

County of Santa Clara

Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System

Mental Health Services



HHS05 060909


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DATE: June 9, 2009

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: 
Kim Roberts
SCVHHS - Chief Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Palo Alto Health Care System

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider recommendations relating to agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Palo Alto Health Care System relating to the provision of mental health services.

Possible action:

- a. Approve delegation of authority to the SCVHHS Chief Executive Officer, or designee, to execute agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Palo Alto Health Care System relating to the provision of mental health services for period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, following approval by County Counsel as to form and legality,

and approval by the Office of the County Executive. Delegation of authority shall expire on June 30, 2014.

- b. Approve delegation of authority to the SCVHHS Chief Executive Officer, or designee, to execute any subsequent amendments to said agreement, to include but not be limited to, extending the term for additional 12-month periods, following approval by County Counsel as to form and legality, and approval by the Office of the County Executive. Delegation of authority shall expire on June 30, 2014.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of the recommended action. The Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Palo Alto Health Care System fully reimburses the County for all costs related to the provision of mental health services to its patients.

CONTRACT HISTORY

In 2003, the VA contacted the County regarding a patient in need of placement at the State Hospital. The VA is unable to obtain State Hospital beds directly because the State allocates all State Hospital beds to counties. As a result, the VA approached the MHD to increase the County's State Hospital bed allocation by one to accommodate this patient.

On October 7, 2003, the Board of Supervisors approved delegation of authority for the Mental Health Department (MHD) to execute an agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Palo Alto Health Care System. That five-year delegation of authority expires on June 30, 2009. Reimbursable services include, but are not limited to, State hospital daily services, any mental health services provided by the Mental Health Department, an administrative fee to cover the Department's staff time, and ancillary costs.

In FY 2009, MHD will receive \$195,668.41 in reimbursement from the VA for costs associated with VA patients. Since the State customarily doesn't report the new State Hospital bed rates until after the fiscal year starts, the MHD will need to amend the VA contract's rates later in FY 2010 in order to recognize the new rates. Maintaining a contract with the VA ensures that the VA will continue to pay for all costs associated with its patients.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The VA works to provide comprehensive, accessible, high quality, cost-effective, and patient-oriented mental health services to its acutely and persistently mentally ill patients in a safe and supportive environment. The VA works cooperatively with individuals, organizations and other health care providers to deliver the full range of services needed by its patients.

From time to time, VA has contacted MHD regarding specific mental health services to veterans and their dependents. At the time of contact, the patient will be assessed by VA and if it is determined that the patient needs specific mental health services (the need is usually immediate), the MHD will assist the VA in finding the needed services for its patients. When a VA patient is involved, the MHD requires the ability to contract with VA immediately in order to begin providing the necessary services and for the County to receive payment for the services delivered.

MHD is requesting a five-year delegation of authority in order to ensure timely processing of contracts with the VA to maintain continuity of care for its patients and ensure that the County receives continued payment for these services.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Failure to approve this action may result in the inability of the MHD to provide requested services for VA patients.