a difference and there are those that live better lives because of what we do. This year has presented many challenges and we have proven that light shines the brightest through the darkness.

Keep giving and never give up hope!



April Giambra is the
Program Manager for
LCBHS SUDS