



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 9/14/2010

Agenda Placement: 7L

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mason, Suzanne R. - Director
Human Resources

REPORT BY: Karla Jensen, Human Resources Analyst II - (707) 253-4489

SUBJECT: Amend the Departmental Allocation List and the Table and Index of Classes of the Mental Health Division of the Health and Human Services Agency to add a Mental Health Nurse Practitioner classification.

RECOMMENDATION

Director of Human Resources requests adoption of a resolution amending the Departmental Allocation List and Table and Index for the Mental Health Division of the Health and Human Services Agency, effective September 14, 2010 with a total projected net savings of \$115,000 and no net increase in FTE.

1. Amend the Departmental Allocation by:
 - a. Deleting:
 - i. One (1 FTE) Psychiatric Nurse and
 - ii. One (1 FTE) (MC) Staff Psychiatrist.
 - b. Adding:
 - i. Two (2 FTE) Mental Health Nurse Practitioners.
2. Amend the Table and Index by adding Mental Health Nurse Practitioner.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Historically, the County has had difficulty recruiting and retaining psychiatrists. After studying staffing models used in other counties, the Mental Health Director has determined that the best option for staffing the Mental Health Division is to delete two vacant allocated positions (a Psychiatric Nurse and a Staff Psychiatrist) and add two Mental Health Nurse Practitioners. In this staff model the Mental Health Nurse Practitioners will perform many of the medication support duties currently being performed by more highly paid psychiatrists and allow psychiatrists to focus on more specialized duties. In addition, utilizing Mental Health Nurse Practitioners instead of Psychiatric Nurses will result in increased Medicare and Medi-Cal billing revenues.

FISCAL IMPACT

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| Is there a Fiscal Impact? | Yes |
| Is it currently budgeted? | No |
| What is the revenue source? | Although the specific recommended actions are not included in the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Mental Health budget, appropriations totaling \$224,823 were included for the two vacant positions proposed to be deleted (\$111,224 for the 1.0 FTE Psychiatric Nurse and \$113,599 for the 1.0 FTE Staff Psychiatrist). The cost for the two recommended 1.0 FTE Mental Health Nurse Practitioners for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 will be approximately \$210,000 assuming a September 1, 2010 hire date, at step level 3. Approval of the recommended actions will result in current year salary savings totaling about \$15,000, plus an increase in billing revenues totaling about \$100,000 in the current year (\$120,000 on an annualized basis), for a total projected net savings of about \$115,000 for Fiscal Year 2010-2011. |
| Is it Mandatory or Discretionary? | Discretionary |
| Discretionary Justification: | There is no mandate to have the positions included in this recommendation. However, the addition of two (1.0 FTE) Mental Health Nurse Practitioners and the deletion of one (1.0 FTE) Staff Psychiatrist and one (1.0 FTE) Psychiatric Nurse will enable the County to more efficiently meet obligations of a performance agreement with the California Department of Mental Health to provide medication support services and allow the County to generate approximately \$120,000 annually in new billing revenue. |
| Is the general fund affected? | Yes |
| Future fiscal impact: | The recommended actions will result in no net change in the number of FTEs allocated for the Department. Appropriations for future fiscal years will be budgeted accordingly. |
| Consequences if not approved: | If the recommended actions are not approved, because of its difficulty in filling psychiatrist and psychiatric nurse positions, the County will not have sufficient staffing resources to provide the necessary level of medication support services to mentally ill adults in the County pursuant to obligations set forth in a performance contract with the State Department of Mental Health, which could put clients at risk for higher levels of care at a higher cost to the County. |
| Additional Information: | |

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 County has had difficulty in recruiting and retaining individuals in the Staff Psychiatrist and Psychiatric Nurse classifications over a number of years, which limits the staff resources available to provide medically necessary medication support services to individuals with mental illness who are served by the County. As a result, the Mental Health Director considered various options to maintain an adequate level of staffing for the provision of services and chose a model that includes the introduction of the Mental Health Nurse Practitioner classification, with specialized training in psychiatric care. Under the recommended model, the Health & Human Services Agency (HHS) would delete one vacant (1.0 FTE) Staff Psychiatrist position and one vacant (1.0 FTE) Psychiatric Nurse position and add two (1.0 FTE) Mental Health Nurse Practitioner positions. Approval of this recommendation would result in a more efficient service model with reduced salary expenses. The action would have no effect on the number of authorized FTEs for the Division.

Mental Health Nurse Practitioners possess additional preparation and skills in physical diagnosis, psycho-social assessment and management of health illness needs in both primary and mental health care and are able to function more independently in clinics under the direction of Physicians/Psychiatrists than are Psychiatric Nurses. Due to their level of training and the commensurate scope of practice allowance, many of the routine functions that are currently managed by Psychiatrists could be performed by Nurse Practitioners, leaving the Psychiatrists free to address more complex cases. In addition, most of the services that would be performed by the Nurse Practitioners would be reimbursable through both Medicare and Medi-Cal, which is not the case for the County's existing Psychiatric Nurse classification. Finally, Napa County Mental Health is following the lead of other counties by pursuing a more integrated behavioral health approach, partnering with the local Federally Qualified Health Center (Clinic Ole) to coordinate the provision of both primary and mental health care within its clinic.

The proposed action is the first phase of a two-phase analysis and reassessment of positions to maximize both functionality and revenues in the Medication Clinic. The planned second phase will include the evaluation of other support positions for possible reclassification to produce a more effective Medication Clinic service delivery model. HHS will return to the Board for approval of any future recommended changes.

A market equity study was conducted among the County's eight identified jurisdictions of comparison (Counties of Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Placer, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma, and City of Napa). The study revealed that the salary differential between a Nurse Practitioner and a Mental Health Nurse Practitioner is approximately ten percent. Based on this finding, it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve the establishment of the Mental Health Nurse Practitioner class at a monthly salary range of \$7,700 to \$9,260, effective September 14, 2010.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Resolution

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Britt Ferguson