

County of Santa Clara

Office of the County Executive

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DATE: May 2, 2023

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Kasey Halcón, Deputy County Executive

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SUBJECT: Progress update on the Trauma Recovery Center

At the Board of Supervisors meeting on January 24, 2023 (Item No. 16), Supervisor Chavez requested Administration report to the Board during the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget process relating to progress of the Trauma Recovery Center, including information regarding a potential regional institution with shared resources from surrounding counties, and whether that center can provide preventative support and services to high-risk employees.

Progress and Development

Recruitment for the Clinical Director of the Trauma Recovery Center is ongoing, and final interviews are scheduled for mid-May. Administration anticipates the final candidate will be selected in early June, with an estimated start date of early July.

Once hired, the Clinical Director will work with Administration and key stakeholders, including the Behavioral Health Service Department (BHSD), the District Attorney's Victim Services Unit (DAO VSU), the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, and community partners like the Bill Wilson Center, Centre for Living with Dying (BWC) and the American Red Cross, to develop and implement a mental health and support services based *Critical Incident Response Protocol* to ensure service providers are coordinated and prepared to respond to emerging critical incidents (e.g., mass violence, violence against specific groups, and natural disasters).

Administration, in partnership with DAO VSU, continues to engage with stakeholders working in trauma services or those who have directly experienced a mass victimization or critical incident to better understand service gaps and how to best meet survivor and community needs. For example, after a recent mass shooting threat at West Valley College, Saratoga (WVC) in March, Deputy County Executive (DCE) Kasey Halcón met with WVC leadership, DAO VSU, and BWC to coordinate support services for staff, faculty, and students. In the months that followed, DCE Halcón has continued to meet with these stakeholders to gauge the current response and evaluate future needs. It was this incident and the tragic prevalence of gun violence in our communities that helped to inform the need for a *Critical Incident Response Handbook*, to aid local schools, businesses, and community-based organization in preparing for an incident.

The Santa Clara County Trauma Recovery Center (SCC TRC) would be the first of its kind, and there is local and statewide interest in our model as a best practice for critical incident community response. Therefore, Administration is exploring both State and Federal grant opportunities to fund current and future services. Until other funding sources can be identified, Administration intends to leverage current resources to help support Center activities.

Regional Services and Shared Resources

Administration continues to pursue cost sharing and collaborative opportunities with local cities and institutions. Administration has met with the Santa Clara County City Managers Association, the Santa Clara County Fires Chiefs Association, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, and will soon be meeting with local University and Community College Police Chiefs, to talk about the SCC TRC and how it can aid in their response to a critical incident.

It is the goal of the SCC TRC to support all our cities in the event of a critical incident, regardless of cost sharing agreements. Furthermore, in the wake of a critical incident in another local jurisdiction or County, it is possible the SCC TRC could be requested to assist. The California Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES) designates each County's local Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) as a critical incident responder, and each County is required to have a local VWAP program. Therefore, Administration intends to work with local VWAP programs and

CAL OES to explore the possibility of envisioning the SCC TRC as a regional model for critical incident response.

Services for At-Risk Employees

Workplace violence is an ongoing concern in Santa Clara County, and after a mass shooting resulted in the loss of nine community members nearly two years ago—the deadliest mass shooting in Bay Area history—local employers and employees are requesting more comprehensive trauma education and support.

Once hired, the SCC TRC Clinical Director will focus on the development of a *Workplace Violence Prevention Toolkit*. SCC TRC staff and partners would engage with local employers, Unions, and employees, to help them build more supportive work environments and thoughtfully and compassionately work with an employee who is struggling; both strategies that may ultimately prevent incidents of workplace violence. Additionally, these principles of intervention and support, when combined with the enhanced services available through the new Employee Assistance Program can be used by the County to help inform our response to staff who may be struggling and need additional support.

c: Chief Board Aides
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