

Biosketch

WAYNE W. CLARK, Ph.D.

Wayne Clark Ph.D. is the Executive Director of the California Mental Health Service Authority (CalMHSA). Dr. Clark received his Ph.D. from the University of California Berkeley (UCB) in an interdisciplinary program including the UCB School of Public Health, the UCB Sociology of Education program, and the University of California San Francisco Sociology of Medicine program. In 1969 Dr. Clark began his career in Behavioral Health at a newly built regional psychiatric facility in Rockford, Illinois, designed with the purpose of returning State Hospital patients to their local communities. In 1973 he moved his family to the San Francisco Bay area where he continued his Behavioral Health work with the San Francisco Health Department, while finishing his academic work at UCB, leading to receiving his PhD. In 1980 he was appointed San Francisco Health Department, Director of the Substance Abuse Division, he held this position for 13 years and in 1993 he was appointed Assistant Director of the Mental Health Division, a position he held for 9 years. In 2002 he applied for and was hired as the Director of the Behavioral Health Division for the Monterey County Health Department. In 2015 he applied for and was hired as the Executive Director of CalMHSA, where he still serves.

During his long career in the Behavioral Health field he has been the Principal Investigator and co-researcher on more than 30 state and federal research and service grants. Areas of investigation have included a clinical trial on acupuncture use in Drug Treatment detoxification, prevention approaches to HIV in high risk populations such as injection drug users and the transgender community, approaches to the dissemination of drug treatment research findings, public policy analysis and advocacy that led to the formation of SAMHSA, prevention interventions for pregnant addicts, innovative models of supportive housing (being a finalist in the Innovations program at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government), substance abuse and primary care integration, prevention strategies for reducing gang violence, and most recently population based approaches to mental health promotion, stigma reduction, and suicide prevention.

Upon selection as the Executive Director of CalMHSA, Dr. Clark has dedicated his time to assisting the 55 member counties in creating regional and statewide programs to prevent and treat behavioral health disorders. He is most proud of the efforts that have been nationally and internationally recognized to promote mental health, reduce suicides, eliminate stigma, and improve Student Mental Health. Throughout his career, he has assisted in linking research to practice, demonstrating that behavioral health interventions, especially early on, can save lives, reduce costs, while minimizing social and legal consequences in communities.

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Executive Director

California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA)

3043 Gold Canal Drive, Suite 200

Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Tel: 916.800.4677; email: wayne.clark@calmhsa.org; web: www.calmhsa.org