



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: HEALTH

File #: 16-814

Board Meeting Date: 12/12/2017

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Louise F. Rogers, Chief, Health System
David A. Young, PhD, MPH, Director, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services

Subject: Report Back on Education Regarding Marijuana Use Prevention Among Youth

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the report on education regarding prevention of marijuana use among youth; advise regarding recommendation.

BACKGROUND:

The Health System welcomes your request for a plan to address the need for education about and prevention of marijuana use among youth in San Mateo County. We know there is much to be learned from the experience of other states as well as our own experience preventing and addressing the impacts of tobacco use. Chief among these learnings is that it is essential that factual information be provided in effective ways to residents regarding the risks of marijuana use. This plan incorporates those lessons.

Our recommendations have the following underlying assumptions:

1) San Mateo County's local plan should prioritize education and outreach to prevent youth access and exposure to marijuana as the primary goal. We know that the negative impacts are worse with earlier onset of use; that youth who use marijuana use other substances at a higher rate; and that marijuana use impairs cognition and impacts brain development until age 25. (Schauer, CDC, 11/7/17) We believe education and outreach efforts should also include trusted adults associated with youth and young adults.

2) The California Department of Public Health is mobilizing a marijuana public education and surveillance campaign similar to other states that have legalized non-medical use. Our plan should be to leverage the statewide education campaign once it is available to meet local needs because it will be offered at a scale that would be very difficult for every jurisdiction to recreate including professional messaging, targeted to specific populations in multiple languages. Our plan should be to influence the development of the State campaigns, to adapt them, and to use them locally,

connecting them to local avenues for outreach.

3) At this time there is neither certainty of funds from the State for these functions nor clarity about timing for any State resourcing. There appears to be an assumption that local taxes will support these and other functions related to marijuana oversight. Unfortunately, other local jurisdictions are not thinking about health education or surveillance as critical activities. They appear to expect the State and/or County to resource and respond to these needs. If we want education efforts to occur alongside the expected considerable marketing by the marijuana industry we will have to make upfront investments and recover these if possible through future revenues.

DISCUSSION:

1) San Mateo County should try to establish a revenue structure for local activities that is sufficient to cover local costs for the Health System to mobilize local health education, prevention and surveillance activities.

2) The Health System should take the lead in contracting with a professional media/communications firm to launch an initial campaign until such time as the statewide initiative has been established and a revenue structure for ongoing activities is available.

The initial effort should mobilize a fact based, educational campaign using print, online and broadcast media, local social media and a website with prevention messages. The campaign would target children and youth, young adults, trusted adults connected to them, and other vulnerable populations such as young parents. The campaign would include 10 education/information sessions and materials to be shared with the County Office of Education, schools, community colleges, and other local organizations serving youth, young adults and trusted adults. The campaign would target increasing the extent to which perception of marijuana recognizes real risks. This campaign would be integrated with other substance use prevention activities where possible, including existing community prevention partnerships, and leverage successful local work to prevent tobacco use. Preventing re-normalization of tobacco use after declining rates should be an associated goal. The Youth Commission and other peer audiences would be enlisted to assist in developing the campaign.

The Memo has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form.

The report on education regarding the prevention of marijuana use contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Healthy Community by prioritizing education and outreach to prevent youth access and exposure to marijuana.

Cost estimate: FY 18-19 \$250,000 for a campaign to launch Summer 2018. Potential for expansion if other counties want to work together on regional sharing of development and placement costs to maximize community exposure to prevention messages.

Measures that will help us evaluate progress would be: a) % of young people (youth and young adults) that have heard the message that marijuana is harmful to your brain; and b) % of young people that agree with that message.

At your Board's request, the Health System will incorporate the \$250,000 budget associated with the campaign in the mid-year changes for the two year FY 17-18 and FY 18-19 budget.