

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN  
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**Health Agency Integration**

In 2015, the Board established the Health Agency (Agency) with the intention of improving access to health care, health outcomes, and system efficiency through better integration across the Health Departments (Departments of Mental Health, Health Services and Public Health). While the Agency's efforts have promoted coordination and integration across the Health Departments and sharpened our focus on ensuring that the County is meeting the needs of our most vulnerable populations (such as foster children, homeless and the justice-involved), we believe that more can be done.

Of note, during the exploratory phase leading up to the creation of an Agency, many stakeholders felt that the agency model wasn't necessary, and suggested instead that better integration could be achieved by simply helping the Departments implement their shared work together more effectively and holding them accountable as a team. The report back on the Agency creation also pointed out that an Agency structure might interfere with each department's ability to steadfastly maintain its own mission, its own

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staff, its own budget, and its own special relationship to both community stakeholders and the board. As one example, the CEO Report Back in 2015 on creating the Health Agency summarized: “There was a strong and convincing rationale of an independent Department of Public Health in 2006. The separations allowed each to develop a strong identity and reputation in their fields, to prioritize their mission to achieve their goals, and to avoid program cuts that could occur in the setting of financial deficits.” These viewpoints, and the importance of maintaining strong, vibrant departments able to pursue their own distinct and unique missions, are still viable and useful today to help guide the County in moving forward.

While all stakeholders agreed there was a need to integrate services, there was disagreement about how to achieve this goal. It may be prudent for the County to consider alternative ways in which the Health Departments can optimize their coordination of efforts and maximize their effectiveness in implementing collaborative projects. The same goals of integration and efficiency must still be pursued, with an emphasis on implementing the many great ideas already in existence.

**I, THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Directors of the Departments of Mental Health, Health Services, and Public Health to:

1. Report back in 60 days on
  - a. A proposed structure, in the absence of an Agency director, that would support the Departments in making substantial progress toward implementing shared projects and fostering interdepartmental integration;

- b. A list of proposed initiatives and associated metrics that will be used as accountability tools to measure the success of such a proposed structure;  
and
- 2. Consult with labor unions, community stakeholders, other public entities, and any relevant County Departments on the structure, proposed initiatives and metrics in directive 1, above.

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JH:jb