



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 10/20/2015

Agenda Placement: 6E

## NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

---

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Shelli Brobst for HOWARD HIMES - Director  
Health & Human Services Operations

**REPORT BY:** JoAnn Melgar, STAFF SERVICES ANALYST II - 253-4722

**SUBJECT:** Agreement with Queen of the Valley - SOAR Program

---

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Director of Health and Human Services requests approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign an agreement with Queen of the Valley Medical Center through its Care Network Program for a maximum of \$40,075 for the term October 20, 2015 through October 19, 2016 to implement the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) program to assist homeless individuals in Napa County with filing applications to the Social Security Administration to obtain benefits.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Queen of the Valley Medical Center through its Care Network Program will implement the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) program to assist homeless individuals in Napa County with filing applications to the Social Security Administration to obtain benefits. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Peter A. and Vernice H. Gasser Foundation.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	No
What is the revenue source?	Peter A. and Vernice H. Gasser Foundation grant and Health and Human Services Agency's (HHS) allocated County General fund.
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary

---

Discretionary Justification:	There is no mandate to contract with Queen of the Valley, Care Network. However, the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) program will allow HHSA to help provide homeless individuals in Napa County with filing applications to the Social Security Administration to obtain benefits.
Is the general fund affected?	No
Future fiscal impact:	This agreement will be included in Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Health and Human Services Agency's Operations budget.
Consequences if not approved:	If not approved, the County will forego \$30,000 in grant money to implement the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) program.
Additional Information:	The \$30,000 Peter A. and Vernice H. Gasser Foundation grant was received in Fiscal Year 2014-2015. Contract expenditures will occur in Fiscal Year 2015-2016 and Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) are disability income benefits administered by SSA that also provide Medicaid and/or Medicare health insurance to eligible individuals. SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) is a national project designed to increase access to the disability income benefit programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) for eligible adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness, medical impairment and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR is designed to serve individuals who are able to apply for benefits under SSA rules. This includes persons 18 years of age or older, as well as individuals who are within one month (90 days for youth who are aging out of the foster care system) of their 18th birthday. Individuals age 65 or over with low income and resources may be eligible for SSI based on age or be eligible for retirement benefits based on their work history.

The application process for SSI/SSDI is complicated and difficult to navigate. Nationally, about 29 percent of individuals who apply for these benefits are approved on initial application and appeals take an average of one year to complete. For people who are homeless or who are returning to the community from institutions (jails, prisons, or hospitals), access to these programs can be extremely challenging. Approval on initial application for people who are homeless and who have no one to assist them is about 10 – 15 percent. For those who have a mental illness, substance abuse issues, or co-occurring disorders that impair cognition, the application process is even more difficult. Nationwide, all 50 states are implementing SOAR. The average success rate for applications filed using the SOAR method is 65 percent and, on average, 50 percent of applicants are housed within 23 days.

In 2015, HHSA received a \$30,000 grant from the Peter A. and Vernice H. Gasser Foundation to oversee a local community based organization to implement a SOAR program in Napa County. Queen of the Valley's Care Network Program ("Queen") was selected because they have experience and training in completing SSI and SSDI applications in accordance with the SOAR method. The Queen will conduct outreach throughout Napa County to identify adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness, medical impairment and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder who are eligible to apply for SSI or SSDI and complete applications

for benefits. It is anticipated that the Queen will complete a minimum of 30 applications during the term of this contract.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

None

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Leanne Link