AGN. NO.

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS **September 10, 2013**

Ensuring Quality End-of-Life Care

Hospice care focuses on alleviating a terminally or seriously ill patient's pain while providing physical, emotional, and spiritual care. For an incurably ill patient with a prognosis of six months or less to live, hospice and home health care allows the patient to spend their last months and days of life comfortably at home or in a home-like environment. Hospice care provides end-of-life post-discharge care to some of Los Angeles County's (County) most vulnerable patients. Hospice care improves service delivery by decreasing long hospital stays and re-admissions and by improving care coordination, patient flow and long-term care.

In Los Angeles County, hospice care is provided by independent agencies that contract with the Department of Health Services (DHS). Audits serve an important role to monitor performance and contract compliance. Each referring County hospital conducts its own quality of care performance review of each of the seven independent

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contracting hospice agencies while DHS' Audit and Compliance units monitor compliance with the contractual terms.

Centralizing the audit system and quality of care performance review will improve coordination between the DHS Audit and Compliance and Contracting units, and the referring hospitals and improve quality of care on the eve of health reform implementation.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Direct the Director of Health Services:

1. To the extent reasonable, require that any hospice agency meet quality of care metrics, such as the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) certification, as a condition of contracting with Los Angeles County when the formal Request for Qualifications is finalized;
2. Report back in 60 days in writing on:
    a. A process that ensures any contract performance audits and quality reviews of hospice and home health agencies' are coordinated and centralized to ensure swift and accurate corrective actions are taken when any substantiated problems are identified;

b. A process that ensures a rational and efficient referral process to qualified contracting agencies for hospice and home health care; and

c. A schedule of actions that the Department of Health Services will take to enhance and expand the quality and dignity of its end of life programs given any new financing opportunities available through federal health reform.

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