



## Public Health Health Equity

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### CBO Collaborative Meeting Summary

June 02, 2026

#### Purpose

To enhance outreach and promotion efforts throughout the County by fostering collaboration with community-based partners and trusted messengers.

#### Public Health Officer Update

**Speaker: Dr. Wang, [EquityinAction@dph.sbcounty.gov](mailto:EquityinAction@dph.sbcounty.gov)**

#### Health Update – Kratom

- Kratom comes from the leaves of *Mitragyna Speciosa*, a tree native to Southeast Asia.
- It contains an alkaloid, 7-OH which presents itself in tiny amounts in the natural leaf and it is 13-46 times more potent than morphine.
- In low doses (1-5g) Kratom presents as a stimulant where one may experience energy, alertness, and sociability whereas in high doses (5-15g) it gives an opioid like sensation like sedation, pain relief, and euphoria.
- In the past year, over 2 million U.S. adults used Kratom. It is most used for pain relief, anxiety, depression, and to stop or reduce opioid use.
- Whole-leaf Kratom
  - Dried, ground leaves of the plant
  - Alkaloid content naturally 2-5%, lower potency
  - Used traditionally in Southeast Asia
- Concentrated, Semi-synthetic
  - Alkaloid content concentrated up to 60%
  - May contain lab-processed, isolated 7-OH which is a more potent opioid agonist than morphine
  - Consumers may not realize they're using a far more dangerous product
- Kratom is sold at smoke shops, gas stations, online vendors, and grocery stores labeled as "liquid shots".
- It comes in the form of powder, capsules, gummies, liquid shots, and drinks.
- Common side effects: Nausea, vomiting, constipation, appetite changes, weight loss, sweating, itching, insomnia.
- Serious but less common side effects: Liver toxicity, seizures, tachycardia, arrhythmias, respiratory depression, hallucinations.

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- About 79% of kratom-associated deaths involve polysubstance use. Dangerous combinations include:
  - Opioids: Addictive respiratory depression
  - Benzodiazepines: Addictive sedation & respiratory depression
  - Alcohol: Addictive nervous system depression
  - Antidepressants: Risk of serotonin syndrome
- Addiction & overdose potential:
  - Withdrawal mirrors opioid withdrawal: Muscle aches, irritability, anxiety, insomnia, runny nose, GI upset, sweated, tremors
  - Kratom is not detected on standard drug screens making it harder to identify in emergencies
  - Between 2015-2025, there has been a 1,200% rise in kratom-related poison reports
  - Between 2015-2025, 233 kratom-associated deaths were reported to poison centers
- Treating kratom addiction:
  - Buprenorphine-naloxone (Suboxone): Most common & promising, treats both withdrawal symptoms and cravings
  - Methadone: Shows preliminary efficacy
  - Clonidine: Eases withdrawal
  - Naloxone (Narcan)
  - Behavioral health support: Counseling and recovery services
- Currently, California does not have a statewide ban on kratom however, CDPH holds that kratom/7-OH products are unsafe for human consumption.

## San Bernardino Countywide Vision: Community Vital Signs

**Community Vital Signs, Nicolette Carlos, [Nicolette-Ashley.Carlos@dph.sbcounty.gov](mailto:Nicolette-Ashley.Carlos@dph.sbcounty.gov)**

**Vision Statement:** We envision a county where a commitment to optimizing health and wellness is embedded in all decisions by residents, organizations, and government.

- Full San Bernardino Countywide Vision Statement available at: [CAO Vision – San Bernardino CountyWide Vision](#)
- The long-term vision for San Bernardino County is to be a county where all have access to opportunity, prosperity, health and well-being.
- The vision calls for long-term collaboration across all sectors for creating a vibrant and economically healthy county.
- The community health priorities are:
  - **Behavioral Health:** Improve mental health and decrease substance misuse in San Bernardino County
  - **Injury and Violence Prevention:** Decrease incidences of violence in San Bernardino County
  - **Chronic Disease:** Decrease morbidity and mortality rates for chronic diseases in San Bernardino County
- Organizations are invited to participate in and support the Community Vital Signs initiative if they are interested in contributing to system-level change. Please contact Nicolette Carlos for more information.

## Rural Health

### Millionaire Mind Kids, Gregory Williams, [millionairemindkids@verizon.net](mailto:millionairemindkids@verizon.net)

- Millionaire Mind Kids offers various programs dedicated to positively impacting youth and students
  - STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) programs
  - Robotics
  - Aviation
  - Law & Justice
  - Financial Literacy
  - Entrepreneurship
- Parent University/Engagement
  - Program which enhances the connection between parents, students, and educational opportunities.
  - Workshops and hands-on activities which allows parents to gain skills to support their child's academic success, financial literacy, and career readiness.
- Reimagining Our Communities (ROC)
  - Youth and community-led initiative that empowers to address local challenges and systemic inequities through trauma-informed and healing-centered learning.
- Highlights/Accomplishments
  - High Desert Black Worker Center (HDBWC) inauguration in 2025. Focused on expanding worker education, rights awareness, and economic opportunities for Black workers across the High Desert.
  - Millionaire Mind Kids' HDBWC received the THRIVE SoCal grant to expand workforce-readiness services for residents across the High Desert region.
  - HDBWC collaborates with the National Black Worker Center to advance economic justice and improve employment outcomes for Black workers in the High Desert.

## Monthly Learning Topic

### Transitional Assistance Department Program Overview, James LoCurto, [James.Locurto@hss.sbcounty.gov](mailto:James.Locurto@hss.sbcounty.gov)

- The Transitional Assistance Department (TAD) administers programs that help individuals and families meet basic needs while promoting stability and self-sufficiency. Programs include financial assistance, nutrition support, and health coverage.
- 3 Primary programs:
  - CalWORKs: Cash-based program for residents that are pregnant or have a dependent child/children.
  - CalFresh: Food and nutrition program
  - Medi-Cal: Health-care program offering free or low-cost health coverage that support physical, dental, vision, and mental health needs.
- 2026 State Budget Changes:
  - **Medi-Cal adult expansion freeze:** New adult applicants ages 19+ without satisfactory immigration status (SIS) will only qualify for restricted scope Medi-Cal (Effective Jan 1, 2026).

- **Reinstatement of asset limits:** New non-modified adjusted gross income Medi-Cal applicants and certain renewals must meet asset limits to qualify for full-scope coverage (Effective Jan 1, 2026)
- **Dental benefit changes:** Adults without SIS who currently have full dental benefits will lose these benefits (Effective July 1, 2026)
- **Eligibility restrictions for certain qualified non-citizens:** Changes to the definition of qualified non-citizens will shift affected individuals to restricted-scope Medi-Cal.
- 2027-28 Federal Policy Changes:
  - **Six-Month Medi-Cal Renewals:** Certain adults will now renew (recertify) Medi-Cal every six months instead of annually (Effective Jan. 1, 2027).
  - **Work/Community Engagement Requirement:** Certain adults must complete work, volunteer, or educational activities to maintain Medi-Cal coverage (Effective Jan. 1, 2027).
  - **Retroactive Enrollment Changes:** Limits will be placed on retroactive Medi-Cal coverage for some adults, reducing coverage prior to the application date (Effective Jan. 1, 2027).
  - **Medi-Cal Premium Changes:** Adults without SIS, ages 19–59, will pay a \$30 monthly premium with a three-month grace period for re-enrollment if premiums are unpaid (Effective July 1, 2027).
  - **Cost Sharing Changes:** Some adults with higher income may pay copays for some non-essential services (Effective Oct. 1, 2028).
- Medi-Cal Resources
  - [www.KeepMedicalCoverage.org](http://www.KeepMedicalCoverage.org) California DHCS provides helpful information and resources to customers to keep themselves and their family covered with Medi-Cal.
  - [www.CoveredCA.com](http://www.CoveredCA.com) or call 1-800-300-1506: Covered California – California's health insurance exchange where individuals, families, and small businesses can find affordable, quality health insurance.
  - [www.BenefitsCal.com](http://www.BenefitsCal.com) Update info, complete renewals, and manage accounts.

## CBO Business

- We encourage you to fill out our survey, [CBO Collaborative Feedback](#) — All feedback will help us to better support our community. Our goal is to ensure that the collaborative remains relevant, uses time effectively, and continues to build and maintain partnerships across the county.
- Topic for July's CBO Collaborative Meeting:
  - Risk factors and warning signs of veterans by VA Desert Pacific Healthcare.

## Community Partner Roundtable

- **Pacific Clinics** provides free mental health services to individuals and families of all ages. The services include counseling, therapy, support groups, family support initiatives, and more programs. For more information, contact Alexzander Lee Martin ([alexzander.leemartin@pacificclinics.org](mailto:alexzander.leemartin@pacificclinics.org))
- **St. Bernardine Medical Center** is hosting a free diabetes workshop on June 24, 2026, from 12:00pm – 1:00pm via ZOOM. The workshop is open to all community members

and partners. Register here: [Understanding Diabetes: Tools for Prevention and Control Workshop](#) & contact Frenzelle Apaga if you have additional questions ([frenzelle.apaga@commonspirit.org](mailto:frenzelle.apaga@commonspirit.org))

- **Community Hospital of San Bernardino** offers free classes including heart health, diabetes, stress management, non-certified CPR, and more. Find classes and registration here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/health-education-center-34360861049?msocid=1190209d31be6792325e368130d46647&aff=ebdsshcopyurl>. For more information, contact Michelle Marquez ([michelle.marquez@commonspirit.org](mailto:michelle.marquez@commonspirit.org)).
- **San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health** shared an upcoming training for June 27, 2026, in the city of Hesperia. SafeTALK is a half-day training that prepares participants to identify individuals with thoughts of suicide and connect them to lifesaving resources. The workshop uses proven methods, including real world scenarios and hands-on learning, to empower attendees to make a difference. Whether you are a student, community leader, or concerned peer, you will leave with practical skills to support those in need. Register here: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/JnASgxPsRq>

**The next meeting will be on**

**Tuesday, July 7, 2026**

**9:00 AM – 10:30 AM**

**Via Microsoft Teams**