



May 5, 2017

To: Board of Supervisors  
Jeffrey V. Smith, M.D., J.D., County Executive

From: René G. Santiago, Deputy County Executive and  
Director, SCVHHS

John P. Mills, Deputy County Executive and  
Director, Employee Services Agency

Subject: Off-Agenda Report on Psychiatry Recruitment

During the January 24, 2017 Board of Supervisors' meeting discussion regarding the agreement with Traditions Psychology Group, Inc. (Legislative File ID# 84437), Supervisor Chavez requested a report relating to the recruitment and hiring of psychiatrists. This off-agenda memo provides the requested information.

**Status**

Recruitment and retention of psychiatrists is a challenge state-wide. Kaiser has made a concerted effort to hire additional psychiatrists, raising salaries and providing other sign-on bonuses. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has made a similar effort in previous years.

Across the Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System, there are **95** psychiatry positions, with a **51%** vacancy rate.

Custody Health Services has filled **six** out of **19** psychiatry positions, for a **68%** psychiatry vacancy rate. By July 3, **four** additional FTEs will be hired. Several additional interviews have been conducted. It is anticipated that, by the end of December 2017, several additional psychiatry positions will be hired. Interest in Custody psychiatry has been very strong. A team is working with Dr. Tiffany Ho, Behavioral Health Medical Director, to conduct interviews and provide tours of the Main Jail and Elmwood to candidates. Candidates are impressed with our vision and operations. Two other doctors have expressed interest in joining the County.

Behavioral Health has filled **14** of **18** positions, for a **22%** vacancy rate.

Santa Clara Valley Medical Center has filled **29** of **58** positions, for a **50%** vacancy rate.

## **Change**

The County has made recruitment of psychiatrists a priority by investing in advertising, constantly advertising in the following publications/websites since July 1, 2016:

Psychiatric News (American Psychiatric Association)  
Psychiatric Times  
American Association of Community Psychiatrists  
Clinical Psych News  
California Psych Association (includes ad and conference syllabus)  
Forensic Mental Health Association of  
California  
American Association of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
(AAPM&R)  
Targeted Physician Job Boards (TPJBS)  
National Council for Behavioral Health  
Psych Congress Elevate Conference Bag Inserts

In addition, our progress regarding improving the Behavioral Health delivery system in the jail is being discussed across the state and is generating interest in our system. Santa Clara County is closer to the Bay Area than state prisons; thus, a number of candidates from the state prisons have made inquiries, seeking a shorter commute.

Advertising and psychiatry recruitment have become a higher priority with Dr. Ho, who is personally attending recruitment fairs. The reaction has been positive.

Here is an example of what an applicant wrote.

“Thank you for scheduling the interview day and setting up all the interviews and tours. I really appreciate it, as I enjoyed meeting all the friendly staff that work with the county. I've applied and interviewed all over the state of California (DSH, CDCR, Kaiser, local jails, private practices, etc.) and felt most comfortable in San Jose. I can definitely see myself relocating and living there if given the opportunity.

I received a very positive impression of employment opportunities that are available in Santa Clara County. At this time, I would like to be considered for only the outpatient opportunities in Elmwood (first preference) and North Main Jail (floors 4~7 as my second preference). Please advise me if these options are unavailable, so that I may pursue other opportunities. I appreciate the consideration.”

The contract with Traditions Behavioral Health (approved on January 24, 2017) provided a significant resource to help address the need for psychiatrists. Across the Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System, there are competing demands and priorities related to psychiatry; for example, providing sufficient psychiatry services in Emergency Psychiatric Services, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center clinics, Behavioral Health Services Department, as well as in Custody Health Services. Taking all psychiatry needs into consideration is important.

**Summary**

In summary, progress in recruitment and hiring has been made. The credentialing process takes a significant amount of time, as does wrapping up caseloads; thus, start dates in the psychiatry field take time.

Please let us know if we can answer any other questions.

c: Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
James R. Williams, County Counsel  
Liz Maldonado, Office of Budget & Analysis  
Matt Gerrior, Director, Custody Health Services  
Martha Wapenski, Deputy County Executive  
Laurie Smith, Sheriff