

# Attachment E

## Improved In-custody Mental Health Services

Great strides have been made in improving the delivery of mental health services at both Sheriff's Office detention facilities. In July 2023, working closely with the Joint Experts in the *Murray* case, the Sheriff's Office, with their healthcare provider WellPath, has opened three (3) Behavioral Health Units: one sixteen (16) bed male unit at the Main Jail, one sixteen (16) bed female unit and one twenty-four (24) bed male unit at the NBJ. These special housing units are designated for inmates that have mental health needs and would benefit from centralized programming and treatment. Inmates are stepped down from restrictive housing and provided increased socialization through structured and unstructured programming with a goal of returning them to general population housing. Programming and treatment is provided by a mix of WellPath mental health providers, Sheriff's Office correctional counselors, contracted discharge and reentry counselors, and volunteers coordinated by a multidisciplinary team. Sworn Sheriff's staff assigned to the BHUs are specially selected and provided additional training in dealing with mentally ill subjects. The Sheriff's Office is currently planning to open two additional sixteen (16) bed units at the Main Jail, raising the available beds from the current fifty-six (56) to a total of eighty-eight (88) BHU beds. All the efforts to date have occurred by leveraging existing programs and resources, such as the Sheriff's Treatment Program (STP), and volunteers from the community, such as AA/NA and the Mental Wellness Center, there have been no additional direct costs.

The Early Access to Stabilization Services (EASS) program began in October of 2022. The program was designed by WellPath Vice President of Mental Health Innovation Carin Kotraba, PhD to provide early intervention for detainees that have had doubt of competence declared in their criminal cases. The goal of the program is to provide earlier intervention and treatment for those who are waiting for assessment and competency training, with the aim of stabilizing those who are brittle or non-responsive to currently prescribed medications and therapies. In CY2023, the EASS enrolled 118 patients, restoring 18 to competency and referring 89 patients to DSH and other treatment facilities, significantly reducing the days spent incarcerated. The program is funded through a contract between WellPath and the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH) and has a capacity to serve 30 patients at any given time. It is provided at no additional charge to the County.

## Expanded Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Programming

In response to the Opioid Crisis and the dramatic increase in overdose deaths, both in the Sheriff's detention facilities and in the community-at-large, the Sheriff's Office has expanded the MAT program for inmates suffering from substance use disorder (SUD) and alcohol addiction. In September of 2022 there were 11 patients enrolled in the MAT program and over 150 on a waitlist. Through the hiring of dedicated WellPath SUD staff and efficiency

measures, there are currently 73 enrolled in the MAT program and the waitlist has been reduced to 86. Just one of the efficiencies implemented concerns how nurses perform MAT medication passes. Previously, MAT medications in pill form required crushing to ensure they were actually taken and not “cheeked”, secreted in the patient’s mouth and not swallowed, to sell or otherwise use for unintended purposes. By changing to a suboxone strip, a sublingual film, which dissolves when placed on the tongue and is more difficult to misuse, it has significantly reduced the time required to prepare and pass the medications. Yet, even with all the efforts aimed at expanding MAT, there is still too many patients waiting to be enrolled. The Sheriff’s Office is actively pursuing grant funding opportunities to assist in increasing SUD counselor and nursing staff to accommodate the expanding caseloads and medication delivery with a goal of eliminating the waiting list entirely.