



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: October 1, 2024
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mouhanad Hammami, Director
Director Public Health Department
Contact Info: Paola Hurtado, Assistant Deputy Director, Primary Care &
Family Health Division, (805) 698-2418
SUBJECT: Volunteer and Clinical Support Services Agreement with A.T. Still University

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management
As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to execute a Professional Services Agreement with A.T. Still University of Health Sciences (ATSU) (learning institution) for volunteer and clinical support services including income generation to the County of up to \$31,500 per year with a period for performance from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2028; and
- b) Approve and authorize the Director of Public Health, or designee, to make immaterial changes in accordance with Section 34 of the Agreement, subject to the Board ability to rescind this delegation at any time; and
- c) Determine that the recommended actions are not a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines, because the recommended actions are government fiscal activities that do not involve commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to authorize the Chair to execute an Agreement with ATSU for volunteer and clinical support services at the Public Health Department in Santa Barbara County.

Background:

The Public Health Department (PHD) desires to enter into an Agreement with A.T. Still University of Health Sciences (ATSU) (learning institution) for volunteer and clinical support services with a period for performance from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2028. ATSU will also pay the County \$6,300 per year for each student assigned to the County, for a total amount not to exceed \$31,500. ATSU has partnered with the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) to develop the Central Coast Physician Assistant (CCPA) program, with the goal of educating community-oriented physician assistants who will provide whole person primary care to our Santa Barbara County's underserved communities.

The ATSU program is a 24-month residential master's degree program based in Santa Maria, California. Students will spend one year on campus in Santa Maria for the didactic phase of the program. Then, students will enter the clinical phase, which includes 35 weeks of supervised clinical practice experiences in various medical disciplines. The Physician Assistant Students (PA/Learners) will spend the clinical phase primarily at one of the partnered Community Health Centers (CHCs), including the PHD Health Care Centers.

ATSU prepares highly competent professionals in the science of medicine steeped in the osteopathic tradition of body, mind, and spirit care for the whole person and service to underserved populations. From their first day, ATSU PA students are immersed in engaged scholarship, threading the philosophy of whole person healthcare and serving the underserved through classes and activities designed to foster critical thinking.

ATSU faculty and staff work closely with PA students, helping them develop professional attributes and clinical problem-solving skills necessary for efficient and optimal patient care. ATSU program aims to produce Physician Assistants who will enter the CHC system and will provide primary care in the following community health specialties:

- Family Medicine
- General Internal Medicine
- General Pediatrics
- Women's Health
- Behavioral Health/Psychiatry

Through this Agreement, the PHD seeks to have licensed ATSU-CCPA Faculty volunteer under a PHD Supervising Physician to directly supervise ATSU Physician Assistant (PA) students who will provide medical screenings and/or public health education/promotion at community events hosted by Santa Barbara County Public Health Department.

Additionally, PHD seeks to host a didactic group of up to sixteen (16) first-year Physician Assistant Students (Learner 1/L1) to participate in clinic rotations once per week at the Lompoc Health Care Center (LHCC) and Santa Maria Health Care Center (SMHCC). During these weekly rotations, the L1 students will provide retinopathy screenings.

PHD also aims to host a cohort of five (5) second-year Physician Assistant Students (Learners 2/L2) to complete clinical rotations at SMHCC and LHCC. Each L2 Learner will participate in five (5) clinical rotations, each of which will be five-week sessions. Learners' (L2) clinical rotations will be in the disciplines of Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Women's Health, Behavioral Health, and Pediatrics.

All L2s will participate in clinical rotations under direct supervision, control, and guidance of designated PHD Supervising Clinician/Physician and be permitted to utilize the premises of PHD Health Care Centers to have conceptual, practical, and clinical learning experiences at PHD.

Offering the ATSU Physician Assistant students a learning environment will enhance their awareness of the community's healthcare needs, social determinants of health (SDOH), and better prepare them as future healthcare practitioners.

Performance Measure:

The PHD supports a Medical Practices Committee (MPC) which oversees clinical and quality operations for the health care center system. The Committee produces an annual Medical Quality Improvement Plan, which incorporates performance measures for the Health Care Centers (HCC), providers, including the student learners associated with this Agreement, and patient populations. The MPC develops goals for these measures and reviews reports quarterly, reassessing the improvement plans, and revising actions to be taken as necessary to reach the goals. These activities result in documentation that supports the Community Health Center Uniform Data Set, Team-Based Care, and all other required program reporting.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

In this agreement with A.T. Still University (ATSU), five ATSU Physician Assistant students will be assigned to perform services for Health Care Center (HCC) patients under the direct supervision and control of designated HCC physicians. ATSU will pay the County of Santa Barbara Public Health Department \$6,300.00 per year for each of the five ATSU students, for a total up to \$31,500 per year. This allotment is included in the FY 2024-25 Adjusted budget.

Key Contract Risks:

ATSU agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County against any claim, lawsuit or judgment arising out of PA Students (Learner 1 & 2) providing clinical support for medical services at ATSU as contemplated by this Agreement. ATSU provides PA students with professional liability coverage while the PA students are involved in PHD hosted events and training rotations outside of ATSU. Additionally, the Agreement contains a termination for convenience clause. These provisions all help reduce the County's risk.

Staffing Impacts:

No additional staffing will be added or reduced as a result of this action.

Special Instructions:

Please execute two (2) original Agreements with ATSU and retain one (1) original Agreement and one (1) Minute Order for pick-up by the department. Please email the PHD Contracts Unit at PHDGROUPEContractsUnit@sbcphd.org when available for pickup.

Attachments:

- A. Agreement between Santa Barbara County and A.T. Still University for Volunteer and Clinical Support services.

Authored by:

Paola Hurtado, Assistant Deputy Director, Primary Care & Family Health