LAC DMH
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
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August 25, 2014

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Robin Kay for
Marvin Southard, D.S.W.
Director, Department of Mental Health

Philip L. Browning
Director, Department of Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: **REPORT BACK ON IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES THAT PROMOTES PERMANENCY (ITEM 21, AGENDA OF JUNE 24, 2014)**

On June 24, 2014, pursuant to a Motion presented by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas your Board instructed the Directors of the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report back to your Board in 60 days on the following:

1. The geographic countywide availability of programs that promote permanency and stability for adopted children and their families, especially in those service planning areas experiencing higher rates of failed adoptions.

2. An evaluation of the efficacy of those programs.

3. Options to potentially expand programs that have demonstrated success, whether through increased delivery of field based services or expanded certified providers or sites, and projected costs to expand.

This memorandum will provide you with the requested information.

Geographic countywide availability of programs that promote permanency and stability for adopted children and their families, especially in those service planning areas experiencing higher rates of failed adoptions.
DCFS contracts with Adoption Promotion and Support Services (APSS) agencies in each Service Planning Area (SPA) in Los Angeles County. Agencies providing APSS, and the SPA in which the services are provided, are detailed in the table below.

SPA	AGENCIES
1	CHILDREN'S BUREAU
2	STRENGTH UNITED
3	CHILDREN'S BUREAU; FIVE ACRES
4	CHILDREN'S BUREAU
5	UCLA TIES FOR ADOPTION (THE REGENTS)
6	SHIELDS FOR FAMILIES
7	OLIVE CREST
8	CHILDREN'S BUREAU; CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE INC.; TIES FOR FAMILIES

While many of the services are delivered at the providers' clinic locations, all mental health agencies have the capacity to also deliver services in clients' homes and in other field locations.

An evaluation of the efficacy of the programs.
DMH and DCFS have reviewed data collected by DCFS regarding the efficacy of the APSS programs. A review of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-13 and FY 2013-14 data indicates varying levels of efficacy among criteria being evaluated and across provider agencies. For example, some agencies demonstrated increased capacity in the number of families served during FY 2013-14. Other provider agencies demonstrated an increased percentage of finalized adoptions while the case was open with APSS. There was also an increase in the percentage of families who met adoption-specific goals among some provider agencies. Finally, relative to the number of children served, during FY 2013-14 there were fewer children removed from the home during the time APSS was working with the family for nearly 40 percent of the provider agencies.

Options to potentially expand programs that have demonstrated success, whether through increased delivery of field based services or expanded certified providers or sites, and projected costs to expand.
As noted in the section above, certain agencies appeared to demonstrate success in some domains while others appeared more successful in other areas for which outcomes were available. For this reason, DMH is committed to working with DCFS to ascertain best practices and disseminate them to all agencies. We will identify the practices utilized by the programs with positive outcomes, and will convene a "best practices" training for all involved providers.

If you have questions about this response, please contact us or Dr. Robin Kay, Chief Deputy Director, Department of Mental Health, at (213) 738-4108.

MJS:PLB:BM:am

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Robin Kay, Ph.D.