



**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH and
RECOVERY SERVICES (BHRS)
Administration**

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Merced County Proclaims September as National Recovery Month

MERCED – National Recovery Month (Recovery Month) increases awareness and understanding of mental health and substance use disorders and encourages individuals in need of treatment and recovery services to seek help. Recovery Month celebrates individuals living their lives in recovery and recognizes the dedicated workers who provide the prevention, treatment, and recovery support services that make it possible.

This year's Recovery Month theme, "Join the Voices for Recovery: Celebrating Connections," embraces the adversity experienced in 2020. When we celebrate our connections to the diversity of people from all walks of life striving for recovery, we find support and courage to speak up for inclusion, respect, and opportunity.

Merced County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) wants to raise awareness of Mental and Substance Use Disorders Support Services in Merced County. Mental and substance use disorders and the societal benefits of recovery for community must be addressed immediately, according to Board of Supervisors who recognized September as National Recovery Month (Recovery Month). "Our County's recognition of Recovery Month emphasized that individuals in recovery and their support systems can be change agents in our communities," stated BHRS Director Genevieve Valentine, LMFT. "It is critical that people experiencing mental and substance use disorders receive the support they need. The reality is that behavioral health is essential to health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people recover."

In 2016, an estimated 44.7 million adults aged 18 or older (18.3 percent) had any mental illness in the past year according to the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an annual survey released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Recovery Month showcases the support by our community leaders that recognize the value of seeking treatment and overcoming mental and substance use disorders. "We all have the potential to make a difference and be visible, vocal, and valuable to help spread the message that recovery is possible," says Division Director Lidia Caza-Burdick, LCSW. Recovery Month is a national observance. The observance raises awareness of mental and substance use disorders, celebrates

individuals in long-term recovery, and acknowledges the work of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.

Merced County BHRS works to empower our diverse community with hope, recovery and wellness by providing comprehensive holistic care. BHRS serves the residents of Merced County with a variety of mental health and substance abuse programs available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can be accessed by appointment, walk-in, or by contacting emergency services. To enroll in services, you can call the ACCESS line at 209-381-6800 or toll free at 1-888-334-0163.

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