



County of El Dorado

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Legislation Text

File #: 12-0294, **Version:** 1

Health and Human Services Agency, Mental Health Division recommending the Board authorize the Chair to sign a letter of withdrawal addressed to the California Regional Mental Health System Coalition Joint Powers Authority (JPA), and each of the members thereof, in accordance with the Agreement between the County of El Dorado and the JPA.

FUNDING: Medi-Cal, Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT), Realignment and MHSA.

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost: There is no Net County Cost associated with the Agreement between the County and the California Regional Mental Health System Coalition (JPA).

Background: In 2005, the County entered into a contract with the JPA as a participating member to purchase a new electronic billing and medical records system for use in the Mental Health Division (MHD). The JPA contracted with Netsmart for use of their Avatar system.

Staff from Information Technologies (IT) and Health Services has been working diligently over the course of the last two years with the JPA and directly with Netsmart to ensure the functionality, accuracy and timeliness of billing software and processes. Netsmart has been responsive in addressing issues identified by the County and the Mental Health billing processes have improved significantly. At this time, the member Counties of the JPA have determined that it would be more beneficial for each county to contract individually with their preferred software vendor. As a result, the JPA is disbanding.

IT and Health Services have reviewed available software solutions and have determined that Netsmart's Avatar system includes valuable functionality, providing revenue recovery and clinical recordkeeping. MHD is currently in negotiation with Netsmart to implement the Avatar software and licensing for same locally. HHS will be returning to the Board with a recommendation in the near future regarding the outcome of those negotiations. The annual cost for the software and support is anticipated to be less than the annual amount previously paid through the JPA.

Reason for Recommendation: Pursuant to the Agreement between the County and the JPA, Article VI, Parties, "any Member desiring to withdraw from the Coalition may do so if the following condition is met: (i) The request to withdraw is submitted to all the remaining Members on or before April 1st of the then current Fiscal Year. The requested withdrawal will be effective at the end of that Fiscal Year." At this time the JPA is disbanding effective June 30, 2012 and the County must submit a letter of withdrawal as part of that process. Notice of intention to withdraw from the JPA will satisfy contractual requirements and allow the County to pursue a local electronic record and billing solution independent of the JPA.

The Mental Health Staff and County Information Technologies have concurred that the Avatar system includes valuable functionality, providing revenue recovery and clinical recordkeeping. MHD is currently in negotiation with Netsmart to implement the Avatar software and licensing for same locally.

HHSA will be returning to the Board with a recommendation in the near future regarding the outcome of those negotiations.

Action to be taken following Board approval:

1. Chair to sign twelve (12) letters of notice to withdraw.
2. Board Clerk's Office to return eleven (11) signed letters to MHD.
3. MHD to mail letters as appropriate.

Contact: Daniel Nielson, 642-7275

Concurrences: County Counsel