



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Health System



Date: December 23, 2015
Board Meeting Date: January 26, 2016
Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Louise Rogers, Chief, Health System
Stephen Kaplan, Director, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services
Nancy Lapolla, Administrator, Emergency Medical Services

Subject: Agreement with American Medical Response West – SMART for assessment and transportation of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services clients

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing an agreement with American Medical Response West for assessment and transport of persons with behavioral health emergencies and prescheduled transport of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services clients for the term of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018, in an amount not to exceed \$1,230,216.

BACKGROUND:

The San Mateo County Mental Assessment and Referral Team (SMART) program was established by the Health System's Emergency Medical Services division (EMS) and American Medical Response West (AMR) in 2005. SMART provides a specially trained paramedic response to 911 emergency requests for individuals experiencing behavioral health emergencies who would otherwise be transported by police car or ambulance. The SMART paramedic is trained to de-escalate behavioral health crises and transport clients in a specially equipped sport utility vehicle, which is less intimidating for clients than a police car.

DISCUSSION:

Through the SMART program, AMR provides medical clearance in the field, facilitates appropriate referral and resolution, and reduces the time spent by local law enforcement on these cases. Since the program's inception, 4,254 County residents have been served, 373 (8.8%) more than once. At least 18% of SMART clients either are not transported after medical clearance, evaluation and intervention in the field, or they are transported to an appropriate service/housing provider. Prior to SMART, all clients would have been transported to a hospital emergency department or to jail. The more

costly ambulance ride would have been \$1,746 versus \$574 for SMART. In April 2014, with Measure A funds, a second SMART team was added to extend coverage to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week.

According to EMS requirements, the persons providing SMART program services must be County-accredited paramedics. By definition, such paramedics have to be employed by a County-recognized provider, i.e., AMR (as the County's current provider of emergency ambulance services) or one of the local fire departments. Because these fire departments do not have a mental health program, the only entity in the County with the ability to staff the SMART program is AMR. Under administrative Memorandum B-1, the SMART services would be exempt from the Request for Proposals process as they are provided by a sole source.

The resolution contains the County's standard provision allowing amendments of the County's fiscal obligations by a maximum of \$25,000 (in aggregate).

The agreement and resolution have been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form. This agreement is late due to prolonged negotiation with the vendor and contract review.

The agreement contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Healthy Community by providing emergency services to people having behavioral emergencies. It is anticipated that 75% of behavioral emergency calls to EMS will be handled by the SMART vehicle, instead of the more costly ambulance ride.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE(S):

Measure	FY 2014-15 Actual	FY 2015-16 Projected
Percent of behavioral health emergency calls handled by AMR "SMART" vehicle	79%	80%

FISCAL IMPACT:

The term of the agreement is July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018, and the maximum obligation is \$1,230,216. \$410,072 is included in the BHRS FY 2015-16 Adopted Budget; similar arrangements will be made for future budget years. Of this amount, it is expected that \$86,862 will be funded by Measure A; \$93,210 will be funded by the Mental Health Medi-Cal Administrative Activities program; \$145,000 by Mental Health Services Act funds; \$15,000 by 1991 Realignment; and \$70,000 by Emergency Medical Services Appropriation (Maddy) Fund. In addition, AMR provides a \$375,254 per year in-kind contribution. There is no net county cost associated with this agreement. The payment provisions and levels of service in the agreement are essentially the same as the prior agreement.