

February 24, 2021

BHAB Advisory Board
1120 South Dora Street
Ukiah, CA 95482

Broadband Alliance
204 S. Oak Street
Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Broadband Alliance Members:

The Mendocino County Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) would like to draw your attention to some issues that have become apparent regarding Broadband and Telehealth Services here in Mendocino County. We know that you are trying hard to get broadband services throughout Mendocino County. However, the increase in use of Telehealth to provide critical Behavioral Health Services makes it imperative, even more so now, that quality broadband access in remote areas of the county happens sooner rather than later.

An important and vulnerable population sector in Mendocino County includes those using Behavioral Health Services. Due to the isolation and stress of the COVID-19 Pandemic, mental health consumers, clients and patients, need access to services like never before. Unless hospitalized or in jail, patients are "seeing" their clinicians via zoom or on the phone. Wireless services and stable broadband internet are a must for them. Individuals needing Behavioral Health Services are so often overlooked and having additional roadblocks makes it even more difficult for them to access services. We need to help them overcome exterior roadblocks, as they usually make their own, and the shift to technology based services should not leave anyone behind.

As you continue advocating for broadband needs here in Mendocino County, we want you to be aware of the vulnerable individuals reliant on Telehealth Services. These individuals need to be high on the list of your considerations for broadband needs in Mendocino County.

We would be happy to provide any additional information that would assist in your advocacy efforts related to this issue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Rich', is written over the printed name.

Michelle Rich
Chair of the Behavioral Health Advisory Board