



**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: Behavioral Wellness
Department No.: 043
For Agenda Of: June 15, 2022
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director
Director(s) Department of Behavioral Wellness, (805) 681-5220
Contact Info: Maria Arteaga, Cultural Competency/Ethnic Services/Peer
Empowerment Manager, Department of Behavioral Wellness,
(805) 681-5220
SUBJECT: Behavioral Wellness - California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA)
Participation Agreement for Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Fiscal
Year (FY) 2021-2023

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 the **California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Participation Agreement 1084-PSSC-2021-SB** to develop, implement, and administer all components of the new Medi-Cal certification program under the Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery Systems in accordance with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Behavioral Health Information Notice 21-041 from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 (Attachment A) at no cost to the members; and
- B. Determine that the above action is a government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project that may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment and is therefore not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to section 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Summary Text:

In 2016, the Board of Supervisors approved the County's membership in 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. The above-referenced item is on the agenda to request the Board of Supervisors (Board) to approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to execute CalMHSA Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Participation Agreement 1084-PSSC-2021-SB to develop, implement, and administer all components of the new Medi-Cal certification program under the Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health (SMH) and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery Systems (DMC-ODS) in accordance with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Behavioral Health Information Notice 21-041 from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Background:

In September 2020, Senate Bill (SB) 803 (Beall, Chapter 150, Statutes of 2020) was chaptered, requiring DHCS to seek federal approval to establish "Peer Specialist" as a provider type and to deliver distinct peer support services as an optional behavioral health Medi-Cal benefit in California under the SMH and DMC-ODS programs. By July 1, 2022 DHCS will add peer specialists as a unique provider type within specific reimbursable services to allow counties the option to provide this valuable resource. As part of this process, DHCS is required to determine the peer certification standards in alignment with the provisions SB 803 (Beall, Chapter 150, Statutes of 2020), and in accordance with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid's (CMS) guidance. DHCS will have a statewide standard for peer certification and monitor certifying organizations and counties.

The County Behavioral Health Directors' Association (CBHDA) identified CalMHSA to submit an implementation plan on behalf of interested counties to create a certification program for peer support specialists that is eligible for Medi-Cal reimbursement in order to increase access to peer support services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries. In November 2021, CalMHSA submitted a plan to the DHCS to develop and administer the Medi-Cal Peer Support Certification program. In April 2022, DHCS approved the CalMHSA Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program.

Peer support specialists are individuals with lived experience, or the parents, caregivers and family members of individuals living with mental health and/or substance use disorder conditions who help others currently experiencing a similar situation. Through shared understanding, respect, and mutual empowerment, peer support specialists help people begin and stay engaged in the recovery process and reduce the likelihood of relapse. The services provided by peers can currently be claimed under the provider type "other qualified provider" within the SMH program, and recovery services provided by peers can be claimed within the DMC-ODS programs. However, each county may decide whether to opt in to add peer support specialists as a Medi-Cal provider type and provide peer support services as a Medi-Cal benefit. Effective July 1, 2022, peer support specialist services will be an optional behavioral health Medi-Cal benefit in California.

BWell already provides peer support services through various MHS and DMC-ODS programs. To receive Medi-Cal reimbursement, peer support specialists must become certified as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist in California. Counties are responsible for either implementing their own certification program or selecting an entity to provide a certification program for their county. Approval of the recommended action would allow the county to implement the Medi-Cal peer support specialist services benefit to certified peer support specialists through the CalMHSA PSS program. CalMHSA's expertise led to the

development of a DHCS-approved certification program. If not for this program, BWell would have to develop its own certification program.

Performance Measure:

CalMHSA's administration of this program will result in greater efficiency in the implementation of PSS certification.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: N/A Narrative: This Participation Agreement does not have any fiscal cost to the County. The Participation Agreement is to formally establish a partnership to implement this benefit on behalf of our county. CalMHSA is working collaboratively with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to identify funding for program start-up and some funding for the certification of peers. For these reasons, the participation agreement does not include any fiduciary responsibility from the County to CalMHSA.

Key Contract Risks:

The County may withdraw from the Program and terminate the Participation Agreement upon 30-days' written notice to CalMHSA.

Special Instructions:

Please return one (1) Minute Order and one (1) complete copy of the above item to Denise Morales at dmorales@sbcbswell.org and the BWell Contracts Division at bwellcontractsstaff@sbcbswell.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A: CalMHSA FY 21-23 PA 1084-PSSC-2021-SB

Authored by:

D. Morales