

DATE: 3/9/2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors

Jeffrey V. Smith, M.D., J.D., County Executive

FROM: Paul E. Lorenz, Chief Executive Officer

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Toni Tullys, Director of Behavioral Health Services

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SUBJECT: Off-Agenda Report on Wellness Center Updates

Under advisement from the Board of Supervisors (Board), and at the request of President Chavez in January 2020, the Administration is providing an off-agenda report related to several wellness centers that have been discussed and the ongoing efforts of the Behavioral Health Services Department to clarify how these various venues could be used to serve clients who might have unique service needs. This report provides the requested information on three different and distinct wellness centers: Homeless Wellness Center, the Ethnic and Culture-Specific Wellness Centers, and the LGBTQ Wellness Center.

Homeless Wellness Center

The Homeless Wellness Center (HWC) is conceived to be a service and administrative site that would serve as a hub for the Valley Homeless Healthcare Program (VHHP) services. It would house medical and behavioral health services and provide a day center with a large range of supportive services. This HWC would provide a space that promotes dignity, healing, and respect for the homeless population in Santa Clara County.

In 2019, VHHP formed a committee to define what the HWC would include. County and community partners also participated in the planning. The group agreed that the HWC would include the following:

- Clinical services to expand the existing medical and behavioral health treatment currently offered through the VHHP integrated model, with the addition of substance use treatment services, dental care, pharmacy, and specialty services such as radiology. In addition to expanding the range of services, the HWC would have expanded evening/weekend hours and ample space for community partners to be housed in the clinic space.
- Comprehensive Support Services through a day center model to offer classes on themes such as cooking, activities of daily living and social skills, General Education Diploma (GED) and employment services, and spiritual care.

- Physical amenities on-site such as exercise equipment, a kitchen, storage for a food pantry and clothes closet, showers, lockers, a library, laundry services, a computer lab, and kennels for clients' animal companions.

It was determined that the HWC needs to be located close to permanent supportive housing units and homeless encampments, and easily accessible by public transportation.

VHHP worked with the Santa Clara County Valley Medical Center (SCVMC) Ambulatory Facilities Planner to draw up initial schematic designs to further define the needed space. The initial plan showed that 30,000 square feet of space were needed to support the services described above. At this time, VHHP is working with various stakeholders to identify the next steps in requesting the project be included in the SCVMC facilities improvement plan. Given that the project is still in the planning stage, a facility site has not yet been identified.

Ethnic and Culture-Specific Wellness Centers

The Ethnic and Culture-Specific Wellness Centers (ECSWC) are prevention and early intervention programs designed to provide and offer low-intensity mental health intervention, community building, culture-specific practices, and other recovery-oriented activities.

The ECSWC services shall be available to County residents of all age groups (ages 0 and older) as identified by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Services shall be designed and implemented to help create access and linkage to treatment in ways that improve timely access to behavioral health services for unserved and underserved individuals and/or families.

The goal of the ECSWC is to provide ethnic and culturally specific services that reduce negative feelings, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, stereotypes and/or discrimination related to being diagnosed with a behavioral illness, having a behavioral illness, and/or seeking behavioral health services. The ECSWC shall increase acceptance, dignity, inclusion, equity, and utilize a networking model with community providers to build trust among clients, their families, communities, and service providers. Services will be strength-based, reflective of ethnic and traditional practices, and promote empowerment of individuals, families, and communities in wellness decision making.

The ECSWC will utilize cultural and traditional approaches to focus on the client's: self-discovery and identity, career vision and readiness, social lifestyle, nutritional choices, college preparation, personal vision, informed perspective, positive communication skills, sense of identity and self-esteem, and adequate life and workplace skills.

Unlike traditional Medi-Cal authorized services, the ECSWC will operate with an open-door policy, whereby individuals who are not diagnosed with behavioral health-related disorders are permitted to attend the program. Clinical behavioral health services may be co-located in the centers with non-clinical cultural activities and programs. Individuals participating in these non-clinical cultural activities and programs are welcome to participate without limitations. Given that the project is still in the planning stage, and that Requests for Proposals are in process; a facility site has not yet been identified.

LGBTQ Wellness Center

A cornerstone of the LGBTQ Wellness Center is ensuring that all service providers work collaboratively on the common goals of serving the diverse LGBTQ community in Santa Clara County.

Through the MHSA, BHSD dedicated two LGBTQ Access and Linkage peer staff positions to support the LGBTQ Wellness work. One has been hired and fully on-boarded at the time of this report, and the other position is in open recruitment. MHSA funding is also already dedicated to additional LGBTQ Wellness Center services and clinical specialty mental health outpatient services for LGBTQ adults over 25 (which is the age cut off for LGBTQ services at The Youth Space and Bill Wilson Center.) Although funding is set aside, and the RFP's are drafted, the services are not able to move forward until a permanent space is identified.

The BHSD LGBTQ Access and Linkage peer staff currently work out of an interim LGBTQ Wellness Center space, called "The Q Corner," at 1075 E. Santa Clara St. in San Jose. The staff are available for both scheduled and walk-in consultations, providing linkages to resources, referrals to services, connections to community, peer support and mentoring, and training and information. The Access and Linkage peer staff are currently planning for the expansion of The Q Corner into North and South County. Although this is a critical start in having a safe and accessible space in Santa Clara County for community members to meet with supportive staff, it is meant to be very interim while the long-term temporary (2-5 years) space is secured.

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