



Agenda Date: 10/24/2006
Agenda Placement: 6J

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Theresa Richmond for Randy Snowden - Director
Health & Human Services
REPORT BY: Theresa Richmond, Chief Operations Officer, 259-8176
SUBJECT: Amend Departmental Allocation List and Table and Index - Health & Human Services Agency -
Mental Health

RECOMMENDATION

Human Resources Director and Director of Health and Human Services Agency request adoption of a resolution amending the Table and Index and the Departmental Allocation List for the Mental Health Division of the Health and Human Services Agency regarding the following, effective November 4, 2006:

1. Amend the Departmental Allocation List with no net increase in FTE's:
 - a. Adding: Six (6) Emergency Response Counselor-Registered / Emergency Response Counselor-Licensed, two (2) Emergency Response Worker, two (2) 0.5 Emergency Response Worker, three (3) Mental Health Counselor-Registered / Mental Health Counselor -Licensed, and one (1) Senior Emergency Response Worker; and
 - b. Deleting: Three (3) Mental Health Counselor, four (4) Mental Health Counselor - Licensed, one (1) Mental Health Worker I/II, Three (3) Mental Health Worker II, one (1) Psychiatric Nurse, and one (1) Senior Mental Health Worker.
2. Amend the Table and Index to add: Emergency Response Counselor-Registered, Emergency Response Counselor-Licensed, Emergency Response Worker, Mental Health Counselor-Registered, and Senior Emergency Response Worker.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of the requested actions will amend the Departmental Allocation List and the Table & Index for the Mental Health Division of the Health and Human Services Agency, adding new classifications specific to the Emergency Response (ER) Unit and creating flexibly staffed registered intern/licensed positions in both the ER and other units of the Mental Health division to aid in the recruitment of difficult-to-fill licensed positions.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

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

The Psychiatric Emergency Response Unit (ER) is a licensed outpatient mental health facility operated through the Mental Health division of HHSA. Its primary purpose is to evaluate persons referred by family, law enforcement, medical providers, or other sources to determine if they are a threat to themselves or others, or gravely disabled, all as the result of a mental illness. In such cases, the ER will provide short term intervention services and, when appropriate, detain the person and place them in an appropriate facility for further evaluation and treatment pursuant to Section 5150 of the Health and Safety Code.

For the past year, HHSA has been pursuing an initiative to restructure the ER and strengthen its service capability. Approval of the requested actions will effectuate the following components of the restructure:

- 1 Creation of a job classification series specific to emergency response staff: Emergency response requires a specific set of mental health skills. Creation of a dedicated classification series will allow for targeted recruitment of emergency response staff, specialized training, increased unit stability, better retention of staff, and improved program capability. Many counties are moving to a dedicated job classification series, which increases competition for qualified personnel. These actions convert all of the mental health positions in the ER unit to counterpart positions in a new "emergency response" classification series. The change is cost neutral. There is no increase in total full time equivalencies (FTEs). The Agency is also requesting that one fulltime equivalent vacant position be split into two halftime positions to allow more flexibility in scheduling staff among difficult-to-cover night and weekend shifts.
- 1 Inclusion of registered interns in the available candidate pool: The competition for licensed mental health professionals is intense among all types of programs. The competition is particularly intense for emergency response programs, with round-the-clock coverage and the need to staff night and weekend shifts. Licensed and unlicensed emergency response staffing can be enhanced by the use of registered interns. When the interns achieve licensure, flexible positions allow them to move into licensed activities within their existing position. HHSA is accordingly requesting the creation of job classifications that allow for the hiring of registered interns and their seamless movement to licensed status when they achieve licensure.

Other components of the ongoing restructure that have already been initiated or implemented include:

- 1 Increase staffing levels on certain night shifts: The Board approved additional staff for this purpose in the spring of 2005, when the initiative was first being developed. The current actions will assist the Agency in recruiting for permanent staff to fill these positions.
- 1 Create a "mobile crisis response" capability: This component was developed as a part of the implementation plan for the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). It will allow ER unit staff to evaluate people in the field, in certain cases relieve law enforcement or medical response personnel of responsibility for persons being evaluated, and allow for follow up of persons who were previously seen and evaluated, reducing the number of people who return to the system through law enforcement or other routes. The

Board approved new positions to perform these activities as a part of the current year budget. The positions are funded through the MHSA.

- 1 Creation of "system navigators": Also a part of the MHSA plan, navigators will assist members of the public to access needed behavioral health and other services, with the goal of improving access and reducing pressure on other first responders. The navigators were also approved as a part of the current year budget and are funded through the MHSA.
- 1 Memorandum of Understanding with Law Enforcement and Hospital: During an approximately one year period from 2005 to 2006, HHSA participated in a multi-agency collaborative that developed a memorandum of understanding among the Napa Sheriff's Department, Napa Police Department, Queen of the Valley Hospital, and HHSA regarding operational protocols for the referral of persons for evaluation.

The requested actions also seek approval of a new "Mental Health Counselor – Registered" classification which will create the capability to recruit registered interns into other programs within the Mental Health division besides the ER unit. This will allow the Agency to compete for candidates who are licensed interns working toward licensure and then seamlessly move them into licensed capacities when they achieve licensure. The new classification will make the Agency more competitive with respect to the recruitment and retention of mental health professionals, including bilingual professionals. The requested actions include the conversion of three positions into this new classification and will have the immediate effect of enabling the Agency to retain a seasoned bilingual intern who has recently achieved licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist.

Human Resources met and conferred with SEIU Local 614 - NAPE staff regarding the above requested actions. The SEIU staff has reviewed and endorsed the requested actions.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Resolution

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Lorenzo Zialcita