Executive Summary

The following interim evaluation reports on the progress of the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) as BHRS implements its 2015-2020 strategic plan for addressing gaps in the County’s substance use services delivery system. BHRS contracted Resource Development Associates (RDA) to provide a progress report on implementation of the strategic plan’s three priority areas:

- **Impact Norms and Perceptions**: Create a culture in Marin County where substance misuse and abuse across all ages is no longer the norm, and substance use disorders are viewed as a health condition rather than a behavioral problem.

- **Improve System Capacity and Infrastructure**: Ensure that individuals, organizations, and communities within the system of care have the capacity and infrastructure to implement evidence-based services and strategies to effectively prevent, reduce, and treat issues related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse and abuse.

- **Implement a Continuum of Effective Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Strategies and Services**: Implement a continuum of culturally responsive evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support services and strategies.

To report on progress since 2015, this report integrated findings from several data sources, including administrative reports, treatment surveys, interviews with BHRS staff, and quantitative treatment data. Using findings from these data sources, RDA developed a rating scale to help indicate interim progress in each strategy area. These ratings are a suggestion based on findings from available data and RDA’s understanding of program activities:

- BHRS and its contractors are progressing successfully.
- While BHRS and its contractors have begun implementing this strategy and may have made some progress, there are challenges or barriers that have caused delays or inhibited progress.
- BHRS and its contractors have not begun implementing this strategy or have been unsuccessful in their implementation.

**Interim Findings**

Since 2015, BHRS staff and partners have implemented many key programs and initiatives to provide comprehensive prevention intervention, treatment, and recovery services.

- **Drug MediCal/Organized Delivery System**: Marin County committed to implement evidence-based substance use treatment practices, coordinate with other systems of care, and to provide a continuum...
of care aligned with the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria for substance use disorder treatment services.

- **Narcan Distribution**: With support RxSafe Marin, Marin County implemented a countywide Narcan distribution plan. Police officers, DMC-ODS providers, County crisis outreach teams, Recovery Coaches, and Recovery Residences also received training and Narcan kits.

- **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)**: The Marin Treatment Center received a grant to create a delivery model to increase access to MAT. Linkages with federally qualified health centers and local emergency rooms have improved, and telehealth services have been adopted to increase access to MAT.

- **Road to Recovery**: This program is county-operated and serves adults with co-occurring substance use disorders and serious mental illness by providing highly individualized outpatient, intensive outpatient, and recovery services.

- **Recovery Coaches**: BHRS hired four individuals with lived experience to serve as Recovery Coaches for individuals with substance use disorders. Recovery Coaches use their personal and professional knowledge and experience to assist clients with moving through the care system.

- **Marin Prevention Network (MPN)**: MPN partners work to change community norms, policies, and laws that affect the availability, promotion, sale, and use of alcohol and other drugs to create a community environment that promotes healthy choices and reduces risk. They are implementing several campaigns and initiatives in line with this mission.

### A. Impact Norms and Perceptions

Strategies for the priority area of impacting norms and perceptions are all progressing successfully. Here are some key findings for the goals in this area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal #A1: By 2020, impact norms and perceptions through policy campaigns, media advocacy, and community engagement.</th>
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<tr>
<td>- BHRS has engaged community members in four policy campaigns to prevent alcohol, tobacco, or other drug problems.</td>
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<td>- By participating in the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) every two years, Marin County has a baseline of data for understanding youth perceptions of the ease of access to alcohol and marijuana in Marin County.</td>
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<td>- Parents who participated in the Parent Norms Survey in 2016 have a clearer understanding of middle school students’ binge drinking compared to high school students’ binge drinking.</td>
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<td>- In partnership with Marin Public Health, BHRS is supporting implementation of RxSafe Marin, a community coalition that works to reduce harm from prescription drug misuse and abuse.</td>
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<th>Goal #A2: By 2020, the Marin community moves from a culture of stigma to a culture of understanding that substance use disorders are a health condition.</th>
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<td>- BHRS has seen an increase in self-referred detox clients.</td>
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B: Improve System Capacity and Infrastructure

The majority of strategies under the priority of improving system capacity and infrastructure are progressing successfully. Data suggest that there have been some challenges in the implementation of policies and procedures, but BHRS has activities in place and planned to address these challenges. Below are some key findings for the goals in this area:

<table>
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<th>Goal #B1: By 2020, there will be an organized intervention, treatment, and recovery service delivery system that meets the needs of the Marin County population.</th>
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<tr>
<td>• BHRS has made substantial progress in expanding the numbers and types of providers in the County</td>
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<td>• BHRS implemented many ongoing efforts to integrate physical and mental health services in its continuum of care</td>
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<td>• While there have been extensive training efforts to support the implementation of ASAM assessments, such substantial changes can take time to fully integrate</td>
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<td>• Clients expressed overall satisfaction with their substance use treatment experiences</td>
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<th>Goal #B2: By 2020, providers and community partners will possess the core competencies to effectively prevent, intervene, and treat alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse and abuse.</th>
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<td>• BHRS is implementing trainings to help establish standards of practice and core competencies, as well as build the capacity of providers, across the continuum</td>
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C: Implement a Continuum of Effective Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Strategies and Services

Similarly, the majority of strategies for implementing a continuum of effective ATOD strategies and services a progressing successfully. Data suggest that, as with implementing policies and procedures to improve system capacity and infrastructure, there have been some challenges with ensuring compliance with polices, standards, and regulations as partners work to implement a continuum of effective ATOD services. There were also some challenges linking clients to services after discharge from detox. The following page presents key findings for goals in this priority area:
Goal #C1: By 2020, all services and strategies will be integrated, multi-pronged, and supported by evidence-based/community-defined best practices to effectively prevent, intervene, and treat alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse and abuse.

- BHRS has worked with providers to ensure they deliver culturally-appropriate, evidence-based, emerging, and community-defined best practices to address substance use among Marin County residents
- BHRS implemented trainings, staff roles, and processes to promote compliance with policies, standards, and regulations
- Marin County opted into the Drug/Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System in April 2017
- Trends suggest that clients have decreased in their frequency of substance use, hospital and ER visits, justice involvement, and housing instability, while their engagement in support groups has increased

Goal #C2: By 2020, all strategies and services regularly use evaluation to assess effectiveness and to inform continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts.

- Marin BHRS has demonstrated a strong commitment to continuous quality improvement (CQI) across its continuum

While there continue to be many implementation steps remaining to achieve the goals of the 2015-2020 plan, BHRS and its partners have made significant progress in implementing strategies for achieving their priorities. Many current activities will continue in subsequent years, while other activities will be added or modified to streamline, improve, and further progress existing accomplishments. BHRS will use findings from this evaluation, as well as other internal and external quality improvement efforts, to address areas for improvement in current activities and begin planning for the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.