



**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: May 1, 2018
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 5 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Alice Gleghorn, Ph.D., Director,
Director: Behavioral Wellness Department
Contact Info: Laura Zeitz, Interim PHF Administrator, (805) 452-2760
SUBJECT: Waiver of retirement exclusion for Mary Pat Sweeney, Psychiatric Nurse II, for the Psychiatric Health Facility of the Behavioral Wellness Department

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

CEO, Human Resources:

Approved: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors consider the following:

- a) Approve and authorize the Behavioral Wellness Department Director to hire retired Psychiatric Nurse II, Mary Pat Sweeney, to provide critical, temporary or "as needed" nursing services at the Department's inpatient psychiatric facility for an amount not to exceed \$44,000 annually beginning May 7, 2018; and
- b) In accordance with California Government Code Section 7522.56(f)(1), certify that the following agreement with a retired County employee is necessary to provide critical, "as needed" nursing services related to the provision of patient care within the inpatient Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) of the Behavioral Wellness Department, before 180 days have passed from the date of retirement; and
- c) Determine that the above actions are organizational and administrative activities of government that are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to section 15378(b)(5) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to request the Board allow retired Psychiatric Nurse, Ms. Sweeney, be hired in a temporary, "as needed" capacity to assist with critically needed nursing coverage at the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) beginning May 7, 2018. Ms. Sweeney was a Psychiatric Nurse for the County's PHF for more than 19 years. She officially retired on March 28, 2018. During Ms. Sweeney's tenure she has worked as a nurse at the PHF covering the overnight shift; a shift for which the Dept can experience challenges maintaining appropriate staffing for various reasons (e.g. late night crisis

admissions, staff calling out sick, etc). Under the supervision of PHF administration, Ms. Sweeney delivered ongoing and comprehensive care to patients hospitalized at the PHF including performing admission assessments, provision of medications, and comprehensive psychiatric nursing primary care in addition to functioning as a team leader for the shift. She was responsible for entering into the patient's health record complete and detailed patient histories and nursing assessments as well as taking orders from physicians and implementing them. She would also identify chief complaints and develop the initial treatment plan, initiate patient education and emergency interventions with clients, who were at times hostile and threatening, and would also interact with and counsel patients and their families regarding matters pertaining to their hospital stay.

The PHF has challenges in hiring qualified Registered Nurses. Although the County maintains an ongoing recruitment for Psychiatric Nurses, it rarely produces enough qualified candidates to meet Departmental needs. To cover her shifts on nights, we have increased the workload of remaining staff including paying overtime, and using contract agency nurses, when they are available, which comes at a much greater cost to the Dept. The PHF operates almost exclusively on nurse staffing, and is bound by State mandates requiring staffing to be based on patient acuity every shift. As such, it is absolutely critical that the Dept. have adequate "as needed" nurses available to cover shifts with very little if any lead time.

Therefore, the Behavioral Wellness Department is requesting that the Board allow Ms. Sweeney to be hired in a temporary, "as needed" capacity, commencing May 7, 2018, to increase our "as needed" staffing options for the overnight shift. Ms. Sweeney is experienced and works smoothly with our entire inpatient hospital team. Because she knows all of our policies and procedures she will easily transition into a temporary, "as needed" staffing role.

Background:

The Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) is a free standing acute 16 bed hospital serving the entire County. The PHF is licensed by both Medicare and Medicaid and has a Governing Board that provides ongoing oversight. This Governing Board met in April, 2018, and concurred that the request to hire Ms. Sweeney as a temporary, "as needed" nurse for the PHF as soon as possible was necessary to safely and adequately staff the acute hospital.

Patients are regularly admitted on 5150 holds as they present a danger to themselves or others or are gravely disabled. Individuals are also admitted from the Santa Barbara County Jail to the PHF unit. Individuals regularly require de-escalation and at times may require interventions up to the most restrictive; seclusion and restraint. Psychiatric nursing care is a specialty and requires skills uniquely important in an inpatient hospital environment (crisis prevention, assessment and management of assaultive behavior). Consequently, it is essential to have highly qualified, skilled health care professionals in our ranks of staffing options.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

It is anticipated that Ms. Sweeney will be used for intermittent, "as-needed" coverage primarily during night shifts at the PHF and will be hired at Step E for Psychiatric Nurse II (\$43.638/hour) as aligned with the County wage tables, plus a 5% Special Duty Allowance (approx. \$2.18/hour) paid to employees working in the inpatient psychiatric hospital. As a retiree of the County of Santa Barbara, and in accordance with California Government Code, Ms. Sweeney will be limited to working no more than

960 hours annually (measured from date of hire), and thus the cost of her continued service as a temporary, “as needed” employee is estimated not to exceed \$44,000 annually. The funding for temporary, “as needed” staffing at the County’s inpatient PHF is budgeted for FY 17/18, and will continue to be budgeted for future budget years.

Special Instructions:

Please send an electronic copy of the minute order to: cmsilvas@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Authored by:

Carlos Silvas, Human Resources Manager