



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: May 21, 2024

DRAFT

XX

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

RECEIVE AND APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE FISCAL YEARS 2023-2026 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT THREE-YEAR PROGRAM AND EXPENDITURE PLAN (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Under the leadership of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board), the County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Behavioral Health Services continues making strides to create a behavioral health system with regionally distributed services that are accessible to all individuals and families in need.

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) provides funding for critical mental health programs that serve people with serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance, supporting some of San Diego County's most vulnerable and unserved populations through services that are responsive to cultural and linguistic needs. MHSA provides dedicated ongoing funding to counties to address a broad continuum of mental health services needs within five distinct components including Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), Community Services and Supports (CSS), Innovation (INN), Workforce Education and Training (WET), and Capital Facilities (CF) and Technological Needs (TN).

As required by the Welfare and Institutions Code, counties must complete a three-year plan and subsequent annual updates for MHSA-funded programs inclusive of all programs and expenditures. The most recent MHSA Three-Year Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2023-24 through 2025-26 was approved by the Board on June 13, 2023 (22) and was subsequently submitted to the Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHOAC).

Today's action requests the Board receive and approve an amendment to the MHSA Three-Year Plan, which would transfer \$10.0 million of CSS funds to the CFTN component in FY 2023-24 for the development and construction of the East Region Crisis Stabilization Unit, and to submit the amendment to the MHOAC, if approved by the Board.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

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CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Receive and approve the Amendment to the Fiscal Years 2023-26 Mental Health Services Act Three-Year Plan and authorize the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency, to submit the Amendment to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed amendment to the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Three-Year Plan advances the County of San Diego’s (County) vision of building a mental health system where services are equitable and accessible to all individuals and families in need across the region. If approved, today’s action will allow MHSA funds to further support the construction of a new Crisis Stabilization Unit that will provide critical services to meet the needs in East County. In 2022, the Healthy Places Index identified El Cajon as an area of high need where additional health and social resources might positively impact the community. Additionally, Department of Health Care Services data from June 2023 tells us El Cajon has a relatively high volume of Medi-Cal customers and a high density of current County Behavioral Health Services clients who would qualify for and can directly benefit from this type of facility in the East Region and receive care in their community.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today’s proposed action aligns with the County of San Diego (County) Sustainability Goal #2, which seeks to ensure equitable access to County services. Amending the Mental Health Services Act Three-Year Plan supports the County’s priority of improving access to crisis care specifically within the East Region of San Diego County.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operational Plan for the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in one-time estimated costs and revenues of \$10.0 million in FY 2023-24 for the development and construction of the East Region Crisis Stabilization Unit. The funding source is Mental Health Services Act. The MHSA funds are anticipated to fund a portion of the \$28.0 million total estimated project costs. BHS will leverage other funding sources for the remaining amount and staff may return to the Board for future funding recommendations for this project. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

At their meeting on April 4, 2024, the Behavioral Health Advisory Board voted to the recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Under the leadership of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board), the Health and Human Services Agency, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) continues making strides to create a

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behavioral health system with regionally distributed services that are accessible to all people and families in need. The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) provides dedicated, ongoing funding to counties for critical mental health programs that serve individuals with serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance, supporting some of San Diego County's most vulnerable and unserved populations through services that are responsive to cultural and linguistic needs.

MHSA is comprised of five components:

- Community Services and Supports (CSS)
- Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)
- Innovation (INN)
- Workforce Education and Training (WET)
- Capital Facilities (CF) and Technological Needs (TN)

Through these five components, MHSA funding supports an array of prevention, outreach, treatment, housing, and support services for people of all ages, including those historically underserved by behavioral health resources. Services are offered through a network of County-operated and contracted community-based behavioral health programs. BHS utilizes a population health approach, along with evidence-based practices and data analysis to identify needs and design services that are impactful, equitable, and yield meaningful outcomes for clients. Community engagement forums are utilized to solicit input from the community, stakeholders, consumers, family members, community-based providers, and healthcare organizations through formal and informal convenings and community partners to determine priorities for MHSA investments.

As required by the Welfare and Institutions Code, counties must complete a three-year plan that includes priorities from the community engagement forums, with subsequent annual updates for MHSA-funded programs. The most recent MHSA Three-Year Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2023-24 through 2025-26 (MHSA Three-Year Plan) was approved by the Board on June 13, 2023 (22) and was subsequently submitted to the Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC).

To improve access to crisis care within the East Region of San Diego County, a new community-based crisis stabilization unit (CSU) is being developed and constructed on a County-owned parcel of land located at 200 S Magnolia Avenue in El Cajon. The East Region CSU, which is anticipated to be operational in 2025, will be centrally located in close proximity to public transit to support easy accessibility.

MHSA provides funding for CSUs that serve as a critical service line providing 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. CSUs can help to deescalate a person's level of distress, prevent or treat a behavioral health crisis, and reduce acute symptoms of a mental health condition. Additionally:

- Services are tailored to each person and are provided on a short-term basis, up to 24 hours, and include crisis intervention, mental health assessment, medication assistance, therapy, and peer support.

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- CSUs are designed to be relaxing and quiet, with a calming environment to support mental wellness.
- The goal is to connect people to ongoing care and divert them from higher levels of treatment.

There are currently six County-funded CSUs in San Diego County. Planning for the development and construction of the East Region CSU has been underway since early 2022, and has received support from community groups, service providers, law enforcement, and city officials for the East Region CSU since March 2023 when engagement efforts began.

To support the construction of this new CSU, today's action requests the Board receive and approve the recommended amendment to the MHSA Three-Year Plan (FY 2023-26), which includes transferring of Community Services and Supports (CSS) funds of \$10 million to the Capital Facilities and Technological Needs (CFTN). This request is a portion of the total estimated cost for the \$28 million dollar project. BHS will be seeking to leverage other resources to fund the remaining costs associated with this project and staff may return to the Board for future funding recommendations.

On October 12, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill (SB) 326, the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), which proposes a set of reforms to MHSA, including modernization and a shift in the scope of services funded. The BHSA went to California voters on March 5, 2024, as Proposition 1, and the election results were [REDACTED]. The BHSA makes substantive changes within behavioral health services, accountability, outcome reporting, and funding availability, including a new requirement for counties to report on all funding sources supporting behavioral health care. If the vote passes, most of the shifts associated with BHSA will be implemented beginning July 1, 2026, however, the County will remain committed to optimizing available financial resources to support progress on this capital project and for the other six County-funded CSUs that are currently operational to meet the increasing demand of the community.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the County of San Diego's (County) 2024-2029 Strategic Plan Initiatives of Equity (Health) and Community (Quality of Life) as well as the *regional Live Well San Diego* vision, by reducing disparities and disproportionality; and ensuring access for all through a fully optimized mental health and social service delivery system that provides programs and services for all individuals with behavioral health needs to enhance the community through increasing the well-being of our residents and our environments.

Respectfully submitted,

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SARAH E. AGHASSI
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

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ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A - Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Amendment to FY 2023-26 MHSA Three-Year Plan

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