

The logo for Panhandle Behavioral Health Alliance (PBHA) features the letters 'PBHA' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'P' and 'B' are in a dark teal color, while the 'H' and 'A' are in a dark blue color.

Panhandle Behavioral  
Health Alliance

# The shape of impact

2020 Report to  
the Community

*Improving how our  
region promotes mental  
well-being in everyday life*

# Letter from the chair and executive director

Why do we let so many people with mental illnesses reach extreme crisis before they can get help? Unfortunately, there are numerous reasons why people get to a crisis situation before seeking treatment - chief among them:

- Cost
- Stigma
- Access to care
- Lack of knowledge about resources

Those issues work together to keep people from getting help before they end up in a critical situation - often, a trip to jail or the emergency room. When we talk about the symptoms of a broken system, what it boils down to is this: **Too many people in our area can't get the help they need until their mental health reaches crisis levels.**

This last year has seen the Panhandle Behavioral Health Alliance truly take shape around this issue. Our workgroups have made major headway in tackling the issues that keep Panhandle residents from getting adequate mental health care:

- The Integrated Care Workgroup has brought in experts to discuss addressing trauma in patients and **integrating mental health screening into primary care** appointments.
- The Community Awareness Workgroup has hosted events to **address the stigma of mental illness** among children and adults, improving our community's knowledge of mental and behavioral health concerns. The group also worked to connect people to resources for help.
- The Provider Shortage Workgroup has identified ways to develop our local workforce pipeline of behavioral health providers and **attract more mental health providers** to the region, including through scholarships, student loan forgiveness programs, internships and job shadowing.
- The Justice Workgroup has hosted a Sequential Intercept Mapping workshop, bringing the community together to **address the needs of people with behavioral health conditions in the criminal justice system.**



We have deep gratitude for the work of PBHA members and the resources provided by foundations and other funders to make our vision of a stronger, healthier Panhandle come to life.

The truth is that the challenges facing our state and region are simply too complex for a single organization to make progress alone. With this network of stakeholders and our financial partners, the behavioral health care system will continue to evolve and help many in our region, as we have seen in the last year.

We're committed to addressing these challenges in our community, and we're going to continue working to improve the well-being of all residents. **Join us as we fight for our friends, families and neighbors with mental and behavioral health issues.**

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Clark".

Dave Clark, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shree Veeramachaneni".

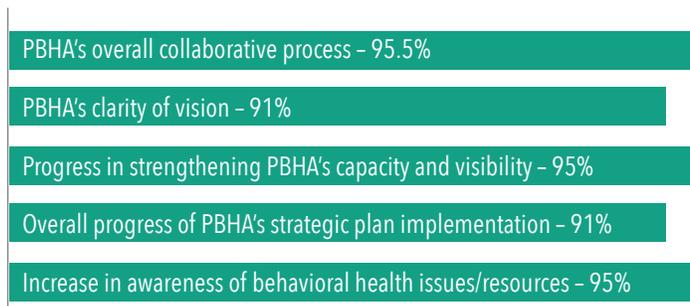
Shree Veeramachaneni, Executive Director

# PBHA At a Glance

## **PBHA EFFORTS ARE FOCUSED ON bringing together professionals and people with behavioral health experience to:**

- Educate the public about mental health
- Connect people to resources
- Equip primary healthcare providers to recognize early signs
- Expand the behavioral health provider workforce
- Improve care and reduce stigma for those involved in the justice system
- Train people in Mental Health First Aid

## **In March 2020, PBHA Stakeholders agreed they were satisfied with the following:**



## **Activities Supported by:**

- 2 full-time staff (1.5 full-time staff prior to 4/1/20)
- Over 1,400 in-kind hours from PBHA stakeholders (since 1/1/19)
- Operational in-kind support from United Way Amarillo/Canyon - \$32,703
- Program in-kind support from Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (integrated care and anxiety programs) - \$22,150

## **Funding Sources**

- Texas State Grant - \$142,787 (2018-19)
- Private/Local Grants - \$10,000 (2019)
- PBHA Sponsorships and Fees - \$5,334 (2019)

## **Financials**

<b>Oct. 2018 to Dec. 2019</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Revenue	\$158,121
Expense	\$142,787

## **Mental Health First Aid**

Mental Health First Aid classes teach people how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders, providing the skills needed to give initial help and support to those in need.

<b># Certified in the Region (since 1/1/19)</b>	246
<b># of Instructors</b>	44

# Increasing Awareness and Decreasing Stigma Through Events

PBHA brought the community together to discuss mental and behavioral health through Mental Health First Aid classes and five different events in 2019.



## Mental Health First Aid Classes

Mental Health First Aid classes are designed to equip learners with the skills they need to address behavioral health crisis situations. Participants receive eight hours of education to enable them to identify, understand and respond to mental health and substance use issues. **Since January 2019, 246 people in the Texas Panhandle have been certified in Mental Health First Aid.**

## Trauma Model Therapy Training

Dr. Colin A. Ross presented a Trauma Model Therapy training to 111 behavioral health providers and community case managers, sharing his insights from running a hospital-based trauma program in Dallas since 1991. Participants learned how trauma-model therapy is useful in situations from domestic violence to addiction. His presentation covered common issues in trauma, such as:

- Attachment to the perpetrator
- Addiction
- Shifting locus of control

## Peace of Mind Conference

Terri Bentley Hill delivered the keynote speech at 2019's Peace of Mind conference, an event that aimed to **decrease the stigma of mental illness and improve community awareness of behavioral health issues.** Hill shared her personal experiences with behavioral health, including losing her husband and a daughter to suicide. In addition to listening to Hill's speech, the event's 160 attendees visited the behavioral health resource fair and appreciated art from people in the community with lived experience with behavioral health issues. The conference wrapped up with a panel of experts in the community who took questions from audience members.

***89% of Peace of Mind Conference attendees said they'll implement something they learned from the conference at home or work***



## Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) Workshop

SIM Workshops help communities across the country address the behavioral health needs of people who come into contact with the criminal justice system. The SIM Workshop included two days of round-table discussions conducted by facilitators from Policy Research Associates, Inc. As a result of this workshop, the community mapped resources and gaps to improve cross-system collaborations and **reduce the involvement in the justice systems by people with mental and substance use disorders.**

*"I gained:*

- 1. Knowledge of local entities that can assist each other with mental illness issues.*
- 2. Networking with other entities.*
- 3. Structuring a pathway to organize our response to the mental health issues facing our community through the criminal justice system."*

*- SIM Workshop Participant*

## Integrated Care Lunch & Learn with Dr. Minkoff

Dr. Kenneth Minkoff, an associate professor at Harvard University, spoke to 89 Panhandle primary care physicians, nurses and students about how to integrate behavioral health screenings into appointments and the ways physicians can direct patients to resources for help. Dr. Minkoff's talk covered:

- Screening for mental health and substance use disorder issues, including tools available to make those screenings easier
- Creating integrated, strengths-based partnerships to manage complex patient issues
- Finding customized approaches to each patient's complex needs
- Helping patients work toward the goal of a meaningful, happy life

## PBHA Annual Meeting

PBHA stakeholders came together for our annual meeting to hear from Representative Four Price and Nelson Jarrin from the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute regarding the **behavioral health progress being made in the Texas State Legislature.** Representative Price shared an update on the Community Mental Health Grant Program and how it's benefiting our region, and Jarrin gave a preview for the behavioral health bills in the upcoming legislative session.

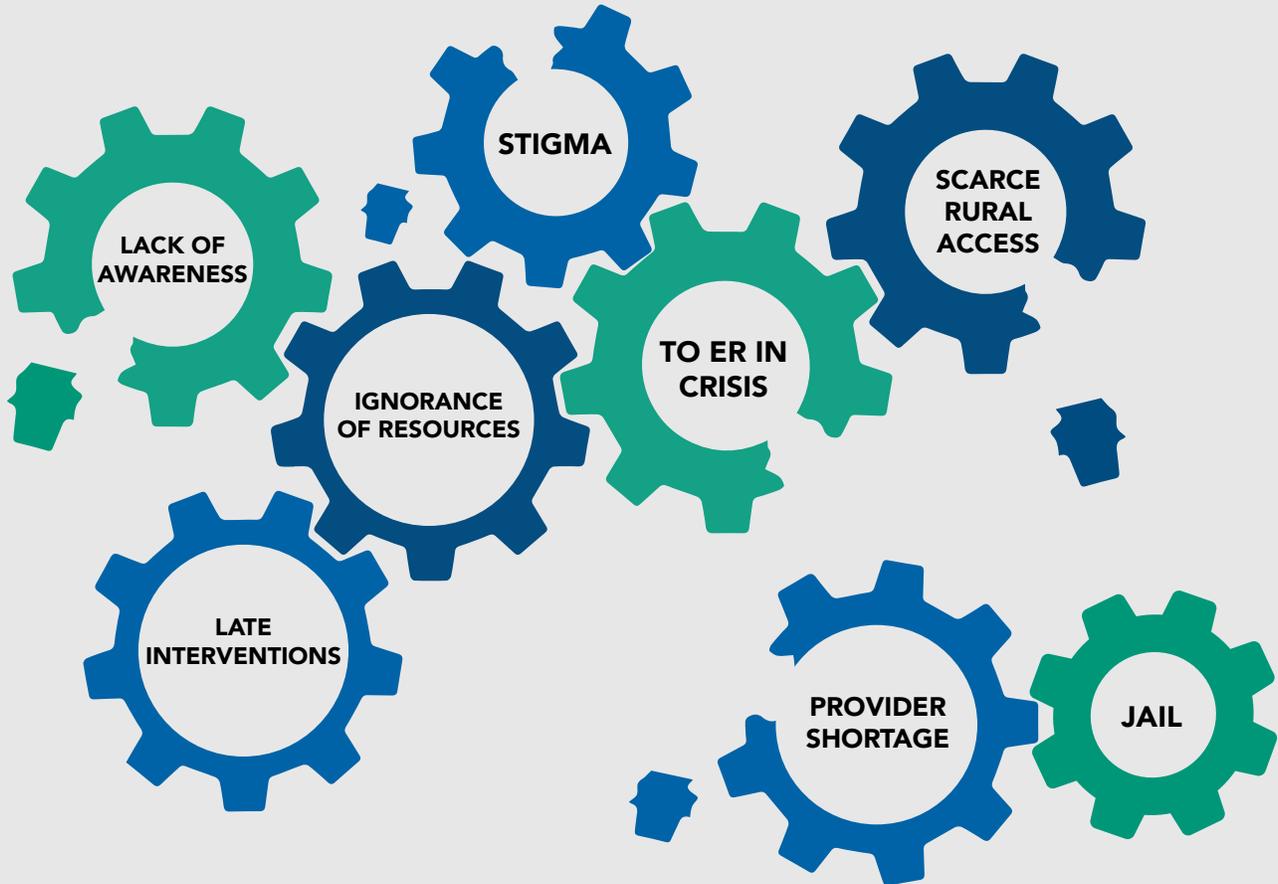


## Angst Documentary Viewing

The Angst documentary is designed to raise awareness of the issue of anxiety in children and teens, showing that anxiety is treatable and encouraging youth to share the anxiety they feel. The documentary takes an inspirational look at how children and teens can overcome their anxiety, as well as how parents and teachers can provide support. In partnership with Okay to Say, PBHA hosted Angst viewings at Caprock High School, West Texas A&M and Amarillo College, which enabled approximately 800 students and community members in our area to see this powerful film. After the documentary, students participated in a question-and-answer session designed to spark a dialogue around anxiety.

*Angst*

## SYMPTOMS OF A BROKEN SYSTEM



THE BEST MENTAL HEALTHCARE SHOULD BE JUST LIKE THE BEST PHYSICAL HEALTHCARE

# 8-10 YEARS

**average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention**

At this time, the main entry points to care for mental health issues in extreme crisis are law enforcement, jail or the emergency room. Compare that to physical ailments, which can be treated at a primary care doctor, urgent care or hospital. PBHA is working to make mental healthcare more accessible in the Texas Panhandle.

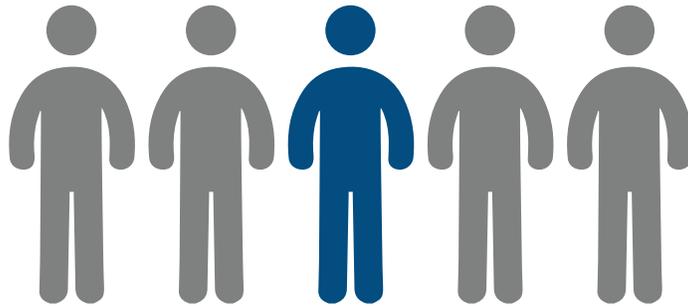
## THE PROBLEM IS BIG

83%

**of people in Amarillo** say they or a member of their household sought mental healthcare in the last two years.

25%

**of Texas youth** experience mental disorders severe enough to significantly impair their ability to function.



**1 in 5 adults in America** experience mental illness.



Nationally, **75% of women** and **63% of men in jail** have a mental health diagnosis.



**of Texas' 254 counties** are designated as Mental Health Professional shortage areas.

# HOW PBHA Helps

## **Expanded Behavioral Health Workforce**

By increasing the number of people entering the behavioral health workforce, our community can better serve all counties in the Texas Panhandle. We are developing a local ecosystem of partnerships, activities and incentives to grow our own behavioral health workforce to address our community's need.

## **Integrating Mental and Physical Healthcare**

Because early intervention is the best approach for mental health, PBHA works to create more entry points to care by integrating behavioral health into primary care practices.

## **Relationships and Connections**

On a bi-monthly basis, PBHA convenes and facilitates meetings with 100+ stakeholders to find and fill gaps through expanded services, learn best practices from one another and better understand how to match clients with resources.

## **Addressing Justice**

Large swaths of our jail and prison population have behavioral health concerns. PBHA works to change the ways these cases are managed from first interactions with police officers onward.

## **Shared Measurement**

By establishing a shared system of measuring success, we're able to improve community impact and well-being. We can focus on the metrics that matter when it comes to changing the system that's in place.

## **Information and Referrals**

Through our Facebook and website, we share resources and communicate vital behavioral health information to the community.

## **Community Events**

At our community events, we connect people to resources for those suffering with mental health issues while addressing the stigma. Breaking down two important barriers to care - stigma and lack of awareness of resources - ensures more people get treatment sooner, and earlier treatment is often more effective treatment.

# Framework for community well-being

## PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Host community events: Peace of Mind Conference and Angst documentary viewing  
Mental Health First Aid trainings

## PROVIDER SHORTAGES

Expand behavioral health provider recruitment and retention through job shadowing, internships and other incentives

## RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

Convene and facilitate 100+ stakeholders to find and fill gaps through expanded services  
Communicate through the website and social media  
Establish shared measurement to improve community impact and well-being

**Engagement:**  
**1,338**  
**unduplicated**  
**individuals**  
**(2019)**

## JUSTICE INVOLVED

Provide education, support and coordination to enhance diversion, treatment, management for people involved in justice system  
Continuity of care upon re-entry

## INTEGRATED CARE

Host learning community and provide trainings on integrating behavioral health with physical healthcare to improve access to care

# changing Lives Through integrated care

When Kelli Watson would walk into a room and see people smiling and laughing, she thought everyone was faking it.

Kelli had suffered from depression most of her life, but didn't know it.

"I thought I knew what depression was - we've all seen commercials that ask 'Are you sad? Maybe you have depression,'" Kelli said. "I wasn't sad. I was nothing."

All that changed when she visited a new primary care physician. At the end of an otherwise-normal appointment, she mentioned to the doctor that she was tired all the time. At that moment, her doctor pulled out a mental health screening questionnaire and asked her to fill it out. Kelli answered yes to 18 of the 20 questions, indicating she was in a major depressive episode.

Equipped with that diagnosis, Kelli's doctor was able to get her help.

"I feel much better now," Kelli said. "I work outside the home. I have energy."

Kelli has used her diagnosis to help others find a way out of depression, too.

"If I can help one single person get help, then that's what I want to do," she said. "We don't recognize these symptoms. It's not talked about. There's a stigma. I want to get the word out that 'who cares what people think?' Get some help. It's life changing."

Her experience has also led her to advocate for integrating mental and physical healthcare.

"My previous doctor assumed that my symptoms were from something else," Kelli said. "When I was diagnosed, I texted him and told him he missed it. I told him he should give every patient that questionnaire."

Kelli uses her creativity to help manage her depression, painting and creating assemblage art. Her pieces were featured at the PBHA Peace of Mind Conference. She and two other people with mental health issues were instrumental in helping PBHA organize a successful art exhibit for peers to share their mental health experiences through their artwork.

"I like working with broken things that people would throw away," Kelli said. "I was broken and we can always make something beautiful out of the broken things. There are things I can't express verbally."

Kelli's story is emblematic of why we created our Integrated Care workgroup. Everyone benefits from more entry points to mental healthcare.

Between her creative endeavors and treatment, Kelli's managing her depression. She no longer thinks that happy people are faking it, because she feels that joy herself.

"Now, it's not fake," Kelli said. "I can laugh. I can cry. Feelings are real."

# Funders and members

We're grateful to our funders for investing in systems change to improve mental healthcare throughout the Texas Panhandle:

Amarillo Area Foundation  
Community Mental Health Grant/Texas Health and Human Services  
Happy State Bank  
High Plains Christian Ministries  
Mary E. Bivins Foundation

Street Toyota  
Superior HealthPlan  
Underwood Law Firm  
United Supermarkets  
Xcel Foundation

Our members are executing PBHA's mission and bringing us closer to our goal of giving everyone in the Panhandle access to high-quality behavioral healthcare:

Maira Argomaniz  
Sherri Bohr  
Kay Brotherton  
Morgan Canales  
Adrian Castillo  
Dave Clark  
Brittany Cotgreave  
Mary Coyne  
Belinda Crelia-Palacios  
Joseph Dad  
Lidia Dailey  
Judy Day  
Meg DeJong-Shier  
Bob Dempsey  
Katherine Duke  
Terry Easterling  
Steven Garcia  
Randall Scott Giles  
Diann Gilmore  
Dr. Perry Gilmore  
Guillerma Gonzalez  
Lori Gunn  
Jennifer Hale  
Michael Hemphill  
Kyle Ingham  
Danna Jackson  
Dr. Alan Keister  
Tim Lacey

Mary Nell Lemert  
Stephanie Loya  
Jenni Mayes  
Julie McCracken  
Libby Moore  
Tracey Morman  
Crystal Morton  
Bruce Moseley  
Michael Nash  
Margie Netherton  
Katie Noffske  
Sara Northrup  
Patrick Osei-Hwere  
Raul Rodarte-Suto  
Bud Schertler  
Rachel Scott  
Mandi Seaton  
Steve Smart  
Miquela G. Smith  
Chelsea Stevens  
Laura Street  
Tommy Sweat  
Mellisa Talley  
Brad Thompson  
Jessica Tudyk  
Stefanie West  
Steven White  
Katharyn Wiegand

Carolyn Witherspoon  
Jerry Ross Womble

## ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

Amarillo Children's Home  
Another Chance House  
Central Plains Center  
Coalition of Health Services  
Community Supervision & Corrections, 47th Judicial District  
Downtown Women's Center  
Heal the City  
Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health  
Mary E. Bivins Foundation  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Texas Panhandle  
Potter County Sheriff's Office  
Randall County Sheriff's Department  
Regence Health Network  
Texas Panhandle Centers  
Texas Panhandle War Memorial Foundation  
Turn Center  
WTAMU Panhandle Area Health Education Center

# Mission

The PBHA collectively builds systems that improve the behavioral health life-cycle of care for all people of the Texas Panhandle.

## LIFE-CYCLE OF CARE

Prevention  
Early Intervention  
Treatment  
Recovery

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Mental Health  
Substance Use Disorder  
Other Addictions

# vision

PBHA envisions a Texas Panhandle which promotes behavioral health and wellness where all people have access to high-quality behavioral health care when and where they need it.

**PBHA**  
Panhandle Behavioral  
Health Alliance

[panhandlebehavioralhealthalliance.org](http://panhandlebehavioralhealthalliance.org)

## PBHA Behavioral Leadership Team

**Dave Clark**, PBHA Chair, Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals

**Mary Coyne**, PBHA Vice-Chair & Communications Co-Chair, AscentHealth Consulting/MCMC

**Laura Street**, PBHA Past Chair, Laura Street Consulting

**Judy Day**, PBHA Measurement/Development Co-Chair, Community Volunteer

**Terry Easterling**, Director, Community Supervisions & Corrections, 47th Judicial District

**Margie Netherton**, PBHA Communications Co-Chair, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

**Katie Noffske**, Executive Director, United Way of Amarillo/Canyon (PBHA Fiscal Sponsor)

**Libby Moore**, Chief Clinical Officer, Texas Panhandle Centers

**Carolyn Witherspoon**, Executive Director, Coalition of Health Services

## PBHA Workgroup Co-Chairs

**Jennifer Hale**, Community Awareness Co-Chair, Amarillo Independent School District

**Elia Moreno**, Community Awareness Co-Chair, Living Intentionally Ministries

**Patrick Osei-Hwere**, Measurement/Development Co-Chair, West Texas A&M University

**Joseph Dad**, Integrated Care Co-Chair, Regence Health Care

**Tim Bowles**, Integrated Care Co-Chair, Oceans Healthcare

**Maira Argomaniz**, Justice Co-Chair, Texas Panhandle Centers

**Brittany Cotgreave**, Justice Co-Chair, Community Supervision & Corrections, 47th Judicial District

**Sgt. Jason Riddlespurger**, Justice Co-Chair, Amarillo Police Department

**Meg DeJong-Shier**, Provider Shortage Co-Chair, WTAMU Social Work

**Rene Havel**, Provider Shortage Co-Chair, Nwth Pavilion