



Recommendation:

The Behavioral Health Division recommends reconvening the initial Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Work Group with structural changes. This recommendation from the Division was developed in partnership with the Mental Health Commission who unanimously supported the developed framework.

Background:

Beginning in June 2013 the Board of Supervisors began consideration of whether to develop a program in the Behavioral Health Division of the Health Services Department that would implement assisted outpatient treatment options in Contra Costa County. This item was referred to the Family and Human Services Committee who accepted the report and recommendation from the Department to pilot an Assisted Outpatient Treatment program for a period of three years. The Board of Supervisors considered the item on October 7, 2014; February 3, 2015 and, on December 15, 2015 the Board approved continuing implementation and authorized the use \$2.25 million per year and directed the Department to report back to the Board after six months of full implementation.

In keeping with this requirement, the Department contracted with Research Development Associates (RDA) to provide on-going evaluation of the newly implemented program. In December of 2016 RDA delivered the 6-month evaluation report through presentations to the Family and Human Services Committee December 12th, the Mental Health Commission on December 14th, and was placed on the consent calendar for the December 20th meeting of the Board of Supervisors. During, and subsequent to, these presentations, members of the Mental Health Commission identified the need to provide an opportunity for stake holder feedback and quality improvement during the implementation of the program. In light of this request, Supervisor Andersen requested the department develop a recommendation for an ongoing outlet for community concerns and quality review and return that recommendation to the Family and Human Services Committee.

Assisted Outpatient Treatment Work Group:

From the beginning of the County's consideration of AOT, the Assisted Outpatient Treatment Work Group has played an important role in facilitating stakeholder input through the various stages of implementation. This work group was developed by the Behavioral Health Division and consists of stakeholders including Health Services staff, judicial and public safety partners, community based organizations as well as members of the community. As the concept matured, the role of the Work Group changed as well. Initially, the Work Group was a source of advocacy to demonstrate the need for the AOT program in Contra Costa County. After authorization from the Board of Supervisors, the Work Group was instrumental as the vehicle to allow stakeholder input with regard to program design and the



early stages of implementation. This Work Group last met in April 2016.

The absence of an outlet for stakeholder feedback was of concern to a majority of the Mental Health Commission, who advanced and approved a proposal to create a Task Force in accordance with the Mental Health Commission By-laws. However the Behavioral Health Director provided an alternate recommendation that would build on the existing AOT Work Group structure.

Seeking to bridge the gap in these strategies, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Mental Health Commission met with the Behavioral Health Division leadership and formed, in partnership, an agreement as to the structure and format of a reconstituted AOT Work Group. This agreement is attached and is supported by the Behavioral Health Department and was unanimously approved by the Mental Health Commission on March 1, 2017.

Agreement Outline:

The agreement reached in partnership between the Behavioral Health Division and the Mental Health Commission makes several structural changes. Key aspects of the agreement include:

- Agreement to using a “steering committee” approach towards agenda setting. In this model any member of the community may come to a steering committee prior to the convening of the full Work Group and propose an agenda item for the next meeting of the Work Group.
- Agreement to co-facilitate. The first meeting of the work group will be chaired by the Behavioral Health Director and the Chair of the Mental Health Commission. This model will continue with a member of the Behavioral Health staff and a member of the Commission acting as co-facilitators for each meeting.
- Agreement to hold quarterly meetings.
- Agreement to allow for the creation of sub-work groups should an issue be identified that requires extra attention.
- Maintain existing membership with service provider partners

Conclusion:

The Behavioral Health Division is recommending that the AOT Work Group reconvene under the framework outlined in the attached document. This document is a product of the partnership between the Behavioral Health Division and the Mental Health Commission. The Division is pleased with this partnership and to work under this framework that allows for meaningful exchange of ideas between service providers, partners and members of the community while allowing for maximum community participation.