

**Legistar Item 07-1644**  
**Mental Health Department**  
**Amendment to Agreement with Maxim Healthcare Services**  
**Original Meeting Date 11/6/07, Continued to 11/27/07**

The following information is provided to address questions raised by the Board and the Chief Administrative Officer at the November 6, 2007 Board meeting relative to the County's Psychiatric Health Facility's (PHF) operations.

***How is the census managed at 12-13 clients so that there is always room for El Dorado County patients?***

The PHF is a 15-bed, acute, inpatient facility. In the last ten years the census has reached this capacity on only a handful of occasions. Because there are usually empty beds, and the costs to operate the PHF are fairly fixed whether there are 2 patients or 10, the County contracts with other counties to care for their acute psychiatric patients. However, the County may stop accepting out of County admissions **at any time**, and usually do when the census reaches 12 patients, saving the last three beds for any El Dorado County admissions that may occur. No County patient has ever been refused admittance to the PHF due to lack of bed capacity. In one situation earlier this year, a Sacramento County patient was returned to Sacramento when the census reached 15 patients, to make room for an El Dorado County patient that needed to be hospitalized.

***Explain how costs for out-of-county clients are billed/collected.***

All contracts with other counties specify a daily rate that is to be paid for each day their patient is cared for at the PHF. If an out of county patient has no Medi-Cal or other insurance, the admitting county is responsible for paying the entire bill. If the patient is a Medi-Cal recipient, the department bills Medi-Cal for the stay. Medi-Cal reimburses one half the rate and the admitting county is charged with the other half of the outstanding bill. The department's collection rate is nearly 100% since they can refuse to accept any additional patients from a county that does not pay, and psychiatric beds are in short supply.

***How is the PHF staffed?***

The PHF is licensed by the State Department of Mental Health. Staffing levels are mandated by the Psychiatric Health Facility Laws and Regulations. For 1 to 10 patients, the department is required to have 4 licensed staff (nurses, psychiatric technicians, LVNs) and 4 mental health workers in a 24-hour period. When the census reaches 11, the department is required to have another licensed employee and another mental health worker within a 24-hour period. The department attempts to staff the PHF consistently for 11-15 patients. An exception occurred in the summer of this year when there were four regular staff out for extended periods of time due to a retirement, family sick leave and an administrative leave. Based on this staff shortage, the department staffed the PHF for 10 patients, and stopped accepting out of county admissions at 8, leaving two beds open for El Dorado County patients. Additionally, the staff shortage required an increased use of registry (contract) workers to meet the required staffing levels.

The procedure for staffing the PHF and filling monthly shifts occurs in the following order:

1. permanent full and part-time county staff
2. non-overtime extra-help staff
3. permanent staff that is overtime

4. extra-help staff receiving overtime (also employed elsewhere in the county), and
5. registry (contract) workers.

Up until recently, the PHF has had a shortage of extra-help staff from which to draw, but they have recently hired several people who will help reduce the need for registry staff.

***Additional Information***

Lastly, the Mental Health Commission has been collaborating with PHF staff in reviewing both our clinical and fiscal operations and procedures with the intent to present a report to the Board in January 2008. This will provide another opportunity for a more detailed discussion of the PHF and its care of acute, psychiatrically impaired adults.