



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD (BHAB) ACTION ITEM DECEMBER 5, 2024

AUTHORIZE A SINGLE SOURCE CONTRACT WITH SHARP HEALTHCARE FOR HOSPITAL-BASED CRISIS STABILIZATION SERVICES WITHIN SHARP CHULA VISTA MEDICAL CENTER (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Under the leadership of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board), the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) has made key investments over the last several years to enhance community-based behavioral health services including the establishment of several crisis stabilization units (CSUs). CSUs provide immediate mental health support and treatment services in a therapeutic setting to people with serious behavioral health needs who require urgent care beyond what an outpatient clinical service can provide. Services typically last less than 24 hours and include crisis intervention, ongoing assessment and stabilization, medication administration, consultation with family and outpatient providers, and linkage and/or referral to follow-up community-based services and resources.

In 2024, Sharp HealthCare (Sharp) received one-time grant funding to support design and development of a new Emergency Psychiatric Assessment, Treatment, and Healing (EmPATH) unit within the Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center. Similar to a CSU, an EmPATH unit offers care for people experiencing a psychiatric crisis through crisis stabilization services. The EmPATH model differs in that it is collocated in an emergency department (ED) enabling people with behavioral health needs to transition smoothly to a CSU without discharging them. Sharp will establish approximately six CSU recliners adjacent to the ED that are anticipated to provide care for a large proportion of people with serious behavioral health conditions who are eligible for Medi-Cal. As the Specialty Mental Health Plan for people with serious mental illness, the County can receive Medi-Cal reimbursement for these services through the California Department of Health Care Services.

The item seeks authority to establish a single source contract with Sharp to establish approximately six CSU recliners within the Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center that serve people with behavioral health conditions who are eligible for Medi-Cal. Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center is a hospital-based setting with an ED, which uniquely positions it to provide CSU services and will facilitate quicker connections to behavioral health crisis care for people entering the emergency department.

The action supports the County's vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically those communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This will be accomplished through further strengthening the continuum of behavioral health services by advancing crisis care in San Diego County and expanding capacity in South Bay Region.

It is, THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that BHAB supports the approvals and authorizations needed to implement the above recommendation.