

Regional Behavioral Health Board Answers

This form is designed to collect information for the annual report to the Governor and Legislature about behavioral health services in Idaho. If you have any pictures of community events in your region, please attach them. Thank you for your help in improving the quality of behavioral health services for Idahoans!

Person Completing Form: Melissa Mezo, Board Chair

Region: 3

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Please list your Behavioral Health Board's Sub-Committees along with each sub-committee's Chair name and contact information:

Finance Subcommittee: Chuck Christiansen, Chair

Children's Mental Health Subcommittee: Joy Husmann, Chair

Please list your region's top three goals:

1. Basic Needs
2. Crisis Assistance
3. Prevention, Enrichment and Resiliency for All

Please list the top 3 action items for these goals:

1. Basic Needs:
 - a. Housing
 - b. Access to Healthcare and Behavioral Health Services
 - c. Employment
2. Crisis Assistance
 - a. Education and training for law enforcement, EMT, first responders, schools, and communities
 - b. Expand access to training and supporting peer supports, family supports, and recovery coaching
 - c. Supporting and marketing Recovery Centers within the region
3. Prevention, Enrichment and Resiliency for All
 - a. Engage schools in prevention services
 - b. Engage community recovery centers, peer support, recovery coaching, family supports, and other community stakeholders
 - c. Provide Mental Health First Aid trainings to school staff and communities

Please provide short answers on your success or outcome. If not, explain why.

The housing crisis in the Treasure Valley has been exacerbated during the COVID pandemic. The shortage of homes in Southwest Idaho's more populous cities has impacted the affordability and cost of living in the rural counties with more families relocating outside city limits. As more people move to the state, the demand for housing increases, leaving sparse affordable accommodation for individuals who are in dire need of sustainable housing. The housing support system has also been impacted by the pandemic, with shelters and supportive housing programs closing due to staffing shortages or COVID outbreaks. There currently is no homeless shelter for males in Region 3. The Western Idaho Community Crisis Center has in turn seen an increase in clients reporting homelessness or housing insecurity as their chief concern and has had many individuals needing to be readmitted until stable housing resources can be identified. Having to transport men to shelters in Ada County can impact a client's ability to access supportive services in their own community, keep jobs, and not violate parole and probation requirements for Canyon County. Needless to say, the lack of housing supports for individuals in crisis in Region 3 only prolongs recovery and stabilization and increases their risk for readmitting for crisis services.

To address this growing need, the Region 3 BHB has identified members of the Board and community stakeholders who are actively involved in addressing the housing crisis. Moving forward, these members will provide updates at the monthly Board meetings. The Region 3 BHB recognizes that many organizations in the community are working diligently to remedy the housing shortage and will look to them for guidance of how the Board can be most supportive. Finally, the Board is actively looking for ways to engage the rural communities of Region 3 in the housing crisis discussion. WICAP in Payette County has partnered with The Fletcher Group to create housing for low-income families. A member of the Region 3 BHB attends those monthly meetings and will report back to the full Board.

Data presented to the Region 3 Board of Health and Behavioral Health Board by SWDH demonstrates a dramatic increase in domestic violence, self-harm, and abuse, especially in youth. The region saw an increase in abuse during 2020; however, instances of self-harm and suicide among teens are increasing at higher rates in 2021. The Region 3 BHB is expecting, and preparing for, the delayed effects of isolation, financial struggles, and loss of "normalcy" and loved ones that continues to during the COVID pandemic. The Region 3 BHB recognizes that providing and advocating for upstream training for youth, and individuals that work with youth, is imperative to combat youth in crisis and to create a more resilient community.

In November 2021, the Region 3 Behavioral Health Board applied for funding through Idaho's Response to the Opioid Crisis (IROC) provided by the State Opioid Response (SOR) Grant for \$50,000. The Board was awarded the full amount and partnered with the Western Idaho Community Crisis Center, Victory Medical Transport, and Southwest District Health to provide transportation to/from the Crisis Center for individuals with a SUD diagnosis experiencing a crisis. This initiative will benefit those who need crisis services but are unable to seek help due to lack of transportation.

What education and/or community events did you participate in?

1. Provided 6 scholarships to Ted Warstadt, IDHW, for Idaho Society of Individual Psychology: Practical Adlerian Approaches to Trauma Throughout the Lifespan conference
2. The Board receives ongoing updates from the vape sensor donation project to Vallivue High School including data and implementation
3. Donated bike equipment to the 2C DFC Caldwell Family Fun Day

Please list your region's top 3 greatest gaps and needs in behavioral health?

1. Stable Housing
2. Access to treatment providers
3. Children/Adolescents Behavioral Healthcare

Do you feel access to Mental Health services in your Region has improved, decreased, or is staying the same? Please explain why.

The results from the Region 3 BHB Strategic Plan survey show that respondents feel that access to Mental Health services in Region 3 has decreased. The COVID pandemic has overwhelmed local hospitals thus making it more difficult for individuals in crisis to access inpatient psychiatric services. More individuals have requested services and there are not enough providers to meet the need. There is an increase in utilization but a decrease in ease of access.

While access to services needs to be improved, COVID has spurred the adoption of more telehealth practices making it easier for those with internet services to access behavioral health services which has helped to normalize this point of care.

Do you feel access to Substance Use Disorder services (Prevention, Treatment, Recovery) in your Region has improved, decreased, or is staying the same? Please explain why.

The results of the Region 3 BHB Strategic Plan survey shows that respondents feel that access to Substance Use Disorder services in Region 3 has remained static. As noted, the pandemic has brought a surge in telehealth services. While it is helpful to some, there is concern that it is not improving health or providing the adequate skills needed for recovery. There is also a lack of connection from virtual support groups for individuals to stay on track toward their recovery as they are not able to meet in person.

Please provide a brief 20–50-word quote from a community member, peer, or BHB member about the importance of behavioral health services in your region.

As Region 3 is very rural and vast, access to behavioral health and all medical services becomes critical. With the increase in telehealth services, some barriers have come down, however, transportation and an increase in providers is needed in order to accommodate the increase in population we are seeing in Idaho. We don't currently have much of the infrastructure in place for the population increase we are experiencing. More schools should look at co-location of a provider to decrease the barrier of transportation while increasing access to services where the student/parent(s) already go. The Recovery Centers have the ability to help with long term stability of individuals and families by providing supports that may not otherwise be available in the community. However, transportation to/from the Recovery Centers is a barrier and we would like to support increased access to transportation.

Behavioral Health Gaps and Needs

Rate each category with 1 being the most critical in your area.	1-13
Stable Housing	1
Access to treatment providers	2
Children/Adolescents Mental Healthcare	3
Community Crisis Center	4
Suicide Prevention Resources	5
Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement officers	6
Caregiver supports (including education, training, emotional support, respite care, etc.)	7
Anti-Stigma education	8
Peer supports (including education, training, emotional support, etc.)	9
Substance use disorder treatment centers	10
Veteran’s Mental Healthcare	11
Mental Health Court	12
Other:	Noted below

If you chose other, please provide more information: From our survey, the below were noted as other critical categories: Transportation, food insecurity, childcare to include in collaboration with employer, telehealth and internet capabilities, and community connectedness.