

MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administrative Services

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jeffrey S. Brown, M.P.H., M.S.W., Director of Health and Human Services
Graham Knaus, Assistant Director of Health and Human Services

DATE: January 6, 2015

SUBJECT: California State Association of Counties 2014 Merit Awards

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Recognize Placer County for receiving three California State Association of Counties 2014 Merit Awards.

BACKGROUND:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) annually reviews innovative program efforts from counties across the state. Reviews focus on county innovation to implement service delivery models that improve services to residents while preserving limited resources. They also recognize the challenges counties often face with limited resources and complex, prescriptive rules to meet Federal/State mandates. County efforts that improve services and efficiency are highlighted. CSAC will be presenting three CSAC Merit Awards to Placer County for innovative efforts to improve services in the community.

Programs that received a merit award include:

Co-Occurring Full Service Partnership: Placer County's Co-Occurring Full Service Partnership Program serves individuals with both mental health and substance use disorders by engaging them in ongoing services, reducing hospitalizations and emergency services usage. The Full Service Partnership (FSP) utilizes intensive engagement strategies aimed at providing treatment options while reducing barriers to accessing both mental health and substance use disorder treatment concurrently. The intent of the program is to reduce expensive and restrictive placements in the County's Psychiatric Health Facility by working with clients to obtain the education and resources necessary with FSP assistance to manage their co-occurring diagnoses without frequent hospitalizations. In the first year of operation, the program produced a net savings of \$244,718 due to reduced need for psychiatric hospital beds and lower emergency room costs.

Integration of Older Adults Services: Placer County's Older Adult Services Coordination program integrates service delivery across the public/private adult continuum of care to better serve the county's aged population. As the number of elderly in our community increases, the challenges to coordinate care for those with a variety of needs increases as well. Elderly with special needs are particularly hard to serve. The recent economic downturn had a disproportionate impact on seniors triggering a sharp increase in the number of Adult Protective Services (APS) reports. In order to better serve this growing population, this program was implemented to improve the integration of funding streams, as well as the coordination of service delivery from a variety of county and community programs. As a result, the County established an Older Adult Services (OAS) Coordinator position to function as a senior peer counselor as well as to coordinate older adult services with multiple partners. The position convenes a multi-disciplinary team to identify appropriate services, and then create a service plan for the senior and their family. The goal is to create a plan which helps the senior to remain safe, independent and healthy while addressing mental health and substance use disorder issues. In its first year of implementation, the program increased the stability for 25 older adults otherwise likely to be conserved or lose their independence while saving the County \$100,000.

Human Services Center: Placer County's Human Services Center embraces leading edge technologies to provide efficient delivery of public assistance, improve performance and demonstrate outstanding customer service. In August 2011, using successful private sector practices, the County launched the Human Services Center (HSC) maximizing technology, streamlining business processes and improving customer service, to be competitive with the private sector. The Human Service Center included three significant business changes:

Call Center - The call center was the first in California to serve all assistance programs for applications and on-going beneficiaries. It has consistently outperformed private sector standards and also received a National Association of Counties Award earlier this year.

Task Based Workload Management/Client Self Service: Human Services moved from case-based to a task-based approach to processing applications and on-going benefits. Cases no longer belong to one staff person, now any staff can help an applicant or beneficiary. In addition, Human Services has implemented full on-line capability for easy access and self-service by customers from any location.

Lobby Management-Improving Visitor Experience: Adopted the Wal-Mart "greeter" approach for Human Services' lobbies to welcome visitors and provide immediate assistance to reduce wait times. The greeter takes paperwork, provides forms, diverts customers to lobby phones that tie to the Call Center or to lobby computers to apply online or print needed verification, and assists with check in at our automated kiosk to be seen.

These three business changes resulted in streamlining the application process for beneficiaries, significantly improving customer service, while also increasing the productivity of staff to meet resident needs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.