



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER**

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

**Agenda Number:**

**Submitted on:**  
(COB Stamp)

**Department Name:** Behavioral Wellness  
**Department No.:** 043  
**Agenda Date:** August 19, 2025  
**Placement:** Administrative Agenda  
**Estimated Time:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director: Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director  
Department of Behavioral Wellness  
Contact: Jamie Huthsing, LMFT, Assistant Director of Compliance and  
Quality Care Management, Department of Behavioral Wellness  
**SUBJECT:** Participation Agreement with California Mental Health Services Authority for  
Psychiatric Inpatient Concurrent Review Administrative and Fiscal Services for Fiscal  
Year 2025-26

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AN

**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Risk Management

As to form: N/A

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair's July 1, 2025 execution of a Participation Agreement with California Mental Health Service Authority (CalMHSA) for Psychiatric Inpatient Concurrent Review (PICR) Program services (No. 12734-SB-PICR-25\_26) for a maximum contract amount not to exceed \$139,440 for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026; and
- b) Determine that the above-recommended action is not a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4), finding that the action is governmental funding mechanism and/or fiscal activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to request the Board of Supervisors to ratify and authorize the Chair's July 1, 2025 execution of a Participation Agreement with CalMHSA for Psychiatric Inpatient Concurrent

Review (PICR) Program services for FY 2025-26. The term of this Agreement is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. At the July 1, 2025 Board Meeting, the recommended action inadvertently referenced an incorrect Agreement period. This item is on the Board of Supervisor's agenda to approve the above recommended actions which will allow the Minute Order to record and acknowledge the actual contract period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**Discussion:**

On July 1, 2025, this item was brought to the Board of Supervisors with a recommended action to approve and authorize the Chair to execute the Agreement; however, the Board Letter inadvertently noted an incorrect Agreement period through June 30, 2025, rather than June 30, 2026. The Minute Order of the Board's Action on July 1, 2025, likewise, reflected the incorrect Agreement term period. The Chair executed the Agreement on July 1, 2025 and no further action is required on the Agreement.

The service under the Agreement will provide concurrent review and authorization for all psychiatric inpatient hospital and psychiatric health facility services, to ensure Behavioral Wellness is compliant with Parity in Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services Final Rule (Parity Rule; Title 42 to the C.F.R §438.910).

**Background:**

In 2014, The Board of Supervisors approved the County's membership with CalMHSA, a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) under Gov. Code §6500 et seq. that serves California counties as an independent administrative and fiscal intergovernmental structure for jointly developing, funding, and implementing mental health services and educational programs at the state, regional and local levels.

Psychiatric Inpatient Concurrent Review (PICR): Per the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Behavioral Health Information Notices (BHIN) 19-026 and 22-017, County Mental Health Plan (MHP) are required to conduct concurrent review and authorization for all psychiatric inpatient hospital services and psychiatric health facility services. The BHINs outline policy changes implemented to ensure an MHPs' compliance in Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services with the Parity in Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services Final Rule (Parity Rule; Title 42 of the CFR, part 438.910)(Parity Rule). DHCS BHIN 22-017 requires MHPs to operate a utilization management (UM) program that ensures beneficiaries have appropriate access to Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS). MHPs are required to conduct concurrent reviews and authorization for all psychiatric inpatient hospital services and psychiatric health facility services. MHPs shall conduct concurrent reviews of treatment authorizations following the first day of admission.

CalMHSA entered into a services agreement with Acentra Health (formerly Kepro/Keystone Peer Review Organization, Inc.), for concurrent review and authorization of inpatient psychiatric hospital services on behalf of multiple California County Mental Health Plans. Utilization of Acentra's technology-assisted concurrent review process ensures a consistent and efficient review process across participating counties and supports MHP compliance with DHCS BHIN 22-017 and the Parity Rule.

On September 13, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved the execution of Participation Agreement No. 1158-PICR-2202-SB, with CalMHSA for this provision, for a maximum contract amount not to exceed \$178,483.20, for the period of September 13, 2022, through December 31, 2024. On April 8, 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved the execution of renewal Participation Agreement No. 11435-SB-PICR-24\_25, with CalMHSA as a renewal of services, for a maximum contract amount not to exceed \$37,184, for the period of April 8, 2025, through June 30, 2025.

On July 1, 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved the execution of the renewal Participation Agreement No. 12734-SB-PICR-25\_26 (BC 24304), with CalMHSA for this provision of services, for a maximum contract amount not to exceed \$139,440, for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026; however, the Board Letter, and subsequently, the Minute Order, noted an incorrect period for the agreement.

**Performance Measure:**

CalMHSA facilitates the efficient use of resources for multiple public entities by providing group purchasing power, joint development of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and contracts for services, reduced overhead costs through sharing of the expenses of administration and reporting, and shared research and strategies. CalMHSA's continued administration of this program will result in greater efficiency in the implementation of these mandated services for compliance with state and federal requirements. CalMHSA has provided and will continue to provide satisfactory reporting to ensure Behavioral Wellness (BWell) maintains compliance with state and federal requirements. This includes meeting with BWell Quality Care Management every other month at a minimum; to review the process for concurrent review and ensure timeliness of Treatment Authorization Requests (TARs) and all necessary documentation is captured in the Atrezzo Portal, and in compliance with psychiatric inpatient requirements. BWell audits a random sample of at least 10% of charts each month and timeliness of TARs completed by the contractor within 14 calendar days has greatly improved and has been in 100% compliance each month since January 2025.

**Contract Renewals:**

The County may withdraw from the PICR Program upon six months' written notice to CalMHSA as a measure of reducing contract risks. CalMHSA has provided satisfactory reporting to ensure BWell has complied with state and federal requirements.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

**Fiscal Analysis**

Funding Source	FY 2025-26	Total
State (MHSA)	\$69,720	\$69,720
Federal (Medi-Cal)	\$69,720	\$69,720
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$139,440</b>	<b>\$139,440</b>

The budget for this agreement is included in the FY 2025-26 approved budget and was included in the July 1, 2025, Board Letter. As was previously reported, funding for this Agreement is budgeted to come from Federal Medi-Cal and State Mental Health Services Act sources.

**Special Instructions:**

Please return one (1) Minute Order to Sara Hernandez at [sahernandez@sbcbswell.org](mailto:sahernandez@sbcbswell.org) and the BWell Contracts Division at [bwellcontractsstaff@sbcbswell.org](mailto:bwellcontractsstaff@sbcbswell.org).

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**Attachments:**

**Attachment A** - CalMHSA PICR FY 2025-2026 Minute Order (issued July 1, 2025)

**Attachment B**- CalMHSA PICR FY 2025-26 Board Letter & Participation Agreement (BC 24304)  
Executed

**Contact Information:**

Sara Hernandez

Contract Analyst

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