



NEVADA COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
AGENCY

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: July 14, 2020

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: **Phebe Bell**

SUBJECT: Resolution approving execution of a renewal Professional Services Agreement contract with Shellee Ann Sepko, LMFT, d/b/a What's Up? Wellness Checkups, for the provision of mental health screening services for high school students in eastern and western Nevada County, as a component of the County's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Plan in the maximum amount of \$103,780 for Fiscal Year 2020/21.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: Contract services are funded by MHSA (Mental Health Services Act) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) dollars. PEI funding is intended to support strategies to help identify and increase prevention efforts and responses to early signs of emotional and behavioral health problems among specific at-risk populations. These services are included in the Department's FY 2020/21 budget and there are no county general fund dollars required in the agreement.

BACKGROUND: Every community and school hopes to develop a roadmap for the success of all students, and it has become evident that schools cannot focus solely on the academic success of young people. Both the physical and mental well-being of a young person has direct implications for that youth's ability to be productive as a student and as a member of their school and community. Embracing the concept of the whole child has led schools and communities to integrate systems that address the academic, social, and emotional needs of teens.

Teen Screen Schools and Communities is a national mental health and suicide risk screening program developed by Columbia University's Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in

response to research revealing that 90 percent of youth who die by suicide suffer from a diagnosable mental illness and that 64 percent experience symptoms for at least a year prior to their deaths.

Under this agreement, the Contractor will continue to implement the Teen Screen model to make voluntary mental health checkups available to all of Nevada County's ninth graders in the Nevada County Joint Union High School District and the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District and any other high school students referred by the schools and/or parents.

The Contractor shall establish a Project Team which will include the following core positions: a Project Director and a Community Resource Coordinator who will coordinate efforts to offer screening in participating Nevada County schools. In addition, the Contractor will make available translation/interpretation services to create opportunities for outreach in the Hispanic communities in Grass Valley and Truckee on an as-needed basis and provide Group Facilitation services for on-campus prevention groups including recruitment, coordinating services through student assistance programs, facilitating groups and evaluation of group effectiveness. The program is completely voluntary, and parental consent and youth assent are required for participation in the program. The program involves the following stages:

- Obtaining parental consent;
- Participant Assent;
- Screening Questionnaire
- Clinical/Debriefing Interview;
- Parent Notification.

The economic ramifications of the Coronavirus pandemic are significantly impacting major funding sources relied on by the department. Behavioral Health is monitoring the situation closely and is actively involved in advocacy efforts through the County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA) to ensure reasonable funding for county services. Additionally, the department has reviewed the 20-21 budget carefully and areas for reduction have been identified to reduce the pressure on existing funding sources. At the same time, demand for behavioral health services is likely to increase over coming months due to both the economic stress and social isolation of this time, as well as due to increasing numbers of Medi-Cal beneficiaries in our county. The department is proposing to move forward with critical contracts at levels similar to what was originally budgeted, but with the understanding that midyear reductions may be necessary if revenues continue to decline. Behavioral Health staff are in close communication with all contractors and have provided support to them around modifying their processes and protocols so that staff can remain safe and community members can safely get the care they need. Staff are also working closely with providers to increase productivity so that we can continue to maximize our ability to draw down federal funds. Providers are aware that midyear cuts may be needed if the economic situation worsens. Additional analysis and review will be done as needed throughout the year. This contract does not rely on general funds and Behavioral Health's current anticipated revenues along with fund balances are sufficient to support this contract at this time. It is recommended that the Board approve this renewal Agreement as it provides services that can intervene with at-risk youth and connect them with the mental health services that can help save lives.

Item Initiated and Approved by: Phebe Bell, MSW, Director of Behavioral Health