



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Public Health
Department No.: 041
For Agenda Of: December 3, 2024
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mouhanad Hammami, Director
Director(s) Public Health Department
Contact Info: Paola Hurtado, Assistant Deputy Director (805) -698-2418
Primary Care and Family Health
SUBJECT: FY 2024 Behavioral Health Service Expansion

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Human Resources; CEO Budget

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Public Health Department Director to accept and receive funding for the County's Federally Qualified Health Centers through the Health Resources and Services Administration Grant Award 1 H8NCS53985-01-00 under the FY 2024 Behavioral Health Services Expansion grant for the period of September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025 in the amount of \$600,000 (Attachment A);
- b) Approve and authorize Budget Revision BJE #0010154 in the amount of \$400,000 to establish appropriations for unanticipated revenue from the Federal Government for Health Resources and Administration supplemental funding for personnel expenses to increase access to behavioral health services (\$170,900), contractual services (\$128,000), and supplies (\$101,100) for FY 2024-25 and in the County's financial system (Attachment B);
- c) Adopt changes to the salary resolution to allocate one (1) 1.0 FTE Behavioral Health Specialist and one (1) 1.0 FTE Administrative Office Professional I/II to the Public Health Department, effective December 9, 2024 (Attachment C); and
- d) Determine that the recommended actions do not constitute a "Project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines, because the actions consist of the creation of a government funding mechanism or

other government fiscal activity, which does not involve commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

This item is on the Agenda to authorize the Public Health Department (PHD) to accept grant funding in the amount of \$600,000 from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) under the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Behavioral Health Service Expansion (BHSE) to support health centers to increase access to behavioral health services through starting or expanding mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services.

Background:

In 2022, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released a Roadmap for Behavioral Health Integration. This roadmap aims to expand access to mental health and SUD treatment and recovery services, including treatment with medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). It focuses on ensuring that primary care providers have the necessary resources and tools to effectively address patients' behavioral health needs. However, despite these efforts, a concerning gap persists in meeting the demand for mental health and SUD services. In 2022, health centers were only able to meet 27% of the estimated need for mental health services among their patients and just 6% of the estimated need for SUD services.

In April 2022, HRSA announced the BHSE grant opportunity to support health centers in increasing access to behavioral health services by starting or expanding mental health and SUD services. The estimated total funding for this grant is \$240 million (\$200 million in ongoing service expansion funding and \$40 million for a one-time, initial-year funding), and up to \$ 600,000 per awardee. The BHSE funding will further the HHS strategic objective of integrating behavioral health into primary care and aid health centers in their response to the nation's ongoing mental health and substance use crises.

HRSA has awarded PHD \$600,000 to increase its staffing capacity for delivering behavioral health services to children and adult individuals experiencing mild to moderate mental health conditions. This will be accomplished by hiring one (1.0) Full-time Equivalent Behavioral Health Specialist (BHS) (Health Center Based), one (1.0) Full-time Equivalent Administrative Office Professional I/II (AOP) (Health Center Based), and a (0.5) Full-time Equivalent Contracted Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner.

The 1.0 FTE bilingual BHS will provide assessment, prevention, intervention, and psychotherapeutic treatment, including symptom management, life-skills education, and relapse prevention through one-on-one counseling to Santa Maria Health Care Center patients.

The 1.0 FTE bilingual AOP will be based out of the Santa Maria Health Care Center and provide administrative support and facilitate mental health services across PHD Health Care Centers. The AOP will review schedules and prepare charts for Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ9) and Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment administration, improve timely access through optimizing BHS schedules, conduct timely follow-up on referrals, reduce patient wait times, and increase same-day access through coordination with the BHS team across the PHD Health Care Centers. Due to staffing limitations, the current BH scheduling workflow relies on the clinical staff, so late cancellations often result in unused slots, a barrier to access that the dedicated BH AOP will directly resolve. Furthermore, the behavioral health AOP will work with the clinical support team, including the medical assistant and nurse assigned to work with the medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) clinician to coordinate MOUD services.

The contracted Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (telehealth model) will offer psychiatry services 20 hours per week. The PHD aims to provide one (1) 4-hour session rotating through five (5) of the PHD Health Care Centers (Lompoc, Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, & Carpinteria), which includes one of the shelter

clinic locations (Santa Maria). Delivery of psychiatry through telehealth will directly remove the biggest identified barrier to access: transportation. In addition, offering psychiatry through telehealth at one of PHD's shelter-based clinics will benefit patients experiencing homelessness by providing them privacy, convenience (reduced travel and disruption to daily activities), and reduced stigma associated with in-person visits.

Performance Measure:

This Notice of Grant Award establishes a 2-year period of performance and provides 12 months of funding. HRSA requires that PHD use the funds to support and increase the number of patients receiving mental health and SUD services, including treatment with MOUD. PHD must budget and submit periodic progress reports to HRSA, describing accomplishments and barriers in carrying out PHD's project plan. Other than budget information and activities list, no specific performance measures are expected.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No **Fiscal Analysis:**

Approving and authorizing the Public Health Director to accept the HRSA FY 2024-25 BHSE grant funds in the amount of \$600,000 will allow the PHD to support health centers to increase access to behavioral health services. These funds will be used to hire one (1) AOP I/II and one (1) BHS. These positions will be added to the department, with acceptance by the Board, of the attached salary resolution. Additional costs include contracted services for a telehealth Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, supplies and other costs needed to support the positions.

As mentioned above, this Notice of Award establishes a 2-year period of performance and provides 12 months of funding. HRSA will decide if we will receive year 2 funding based on congressional appropriation and satisfactory progress, and a determination that continued funding would be in the government's best interest. In the event the second-year funding does not receive approval, PHD will use the patient revenue generated by the services provided by the new BH specialists to pay for both positions' salaries and benefits.

The BJE included with this action is only for \$400,000 rather than \$600,000 because the funding period of the grant crosses over two County fiscal years. It is estimated that \$400,000 will be spent in FY 2024-25 and the remaining \$200,000 will be spent in FY 2025-26 for Salaries and Benefits and the contractor, and will be included in the Recommended budget for Public Health.

This program is supported by the HRSA of the HHS as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$600,000 with 100 percent funded by HRSA. The contents of this Board Letter are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov).

This action is not anticipated to create a need for any additional facilities.

Key Contract Risks:

Multiple policies, procedures, and training are in place to minimize risks.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:
Add 2 new

FTEs:
Add 2.0

Special Instructions

Please return one (1) electronic copy of the Minute Order and one (1) copy of the fully executed salary resolution to the PHD Contracts Unit at phdcu@sbcpd.org and (1) copy of the fully executed salary resolution and one (1) copy of the minute order to Stefan Brewer, Senior Workforce Planning Analyst, Human Resources Department at SBrewer@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A - HRSA Notice of Grant Award 1 H8NCS53985-01-00

Attachment B - Budget Revision Request BJE #0010154

Attachment C - Salary Resolution

Authored by:

Paola Hurtado, Assistant Deputy Director, Public Health Department