

**OVERVIEW:** The Service and Bed Availability Tool is a user-friendly, filterable web-based directory that connects Los Angeles County residents to substance use services and residential beds.

**CHALLENGE:** In July 2017, the Department of Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau (DPH-SAPC) transformed its substance use disorder (SUD) treatment system into a specialty managed care plan under a federal Medicaid waiver program called Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS). DPH-SAPC used this system transformation to push for a solution that could address the perpetual challenge of community members not knowing how to access publicly funded SUD services. The complexity of providing a comprehensive listing of the over 84 contracted provider agencies and 350 facility locations required an innovative solution that ensured Los Angeles County's most diverse and often marginalized and underrepresented communities could locate, identify, and connect with the equally diverse network of SUD treatment providers while supporting methodologies for evaluating effectiveness.

**SOLUTION:** This challenge led to the design and development of a publicly-facing tool that aimed to make connecting with substance use services as easy as finding a restaurant on Yelp®. To meet this aim, DPH-SAPC conducted extensive research on provider directories throughout the nation, to design, develop, and launch its Service and Bed Availability Tool (SBAT), a best-in-class filterable web-based tool that offers dynamic mechanisms to help users locate and make appropriate referrals within one of the largest networks of substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers in the Country. The SBAT simplifies the process of identifying appropriate SUD providers by offering a set of features that allow users to maximize their search for the appropriate provider(s), this includes:

- Accessibility: Translation button allows users to translate SBAT content into various languages and font sizes.
- Search Features: SBAT users can search by provider agency name or by address proximity within a specific radius. Once selected, the interactive map populates applicable locations to select by clicking on the map icon or from the list.
- User friendly filters: SBAT users can narrow the search using filters such as the (1) type of service they want (e.g., residential, outpatient, etc.); (2) language spoken; and (3) clients served (e.g., youth, co-occurring mental health, etc.), including cultural considerations and specialized populations (e.g., LGBTQIA, perinatal, etc.).
- Bed Availability and Intake Appointments: SBAT users can also assess whether a selected provider site location has open intake appointments or has current beds available.

- Provider Agency Information: SBAT users can identify provider sites that are accepting new patients, the site locations business hours, website and contact information as well as the exact distance from the user's chosen location.

DPH-SAPC contracted providers are required to submit accurate information to populate in the SBAT and update the information on at least a daily basis, specifically information on intake appointment and bed availability. DPH-SAPC monitors daily residential updates through regular follow up and automated daily automated e-mail notifications that remind residential site locations to update their bed availability help to ensure compliance with regular updates.

**Innovation:** The innovative approach that DPH-SAPC chose in the development of the SBAT focuses on the User Interface (UI) and User Experience (UX) to uniquely engage users and make SUD service availability transparent and accessible to LA County residents. To further its commitment to innovation, in 2021, DPH-SAPC launched a backend SBAT dashboard to provide visibility on how users were interacting with the SBAT to help DPH-SAPC and its network providers make more data-informed decisions to improve service access. The SBAT dashboard provides information, at both a provider agency-level and individual facility-level, on indicators such as average daily bed and intake slot availability and timeliness to input data. Tracking these indicators helps to better assess efficacy of referral workflows as they occur through the SBAT, and monitor accuracy and transparency of the information offered to SBAT users. Based on feedback from community partners and other stakeholders, SBAT further innovated its user experience by adding the "Bed Available Now" function that allows referral partners and LA county residents, including those who are experiencing homelessness, to filter the provider directory to only search for sites that show beds currently availability, ensuring more accurate and real-time connections.

**RESULTS:** DPH-SAPC analytics show that between 2021 and 2024 (January-July), the SBAT saw an increase in the number of page views from 1,800 to 49,000, respectively. As an example, for the period covering January-July 2024: (a) the most common language filter selection by users was Spanish (67%), followed by Armenian, ASL, and Russian; (b) the most common service populations selections were: adults followed by co-occurring mental health and youth; and (c) of the over 186 residential site locations in the SBAT, 93% updated their bed availability daily.

**REPLICABILITY:** The SBAT is replicable and other counties can benefit from the user experience offered by a web-based dynamic system that assists community in locating services.

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- **Additional Materials** – Link to SBAT: <https://sapccis.ph.lacounty.gov/sbat/>