



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: January 5, 2010
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Michele Mickiewicz, MPH, Interim Director
Director Public Health Department
Contact Info: Elizabeth Snyder, MHA (681-5252)
Deputy Director Primary Care and Family Health Division

SUBJECT: Professional Services Agreement with ECG Management Consultants, Inc.

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 Supervisors:

Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the Agreement for Professional Services with ECG Management Consultants, Inc. (not a local vendor) to provide professional consultation services for the period of January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 in the amount not to exceed \$246,951.

Summary Text:

To provide Santa Barbara County residents with high quality, consistent medical care, and to qualify for state and federal incentives, the Public Health Department (PHD) must upgrade its outdated paper medical record system to an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. Research has demonstrated that EHR systems provide significant improvements in patient safety, reimbursement, access to care for patients at multiple settings, and increased portability of patient care across varied levels of care (e.g. primary care, specialty care, emergency room care, etc.). EHR systems are fast becoming the standard, nationwide, to track patient care and improve patient outcomes.

Recently, Congress appropriated funding through the American Resource Recovery Act (ARRA) for healthcare systems to implement EHRs. This move makes it possible for the PHD to implement an EHR system and thus attain a higher level of patient care and efficiency. Starting in 2012, the federal Medicare system will provide incentives in the form of higher service reimbursement rates for medical providers using EHR systems.

Research and discussion with other healthcare providers using EHRs has demonstrated that careful planning and implementation of the EHR is necessary to protect patient medical care information, prevent significant reductions in work capacity and revenue reductions, as well as assist patients and staff in the acceptance of the fundamental changes that are necessary to provide medical care in a paperless environment.

The Public Health Department has spent months researching various EHR options and recently concluded a Request for Information (RFI) process for professional consultants to assist the PHD with the evaluation and selection of an appropriate EHR vendor. ECG Management Consultants, Inc. was selected for their experience and expertise in EHR selection, especially in regards to California Safety Net Providers and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) like the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department. ECG Management Consultants, Inc. is based in Seattle, Washington with a branch office in San Diego, CA.

The agreement with ECG Management Consultants, Inc. includes:

- Review and analysis of the Public Health Department's existing and projected Information Technology (IT) systems associated with patient care.
- Work flow efficiency and effectiveness analysis.
- Assistance with a Request for Proposal (RFP) process targeting recommended EHR vendors that can meet the County's intricate and complicated IT and healthcare needs.
- Development of an implementation strategy and evaluation plan.
- Development of an implementation budget for all project-related and ongoing costs, based on various hardware and software alternatives.

Background:

The PHD clinic division currently serves more than 30,000 unique patients at its 10 sites and uses a paper medical record. Approximately 160,000 medical charts are currently in circulation or archived in long-term rental storage as per existing regulation. These hard copy records require significant resources to maintain, purge, access and transport. The Public Health Department typically performs more than 250,000 medical record "pulls" each year. A medical record "pull" involves retrieving the medical records from storage (currently a manual process) in order to have the records available to the medical providers for each patient clinic visit, prescription refill, medical referral, legal request and/or patient access request. An EHR would eliminate this constant filing and re-filing of medical records and make information readily accessible to providers in multiple locations via networked computers. In addition, EHR systems can provide access to critical treatment information to referral providers without risking unauthorized disclosure of private health information through unsecured fax communication, patient transport or private courier transport. Finally, an EHR greatly reduces the potential for medication and treatment errors by instantaneously identifying drug to drug interactions or other treatment conflicts that are preprogrammed into the system. This greatly reduces the County's liability while concurrently insuring patient safety and improving patient medical outcomes.

The current PHD IT clinical structure is fractioned among multiple proprietary electronic data systems that have little or no interconnectivity within the Public Health Department, let alone with other key medical health providers in the community. ECG Management Consultants, Inc. will help the County PHD assess the most efficient and effective IT design to integrate with an EHR. In addition to implementing an EHR, the project will include the integration of existing software systems to improve

data sharing and connectivity. The selection of an Electronic Health Record system is a key project for the Public Health Department for FY 2009/10 and has been identified as a critical capital improvement project for several years.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

The funding for this agreement for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2009-10 has been budgeted in the amount of \$150,000 and can be found on Page D-199 of the County's Operating Plan document. The remainder of the funds for the contract (either approximately \$40,000 or \$100,000, depending on whether the Department chooses to use ECG Management Consultants, Inc. for some optional evaluation processes) will be incurred in Fiscal Year 2010-11 and are currently held in a designation in the Public Health Special Revenue Fund. These funds will be submitted as part of the Department's recommended Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget.

Staffing Impacts:

For this agreement, existing staff will provide information and input into the EHR vendor selection process and development of an implementation plan. Existing PHD administrative staff and leadership will assume the additional tasks and responsibilities associated with oversight of this professional service agreement.

Special Instructions:

Please return one (1) fully executed agreement to PHD Contracts Unit, 300 North San Antonio Road, Building 8, Santa Barbara, CA 93110. Please return an electronic copy of the Minute Order to the PHD Contracts Unit at PHDRES.ContractsUnit@sbcphd.org

Attachments:

Agreement for Professional Services, ECG Management Consultants, Inc.

Authored by:

Elizabeth Snyder, Deputy Director Primary Care and Family Health Division