



**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: January 13, 2026
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Director(s): Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director
Department of Behavioral Wellness

Contact: Jamie Huthsing, LMFT, Assistant Director of Compliance
and Quality Care Management

SUBJECT: Santa Barbara San Luis Obispo Regional Health Authority, DBA CenCal Health FY 2025-29 Memorandums of Understanding for Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System FY 2025-29 and Mental Health Plan FY 2025-29 Services Delivery and Coordination

DS
AN

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Director of the **Department of Behavioral Wellness** (BWell), or designee, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **Santa Barbara San Luis Obispo Regional Health Authority, DBA CenCal Health** (CenCal), as well as the associated attestation, for services delivery and coordination of Medi-Cal members served by CenCal as the county Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan and BWell as the county Medi-Cal Mental Health Plan for the period of September 1, 2025, to August 31, 2028 (Attachment A); and
- b) Approve and authorize the Director of the Department of Behavioral Wellness (BWell), or designee, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Santa Barbara San Luis Obispo Regional Health Authority, DBA CenCal Health (CenCal), as well as the associated attestation, for services delivery and coordination of Medi-Cal members served by CenCal as the county Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan and BWell as the county Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System Plan for the period of September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2028, (Attachment B); and

- c) Delegate to the Director of the Department of Behavioral Wellness, or designee, the authority to (1) make immaterial changes to the above MOUs (such as changes to the MCP Responsible Party, MCP-MHP Liaison, MHP Responsible Party, MHP Liaison, or the parties' addresses for purposes of notice), (2) update Data Exchange policies and procedures as documented in each MOU's Section 11 and Exhibit C, without requiring the Board's approval of an amendment of the Agreement, subject to the Board's ability to rescind this delegated authority at any time; and
- d) Determine that the above-recommended actions are not a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5), finding that the actions consist of administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

The above referenced items are on the agenda to request approval and authorization for the Director of the Department of Behavioral Wellness (BWell) to execute two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with Santa Barbara San Luis Obispo Regional Health Authority, DBA CenCal Health (CenCal).

Neither MOU has a fiscal impact to the County, and the term of each MOU is from September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2028. Both MOUs are for services delivery and coordination of Medi-Cal members served by CenCal as the County's Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan.

One focuses on BWell as the County Medi-Cal Mental Health Plan (MHP) and defines how CenCal and BWell will coordinate care and share data to support members who are provided specialty mental health services by BWell.

The other MOU focuses on BWell as the County Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) and defines how CenCal and BWell will coordinate care and share data to support members who are involved in County's alcohol and drug programs.

Discussion:

Execution of the MOUs brings the County into compliance with Title 9 CCR 1810.370 and the Integrated Intergovernmental Agreement No. 24-40145 between BWell and Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) in accordance with DHCS guidance. BWell is responsible for providing specialty mental health services and alcohol drug programs for County Medi-Cal members. CenCal Health is the managed care provider for County Medi-Cal members and provides them with physical health care services as well as mild to moderate mental health services. Each agency's scope of care is adjacent but does not overlap. These MOUs will allow CenCal and BWell to coordinate care and share data on individual members to provide the best possible care across the member's health care journey. In addition, the MOUs will ensure both BWell and CenCal are aligned on the responsibilities and obligations of each party.

Approval of the recommended actions will allow BWell to partner with CenCal to engage in the development of processes and procedures to enhance oversight, compliance, and reporting to DHCS to facilitate the provision of medically necessary services to members receiving services, where members are served by multiple parties to this MOU.

Background:

The Department of Behavioral Wellness (BWell) provides a continuum of services to County residents, including inpatient treatment services, to best meet the needs of individuals with severe mental illness.

CenCal Health has served the County of Santa Barbara since 1983 and is the exclusive Medi-Cal health plan in the county service area. CenCal Health is currently serving one in three County residents.

In October 2021, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Director of Behavioral Wellness (BWell) to execute DHCS DMC-ODS Intergovernmental Agreement No. 21-10034 with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to provide substance use disorder treatment services.

In September 2022, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Director of BWell to execute the \$0 five-year County Mental Health Plan (MHP) Agreement No. 22-20133.

On October 12, 2023, DHCS released concurrent Behavioral Health Information Notices (BHIN) requiring MOUs be entered into by the MCP with the County Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery Plan (DMC-ODS) and the County MHP, respectively. The MOUs are intended to improve transparency and accountability by setting forth the obligations of each party as it relates to service or care delivery; and coordination so that each party is aware of what the other party may be required to do. In addition, the BHINs reiterate oversight, compliance, and DHCS reporting requirements to help ensure that MOUs are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. Finally, the BHINs included a required MOU template for DMC-ODS and MHP, respectively.

On December 31, 2024, DHCS terminated DMC-ODS Intergovernmental Agreement No. 21-10034 and MHP Agreement No. 22-20133. In January of 2025, BWell entered into a new Integrated Intergovernmental Agreement No. 24-40145 with DHCS for Specialty Mental Health and DMC-ODS services.

The MOUs that are before the Board today comply with the guidance provided in the BHINs and Integrated Intergovernmental Agreement No. 24-40145.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

CenCal and the County provide services to their members through their separate and respective agreements with DHCS. These MOUs are to establish processes and procedures, coordinate care, and share data – however there is no fiscal responsibility on either side in these MOUs. Therefore, the MOUs do not include any financial responsibility from the County to CenCal, nor from CenCal to the County.

Special Instructions:

Please email one (1) Minute Order to Chris Shorb at cshorb@sbcowell.org and to bwellcontractsstaff@sbcowell.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A: CenCal Health Santa Barbara County Specialty-Mental-Health MOU FY 24-28

Attachment B: CenCal Health Santa Barbara County Substance-Use-Disorder-ODS MOU FY 24-28

Contact Information:

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