



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: March 19, 2013

05

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF LAURA'S LAW (DISTRICTS: ALL)

SUMMARY

Overview

San Diego County has been a leader in providing behavioral health services and raising public awareness concerning mental illness. With the "It's Up to Us" campaign, we have shined a light on the need to better understand mental illness, reduce stigma and encourage people to help others, or seek help for themselves. Knowing the impact that mental illness can have on the front lines of law enforcement, the County created the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) program in 1996 to partner licensed mental health clinicians with uniformed law enforcement officers to provide emergency assessment and referral for individuals with mental illness who come to the attention of law enforcement.

Since successful mental health treatment goes well beyond the PERT program, the County of San Diego implemented the In Home Outreach Team (IHOT). IHOT is a centralized program offering three mobile teams to provide home outreach to adults with serious mental illness who are reluctant or "resistant" to receiving mental health services. IHOT also provides extensive support and education to family members who are dealing with the mental illness of a loved one.

IHOT is a voluntary alternative to Laura's Law, which was created with the passage of AB 1421. Laura's Law allows for the adjudicated involuntary outpatient treatment of any person with a mental disorder who, as a result of that mental disorder, and if not appropriately treated can be deemed a danger to others or to himself or herself, or can become gravely disabled. However, Nevada County is the only county in the state that has implemented Laura's Law. Los Angeles County has introduced a modified version. Additionally, the state legislature is introducing new bills that would modify Laura's Law.

Today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer to analyze the differences and similarities between IHOT and Laura's Law, provide a complete review and analysis of related proposed Laura's Law legislation, provide recommended next steps, provide quarterly updates on the results of IHOT and report back to the board within 90 days. This information will provide the Board of Supervisors with the information necessary before considering potential action.

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF LAURA'S LAW (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Recommendation(s)

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN JACOB AND SUPERVISOR D. ROBERTS

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to analyze the differences and similarities between the County's In Home Outreach Team Program (IHOT) and Laura's Law, specifically service, staffing and costs.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a complete review and analysis of related, proposed Laura's Law legislation.
3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide recommended next steps in closing the gaps, if any, between IHOT and Laura's Law.
4. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide quarterly comprehensive updates on the results of IHOT to the Board.
5. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to report back to the board within 90 days.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact with the recommended actions.

Business Impact Statement

N/A

Advisory Board Statement

N/A

Background

San Diego County has been a leader in providing behavioral health services and raising public awareness about the need to deal with mental illness. With the "It's Up to Us" campaign, we have shined a light on the need to better understand mental illness, reduce stigma and encourage people to help others or seek help for themselves. Knowing the impact that mental illness can have on the front lines of law enforcement, the County created the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) program in 1996 to partner licensed mental health clinicians with uniformed law enforcement officers/deputies to provide emergency assessment and referral for individuals with mental illness who come to the attention of law enforcement. PERT evaluates the situation, assesses the individual's mental health condition and needs, and, if appropriate, transports individual to a hospital or other treatment center, or refers him/her to a community-based resource or treatment facility.

Since successful mental health treatment goes well beyond the PERT program, the County of San Diego implemented the In Home Outreach Team (IHOT). IHOT is a centralized program offering three mobile teams to provide home outreach to adults with serious mental illness who are reluctant or "resistant" to receiving mental health services. IHOT also provide extensive support and education to family members who are dealing with the mental illness of a loved one. IHOT combines the services of a peer specialist, family specialist and a mental health professional to work with those who are difficult to engage and resistant to treatment. This program was adopted as a three-year demonstration project which sunsets January, 2015.

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF LAURA'S LAW (DISTRICTS: ALL)

IHOT is a voluntary alternative to Laura's Law, which was created with the passage of AB 1421. Laura's Law allows for the adjudicated involuntary outpatient treatment of any person with a mental disorder who, as a result of that mental disorder, and if not appropriately treated can be deemed a danger to others or to himself or herself, or can become gravely disabled. However, Nevada County is the only county in the state that has implemented Laura's Law. Los Angeles County has introduced a modified version. Additionally, the state legislature is introducing new bills that would modify Laura's Law.

In addition to the IHOT program, the County's Behavioral Health Division has significantly increased the services to high-risk adults with serious mental illness and histories of not engaging in community-based mental health care due to their reluctance or resistance to care and/or limited access point for services. These include:

- The implementation of a Behavioral Health (BH) Court to serve individuals with serious mental illness in the community in lieu of jail; in February 2013, the first graduates of this program were recognized at a celebration of their successful completion of the program.
- The implementation of the Kick-Start program, an early intervention program to address the first signs of serious mental illness and to avoid more costly institutional based interventions later in the young person's life.
- The implementation of the Bridge to Recovery program to provide assertive after-care services for individuals with a primary substance abuse disorder who are leaving the County's Psychiatric Hospital's Emergency Psychiatric Unit (EPU) and the inpatient unit to ensure that they connect to the necessary alcohol and recovery services they need to help with their recovery.
- The implementation of the HOPE Connections program that provides peer and family specialists for individuals and their families while they are at the EPU and in the San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital, to help them understand the behavioral health system, what to expect next in their care and to provide on-going support to assist them in their care-seeking and recovery process.

These efforts have been largely possible through funding from the Mental Health Services Act for system-transforming services to high risk and underserved individuals.

Today's action would ask the Chief Administrative Officer to analyze the differences and similarities between IHOT and Laura's Law, provide a complete review and analysis of related proposed Laura's Law legislation, provide recommended next steps, provide quarterly updates on the results of IHOT and report back to the board within 90 days. This information will provide the Board of Supervisors with the information they need before considering potential action.

Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan

N/A

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF LAURA'S LAW (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB
Vice-Chairwoman, Second District

DAVE ROBERTS
Supervisor, Third District

ATTACHMENT(S)
N/A