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September 19, 2005

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D. Thomas L Garthwaite
Director and Chief Medical Officer

SUBJECT: **EXPANSION TUTORING/MENTORING PROGRAM IN THE SECOND DISTRICT**

As requested, this is to provide you with information relative to expanding the Tutoring/Mentoring Program (T/M) for nursing students to include colleges in South Los Angeles by augmenting total program funds to service these institutions with other participating colleges.

As you may recall, in response to the system-wide nursing shortage, on July 3, 2001, there was a Board motion to "renew the existing contract for the very successful Tutoring/Mentoring Program at East Los Angeles Community College (ELAC) and extend the program Countywide". As a result, ELAC's contract was renewed and in July 2003, a T/M program was also established in the Third District at Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) and Fifth District at Glendale Community College School of Nursing (GCC).

Historically, the T/M program has been established in two year, fully accredited State Board of Registered Nursing, Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) programs. The purpose of the T/M program is to provide Associate Degree Nursing schools with financial assistance to offer personalized academic and clinical support to nursing students. The program is designed to improve study skills, enhance the overall learning process, and better prepare students to pass the National Council of Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) exam. Some of the other over arching goals are to:

- Provide academic support to students who receive less than 76 percent on any nursing course examination,
- Ensure the program provides lectures that prepare the student to pass the NCLEX-RN (as mentioned above) and,
- Assist each student to seek employment in County health facilities.

AVAILABLE NURSING PROGRAMS

Currently, in South Los Angeles there are two year ADN programs at Compton Community College, El Camino College, LA Harbor College, and LA Southwest College. In terms of providing T/M services and funding to one or more of these colleges, the following should be considered:

- Viability/stability of the school's academic program (which is largely based on NCLEX-RN pass/fail rates).
- The ability to achieve improved outcomes given the amount of funding available (e.g., percentage of improvement).
- Which program(s) can benefit the most from the personalized academic support.

The chart below compares the four programs on NCLEX-RN pass/fail rates and level of improvement:

Nursing Program	01/02 Pass/Fail Rate	02/03 Pass/Fail Rate	03/04 Pass/Fail Rate*	Level of Improvement
Compton	25%	72%	35%	Fluctuates with low pass rates
El Camino	86%	88%	91%	2-3% per year
LA Harbor	95%	86%	92%	Fluctuates with high pass rates
LA Southwest	36%	50%	63%	13-14% per year

*Most current data available from the BRN, pass/fail rate is based on the number of students taking the test.

Based on NCLEX-RN scores, which are used as a barometer for nursing program success, El Camino and LA Harbor have the most viable/stable academic program. However, LA Southwest shows the highest rate of improvement and given the low but increasing pass rates, may benefit most from personalized academic support. Compton's continued scrutiny by the California Board of Registered Nurses, low scores, and inability to maintain a consistent level of improvement (as indicated by the NCLEX-RN pass/fail rates), may indicate this program requires more assistance than is currently available through the T/M program.

T/M PROGRAM COSTS

Each of the existing T/M programs has a different maximum obligation of County funds. The Department's longest standing contract is with ELAC where the maximum obligation is $245,000. The contracts with GCC and LAVC have maximum obligations of $183,605 and $189,963 respectfully. The compensation is distributed in two payments and is used to fund supplies and program staff (e.g., nurse advisor, faculty and student tutors, and student workers). Therefore, the Department will implement a T/M program at Los Angeles South West College, with the recommended maximum obligation set within the $183,000 to $189,000 range. In addition, please note that funds used to cover these costs will be encumbered from general County funds.

NEXT STEPS

The Department will begin developing a T/M agreement and Board letter stating the purpose and justification of additional program(s), with LA Southwest being the recommended school. However considering their pass rate, it is recommend that we require LA Southwest to incorporate an automated assessment/testing tool component into their program that assesses and prepares nursing students to successfully pass the NCLEX-RN exam. Both LAVC and GCC use such a program and it has had proven successful in increasing their pass/fail rates over time.

As one of the final steps in this process, we will meet with the selected contractor to discuss their readiness and ability to incorporate necessary changes into their existing program (i.e., quarterly program and expenditure reports, mandatory workshops, stringent liability insurance parameters, annual program reviews, etc.).

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

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