

*Setting the Standard in Health Care Excellence*

May 18, 2021

Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**SUBJECT: Approval of, and Authorization for the Ventura County Behavioral Health Director or Designee to Submit, the Mental Health Services Act Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project Plan, a Field-Based Treatment and Intervention Program Designed to Respond to Crises and Provide Short-Term Mental Health Intervention, to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, for Approval of Funding in the Amount of \$3,380,986, for the Term of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval of, and authorization for the Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Director or designee to submit, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project Plan (Exhibit 1), a field-based treatment and intervention program designed to respond to crises and provide short-term mental health intervention, to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC), for approval of funding in the amount of \$3,380,986, for the term of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025.

**FISCAL/MANDATES IMPACT:**

**MHSA Budget Unit # 3260-3269 (Innovations)**

Mandatory: No  Yes  Cite Authority:

Source of Funding: Proposition 63 Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)

Funding Match Required: No

Impact on Other Department(s): None

	<u>FY 2020-2021</u>	<u>FY 2021-2022</u>
Summary of Revenue and Total Costs		
Revenue:	\$0	\$175,000
Costs:		
Direct Cost	\$0	\$175,000
Indirect - Dept.	\$0	\$0
Total Costs	\$0	\$175,000
Net County Costs	\$0	\$0

<b>FY 2020-21 Adjusted Budget for MHSAs Innovations BU #3260-3269</b>				
	<b>Adopted Budget</b>	<b>Adjusted Budget</b>	<b>Projected Actual</b>	<b>Estimated Savings/(Deficit)</b>
Appropriations	\$1,818,203	\$1,961,883	\$1,719,933	\$241,950
Revenue	\$1,818,203	\$1,818,203	\$2,491,568	\$673,365
Net Cost	\$0	\$143,680	(\$771,635)	\$915,315

Note: Revenue and appropriations for this item have been included in the FY 2021-22 preliminary budget for Innovations Budget Unit 3260-3269.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Background**

The MHSOAC oversees programs funded by the MHSAs which was passed by voters in 2004. The mission of the MHSOAC is to collaborate with non-MHSA service providers to catalyze transformational changes across service systems so that everyone who needs mental health care has access to and receives effective and culturally competent care. MHSAs innovations category of funding seeks to improve the quality of mental health services, including measurable outcomes involving reductions in hospitalization, incarceration and homelessness recidivism. Innovations projects are considered novel, creative and/or ingenious mental health practices/approaches that contribute to learning, and that are developed within communities through a process that is inclusive and representative, especially of unserved, underserved and inappropriately served individuals. Under the MHSAs innovations category, counties are expected to develop innovative projects, and use the information learned from such projects, to improve the behavioral health care system.

Ventura County has an ongoing focus on how to address several critical issues identified by the 2019 Community Mental Health Needs Assessment (CMHNA) as outlined in the most recent 2020-2023 MHSAs Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan. Subsequently, with the COVID-19 pandemic, these issues have only further

demonstrated the increased need for change. One significant finding of the CMHNA was the importance of enhanced services for individuals who are homeless and living with mental illness, access to culturally responsive mental health services, and access in general to mental health services. Alternately, but not independently, a need for an augmentation of our crisis team services has been identified. Community stakeholders have flagged the need for a response to: 1) crisis calls that do not meet medical necessity for crisis intervention, but are still urgent and field-based and 2) clients who were served by the crisis team, but exceed their time on a hold in the emergency room and were not hospitalized.

In response to these identified needs in our community, VCBH has designed the Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project.

### **Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project**

The Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project is a Four-year project that addresses the MHSAs innovations component and focuses on increasing access to services for underserved populations while also promoting interagency collaboration through a mobile mental health van. The Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project Plan is designed to deliver quality, brief, consistent, walk-in style mobile mental health therapy to residents who have recently been in crisis, live in underserved areas, or who are part of underserved or underserved communities. The program aims to increase access to care, decrease mental health symptoms, ease the stigma of mental health, and reduce the toll mental illness takes on local people, organizations, and the social network of the community. Using MHSAs innovations funds, a specially outfitted van will be purchased and a menu of flexible services will be provided by a diverse multidisciplinary team that will be identified through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process and contracted to focus on patient-centered care through patient education and empowerment in the community and on-call. Services would be short-term solutions focused mental health sessions, substance use services, peer support, injections or prescription of psychiatric medications, prevention screenings and testing of health factors, wound care, and diabetes and hypertension monitoring.

Pop-up clinics will be used to establish trust through routine outreach and provide engagement opportunities in some of the County's most vulnerable communities, such as (1) farmworker housing, (2) homeless shelters, and (3) cities with high numbers of people who are monolingual, have high poverty rates, or high homeless counts. Pop-up events will be coordinated with the Health Care Agency's mobile clinic to provide physical and mental health care clinic services and medication administration.

In accordance with state regulations, the proposed Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project was developed with the participation and input of stakeholders, and subsequently posted for a 30-day public comment period beginning March 15, 2021. A public hearing

was held on April 19, 2021, after which the project was approved by the Behavioral Health Advisory Board.

VCBH recommends approval of, and authorization for the VCBH Director or designee to submit, the Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project Plan, a field-based treatment and intervention program designed to respond to crises and provide short-term mental health intervention, to the MHSOAC, for approval of funding in the amount of \$3,380,986, for the term of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025. Upon MHSOAC approval of the Plan, VCBH will return to your Board with any substantive changes to the Plan. VCBH will also return to your Board for approval of any agreement that arises from the RFP process. The Mobile Mental Health Program Innovative Plan will be included in future overall MHSA Innovation project updates sent to your Board for review and approval, as required by the Department of Health Care Services.

This Board letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel. If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact VCBH Director Sevet Johnson or HCA Assistant Chief Financial Officer Narcisa Egan at (805) 981-1881.



SEVET JOHNSON, PsyD  
Behavioral Health Director



BARRY ZIMMERMAN  
Health Care Agency Director

Attachment:

Exhibit 1 – Mobile Mental Health Innovative Project Plan