

County of Santa Clara
Behavioral Health Services Department



24-4396

DATE: February 27, 2024 (Item No. 31)
TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Sherri Terao, Director, Behavioral Health Services Department
SUBJECT: Eating Disorder Treatment Services Contracts

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider recommendations relating to eating disorder treatment services. (LA-1)

Possible action:

- a. Approve Agreement with Los Gatos Treatment Center, dba LGTC Group, (LGTC) relating to providing youth residential eating disorder treatment services in an amount not to exceed \$679,415 for period February 27, 2024 through June 30, 2024, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality. A single source exception to competitive procurement has been approved by the Office of Countywide Contracting Management pursuant to Board of Supervisors Policy 5.6.5.1(D)(2)(a).
- b. Approve First Amendment to Agreement with LGTC relating to providing Standard Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient, and Partial Hospitalization (OP/IOP/PHP) eating disorder treatment services increasing the maximum contract amount by \$950,000 from \$400,000 to \$1,350,000, with no change to the term of the Agreement, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality.
- c. Approve First Amendment to Agreement with Sunol Hills, LLC, relating to providing OP/IOP/PHP eating disorder treatment services increasing the maximum contract amount by \$350,000 from \$400,000 to \$750,000, with no change to the term of the Agreement, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Approval of the recommended actions would have no net impact to the County General Fund. Services under these Agreements are funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and are included in the Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD) Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 Adopted Budget. The amount paid to the County Contracted Providers (CCPs) would be based on actual utilization by County-referred patients.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND BACKGROUND

County and Managed Care Plans' Obligations to Provide Treatment Services for Eating Disorders

The State of California categorizes anorexia and bulimia as conditions eligible for “medically necessary” services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries for adults and youth. Treatment for eating disorders typically blend medical and mental health interventions, which are covered and organized by the Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCPs) in Santa Clara County. In some instances, conditions are severe enough to require specialty mental health services, which, in Santa Clara County, are organized by BHSD as the (Specialty) Mental Health Plan for the County. For individuals requiring both medical and specialty mental health interventions, the County’s BHSD must work with the MCPs to ensure that patients receive all necessary coordinated care.

Treatment modalities include outpatient services, residential care, partial hospitalization, and acute care. To better meet the needs of adults and youth with eating disorders who also require specialty mental health services, BHSD recommends establishing a new agreement with LGTC, and amending two separate agreements, one with LGTC and one with Sunol Hills.

New Agreement with LGTC for Youth Residential Eating Disorder Treatment Services

The new Agreement with LGTC would provide eating disorder residential treatment services to approximately seven youth per year. Residential eating disorder treatment services consist of structured weekly treatment services that include individual and family therapy sessions, psychiatric services, medical consultations, access to laboratory testing, frequent monitoring of vital signs, body weight, medication administration, individual nutrition sessions, monitoring of calorie intake, and therapeutic groups. Therapeutic groups consist of exposure therapy, nutritional education, dialectical behavioral therapy, behavioral management, body image groups, communication skills training, self-calming skills, exercise support, relapse prevention groups, and discharge planning. Upon completion of residential services, youth transition to a lower level of eating disorder treatment to support recovery and reduce readmission to higher levels of care. Residential treatment services help prevent acute hospitalization and the development of other serious life-threatening medical conditions.

Amendments to Existing Agreements with LGTC and Sunol Hills for Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient, and Partial Hospitalization (OP/IOP/PHP) Eating Disorder Treatment Services

The County currently has agreements with four providers for OP/IOP/PHP treatment services. The four providers are LGTC, Sunol Hills, the Healthy Teen Project, and Cielo House. Combined, they have been able to assist approximately 57 individuals per year. Cielo

House's contract will terminate on March 8, 2024 due to program closure. As a result, the proposed amendments and budget increases for LGTC and Sunol Hills are necessary to maintain system capacity and access to eating disorder services.

OP/IOP/PHP services consist of weekly treatment schedules for both youth and adults, and may include individual and family therapy sessions, consultations with other providers of psychiatric and medical services (e.g., access to labs, monitoring of vitals, and medication compliance), as well as weigh-ins, monitoring of calorie intake, and therapeutic groups as needed. Individual, group, or family therapy is also provided as needed to improve physical and mental health condition, avoid hospitalization, and reduce the need for admissions into higher levels of care. Regular ongoing communication and consultation with the patient's team of providers (including those outside the program) comprised of the patient's primary care physician, outpatient eating disorder specialist, psychiatrist, and mental health providers is also part of ensuring a continuity of care and a smooth transition of services into and from outpatient treatment.

Under the continuum of care, individuals can receive PHP services for up to 35 days for the highest level of need, then step down to IOP to receive up to 25 days of services, and ultimately once stabilized and ready, step down to receive OP visits for nutrition support. This step-down process provides a structured and supportive environment, maintains progress made in residential care, and builds on skills for continued recovery for individuals to gradually transition back to their home environment.

Next Steps and Coordination with MCPs

Currently, the services provided by LGTC and Sunol Hills (and the Healthy Teen Project) are supported with MHSA funds. However, BHSD is taking steps to reduce reliance on MHSA funding.

First, although the specialty mental health interventions associated with the services could be covered by Medi-Cal, there are no Medi-Cal certified providers of eating disorder services in the county or nearby counties. BHSD is working with CCPs to better understand their barriers to becoming Medi-Cal certified entities, while aligning with sister counties who also use these same providers for Medi-Cal covered eating disorder treatment services. BHSD will be reaching out to other counties to support LGTC, Sunol Hills, and the Healthy Teen Project in becoming certified to deliver Medi-Cal billable specialty mental health services.

Second, BHSD is developing agreements with the MCPs in Santa Clara County so that the MCPs cover the cost of medical and non-specialty mental health services. This effort is supported by guidance from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), which also provided a template for agreements between the County and the MCPs. The agreements with the MCPs should be completed by the end of August 2024.

Both these efforts would reduce the reliance on MHSA funding in the future. Additionally, having Medi-Cal certified CCPs for eating disorder treatment would increase revenue to support these programs for the County on an ongoing basis. BHSD has also updated its authorization process to have additional oversight over eligibility screening and utilization management.

CHILD IMPACT

The recommended actions will have a positive impact on children or youth by providing eating disorder treatment services to this target population.

SENIOR IMPACT

The recommended actions will have a positive impact on seniors by providing eating disorder treatment services to this target population.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended actions will balance public policy and program interests and enhance the Board of Supervisors' sustainability goal of social equity and safety by providing eating disorder treatment services to help reduce the need for more costly state hospitalizations and hospitalizations in other acute care settings.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Failure to approve the recommended actions would result in BHSD's inability to meet access and capacity needs for sufficient residential and OP/IOP/PHP eating disorder treatment services for adults and youth in Santa Clara County. Additionally, delays to these services could result in higher expenditures for acute hospitalization if individuals decompensate.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

Priority processing is requested for these contracts to ensure timely access and reimbursement for eating disorder treatment services. Upon approval, the Clerk of the Board is requested to send e-mail notifications to Rachel Talamantez (Rachel.Talamantez@hhs.sccgov.org), Courtney Gray (Courtney.Gray@hhs.sccgov.org), Angeleah Macatiag (Angeleah.Macatiag@hhs.sccgov.org), Earl Ong (Earl.Ong@hhs.sccgov.org), Evonne Lai (Evonne.Lai@hhs.sccgov.org), and Jason Truchon (Jason.Truchon@hhs.sccgov.org).

ATTACHMENTS:

- For BOS Signature – LGTC Residential Agreement FY24
- For BOS Signature – LGTC Amendment 1 for OP-IOP-PHP
- For BOS Signature – Sunol Hills Amendment 1 for OP-IOP-PHP

- Agreement – LGTC Group FY23-FY24
- Agreement – Sunol Hills OP-IOP-PHP FY23-FY24
- Single Source – LGTC Group OP-IOP-PHP
- Single Source – LGTC Group Residential
- Single Source – Sunol Hills OP-IOP-PHP