

**CONTRA COSTA HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

TO: Family and Human Services **DATE:** July 31, 2017
 Committee Members
 Board of Supervisors

FROM: Joseph Mega, MPH, MD
 Medical Director, Health Care for the Homeless

SUBJECT: Health Care for the Homeless Annual Update

Recommendations

1. Accept this report from the Health Services Department; and
2. Forward this report to the Board of Supervisors for acceptance; and
3. Direct staff to continue to report on an annual basis to the FHS Committee regarding health status of the homeless population in Contra Costa County by the Health Care for the Homeless Program.

Background

Since 1990, the Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) Program has provided health care services to the homeless population in Contra Costa County through mobile clinics, stationary health centers and the Concord Medical Respite facility. Health care services provided by the HCH team include routine physical assessments, basic treatment of primary health problems such as minor wounds and skin conditions, respiratory problems, TB screening, acute communicable disease screening, coordination and referrals for follow up treatment of identified health care needs, dental services, health education, behavioral health services, medication assisted treatment and outreach and enrollment services. A significant portion of the homeless patients seen by the HCH team have chronic diseases, including asthma, hypertension, diabetes, and mental health/substance abuse issues. They also have disproportionately more dental, substance abuse and mental health needs than the general population.

The clinical team is comprised of a Medical Director, Family Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, Community Health Workers, Dentist, Registered Dental Assistance, Mental Health Specialist, Substance Abuse Counselor, Health Educator and Eligibility Workers.

Homeless patients who receive care on one of the mobile clinics are referred into one of the CCHS ambulatory care health centers for primary and specialty care,

into County mental health and substance abuse services, and to Contra Costa Regional Medical Center for emergency, inpatient hospital, outpatient surgeries, laboratory and radiology. There are four ambulatory care clinics, located in Antioch, San Pablo, Martinez and Concord, designated specifically for homeless patients to help them transition from the mobile clinic setting into the ambulatory care system. HCH staff members are present at each of these clinics.

Updates

The HCH Program now includes a **Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)** team, which provides Nurse and Behaviorist Care Management services to patients seeking recovery from opiate addiction. This program works in collaboration with the CCHS ambulatory health center system and the CCHS Alcohol and Other Drugs division of Behavioral Health. MAT patients are prescribed Buprenorphine, a drug used to treat opioid addiction, enrolled in regular group classes to support their recovery, and assigned a nurse care manager to support this process and ensure medication and appointment compliance. The MAT program has seen significant growth in the last year through referrals for patients needing these services.

The HCH program also continues to expand our Behavioral Health services as funding and collaborative opportunities become available. We've recently collaborated with the Behavioral Health division to add a half-time Psychiatrist to our mobile team. Dr Emily Watters provides psychiatric support to patients with our Medical Outreach team and at County-run homeless shelters. In addition, we are currently interviewing to add a Mental Health Case Manager to our team to provide ongoing support to patients who transition out of an emergency shelter environment.

The attached report highlights the increasing needs of the aging homeless population, and the disproportionate behavioral and social needs of our homeless population.