



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-0321, **Version:** 1

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Health and Human Services Agency, Behavioral Health Division, recommending the Board:

- 1) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign Agreement for Services 447-S1711 with Netsmart Technologies, for the provision of the Netsmart Avatar electronic health record and billing system, for the term May 22, 2017 through May 31, 2022, with a maximum contractual obligation of \$750,000; and
- 2) Authorize the Purchasing Agent, or designee, to execute further documents relating to Agreement for Services 447-S1711, including amendments which do not increase the maximum dollar amount or term of the Agreement, and contingent upon approval by County Counsel and Risk Management.

**FUNDING:** Medi-Cal, Mental Health Realignment and Mental Health Services Act.

**DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:**

Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) recommending the Board approve and authorize Agreement for Services 447-S1711 for the continued provision of the Netsmart Avatar electronic database and billing system service, allowing for timely and accurate Medi-Cal billing while ensuring that the County continues to conform with the global healthcare transition from paper to electronic health care records, as well as maintaining continued compliance with the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009.

**DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:**

In 2005, the Board approved a Mental Health Agreement to contract with the California Regional Mental Health Systems Coalition Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to develop an integrated information systems infrastructure. The JPA members researched available software systems suitable for Mental Health records and billing that satisfied the requirements of the California Medi-Cal system. As a result, the JPA selected and implemented the Avatar system, a product of the Netsmart Technologies Corporation, to achieve this goal and meet the State requirements.

Despite the quality and success of the product, the Application Service Provider (ASP) billing configuration proved to be problematic and the JPA system was dissolved by June 30, 2013. HHSA desired to continue using Avatar due to the financial and staff time investment in developing and using the software, the multitude of records contained in the software platform, and to ensure continuity of record keeping for those clients whose records already reside in the system. The Board approved Agreement for Services 465-S1211 on May 22, 2012 (File No. 12-0629, Agenda No. 15) for a five (5) year term.

During the period of the Agreement Netsmart has proven to be a consistent partner by providing support and customizing as requested. Electronic billing processes result in Medi-Cal funding to support Behavioral Health services.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Disapproval of Agreement for Services 447-S1711 will result in a gap in availability of an electronic health record system, and will impact HHSA's ability to submit timely and accurate Medi-Cal billings.

The Behavioral Health Division will revert back to paper records thus failing to conform with the global healthcare transition from paper records to electronic health records, as well as failing to comply with the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009.

**OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

County Counsel, Risk Management, and Information Technologies.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no Net County Cost associated with this Agenda item. Sufficient appropriations were included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17 budget, and will be included in future budgets for the term of the Agreement.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

- 1) Clerk of the Board to obtain signature of Chair on two (2) original Agreements for Services 447-S1711.
- 2) Clerk of the Board to return one (1) fully executed Agreement to the HHSA Contracts Unit at 3057 Briw Road.

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:**

Health and Human Services Agency Strategic Plan Objective 4.1.7: Identify cost effective emerging technologies to improve service delivery and drive efficiency for HHSA employees.

**CONTACT**

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