

February 27, 2024

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93003

SUBJECT

**Receive and File the 2022-23 Annual Activity Report for the County of Ventura
Community Health Center Board**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Receive and file the 2022-23 Annual Activity Report for the County of Ventura
Community Health Center Board.

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY

The item presented in this Board letter supports the Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities strategic priority of the County Strategic Plan as it is designed to meet the goal of providing access to quality healthcare required for our community to thrive.

DISCUSSION

The County's designation as a "Health Center" under section 330(e) of the federal Public Health Services Act is critical to being well positioned to take full advantage of the benefits that come from this special status. The eighteen (18) clinics that constitute the County's "Health Center" are known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Currently, the FQHCs manage more than 95,000 unique patients a year, of which over 5,000 are provided services through the Health Care for the Homeless program. Since the County's FQHCs are considered "safety net" providers, they are compensated at higher reimbursement rates from Medi-Cal and Medicare than the County's non-FQHC clinics. The goals of the FQHC system is to improve access to quality health care for the community with a focus on underserved people, such as the homeless and those with limited means. In addition to ensuring greater reimbursement rates for patient visits, the HRSA also funds a variety of other projects, such as access to dental care, mental health services, substance use disorder treatment program, health care for the homeless, community outreach and benefits assistance, health education, and HIV prevention/treatment programs.

In June of 2015 your Board established the Community Health Center (CHC) Board to meet a condition of operating FQHCs and having access to various grant programs administered by HRSA. The CHC Board guides the Health Care Agency (HCA) in its mission to provide comprehensive health care that is quality-driven, affordable, and culturally competent to the people of Ventura County. The CHC Board is actively engaged in the provision of high-quality health care for the community, which aligns with the County's Mission, Vision, and Values. The CHC Board meets monthly to review and approve such items as the FQHC budgets, clinical hours of operation (including after-hours access), licensing and privileging of all providers, any clinic closures or additions of service, identification of service gaps and community needs, billing and collection processes (including a mandated sliding fee discount policy), and access to care, specifically for the uninsured and underinsured. Additionally, the CHC Board approves all new programs and grant applications. In 2022-23, the CHC Board approved a budget of over \$20.5 million that includes HRSA base funding and supplemental grants to increase access in COVID-19 treatment and vaccines, improved blood pressure control through home blood pressure cuffs, capital improvement and infrastructure.

A significant success noted in this Annual Activity Report is the stellar marks received from the HRSA Operational Site Visit. Site Visits happen every three years and ensure that the Health Centers are operating under compliance. Ventura County's Health Center received minimal 'contingent' findings that were all remedied prior to any official reporting. Therefore, Ventura County's FQHCs were found in complete compliance. In addition, the FQHCs received two quality awards from HRSA for advancing health information technology for quality and addressing social risk factors.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel, and Auditor-Controller's Office. If you have any questions regarding these recommendations, please contact Theresa Cho, MD at 805-677-5223.



Theresa Cho, MD
CEO Ambulatory Care



Barry Zimmerman
Health Care Agency Director

Attachment 1 - CHC Board Annual Activity Report FY 2022-23