Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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To ensure access to high-quality, patient-centered, cost-effective health care to Los Angeles County residents through direct services at DHS facilities and through collaboration with community and university partners.

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May 3, 2016

TO: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Mitchell H. Katz, M.D.
Director

SUBJECT: **NOTIFICATION OF FORTHCOMING SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT FOR CLINICAL STAFFING AT THE JAILS**

This is to provide the Board with advance notification of my intent to recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve a sole source contract with Urgent Care Associates, Inc. (UCA) for clinical staffing services in the jails for a period not to exceed two years. I am targeting the June 14, 2016 Board agenda for presentation of this contract for your approval so that we may proceed with rapidly bringing additional clinicians in to see jail patients.

Background

Based on a collaborative report developed by the Chief Executive Office, in conjunction with County Counsel and the Directors of the Department of Human Resources, Health Services, Mental Health, Public Health, and the Sheriff's Department, the Board approved a roadmap for dramatically improving the quality and efficacy of health care services provided to the County's inmate population. Your Board's action created a single, integrated jail health services operation to consolidate separate jail health services functions under a single Correctional Health Director within the Department of Health Services (DHS). The new structure occurred as part of a system of approaches and strategies to improve the overall quality and delivery of all care provided in the jails by enacting numerous enhancements, including coordinating primary care and preventative care, improving workflow and clinical processes, improving access to care and discharge/reentry planning, improving jail mental health services, and emphasizing substance abuse services.

Justification

Key to successfully implementing the new jail health services structure is ensuring there is appropriate and sufficient clinic staffing at all jail facilities. The Correctional Health Director has been hired and clinical staff are being recruited. However, more clinicians need to be rapidly brought in to see more jail patients and improve the overall provision of health care in that setting. I have determined that the current staffing must be temporarily augmented through the use of contracted services.

DHS currently has three Board approved contracting vehicles to retain contract clinicians. These are the Temporary Medical Services (TMPS) and Specialty Medical Services (SMS) agreements that are with individuals; as well as the Physician Registry Services (PRS) agreements with registry firms. A few clinicians have been brought in under the TMPS agreements; however, the use of the TMPS and SMS, agreements requires DHS to locate suitable candidates and once under individual contract DHS manages their scheduling. The current PRS contractors haven't been successful in recruiting clinical staff to work in the jails.

While DHS continues to recruit for permanent County employees, I have determined it is more efficient in the short term to immediately obtain a single contractor to provide sufficient qualified staff coverage during the next two years. There isn't sufficient time to complete a solicitation process. In order to rapidly develop a contract for presentation to your Board so staff augmentation can start July 1, 2016, my staff contacted UCA, a firm the County previously partnered with under two competitively solicited contracts for urgent care services at DHS facilities. UCA consistently provided quality patient care, complied with the terms and conditions of the previous contracts; and was a collaborative partner with DHS in transforming urgent care at the facilities.

UCA is part of Emergency Medical Associates, a leading provider of emergency care and episodic care management services to patients, communities, provider groups and hospitals throughout the Southwest. UCA has clinical staff with experience providing health care in correctional settings and is enthusiastic about partnering with DHS on the jail health services transformation. UCA will recruit, hire and assist with managing and scheduling clinical staff. The proposed contract will be limited to a two year period as DHS continues to hire permanent staff. Approximately 600 hours of additional clinical staff are needed on a weekly basis. Use of a single contractor will enable DHS to be more nimble in clinical staff coverage in the jails and support accomplishment of the Board approved roadmap to improve inmate patient care.

Closing

Due to the critical need to quickly obtain addition clinical staff resources, this notice doesn't comply with the revised Sole Source Board policy 5.100. I appreciate your Board's continuing support as DHS transforms jail health services.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know or contact Dr. Mark Ghaly, Director, Community Health and Integrated Programs at (213) 240-8107.

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c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel