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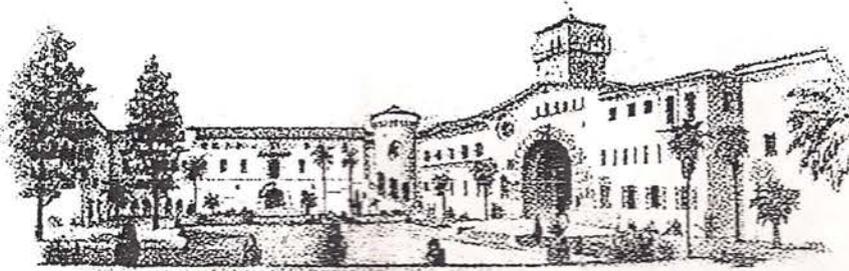
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August 15, 2012



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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

Honorable Judge Brian Hill
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Santa Barbara County
Santa Barbara Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101

Reference: Response to Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury Titled, "*CARES Crisis Residential North: An Underutilized Mental Health Asset*" (Published June 7, 2012)

Judge Hill:

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) is providing its response to the above-referenced Civil Grand Jury Report. The Board recognizes the need for additional facilities in the county to treat persons suffering from severe mental illness. We further recognize that given the significant concern about the lack of resources available for mental health treatment full utilization of existing treatment beds should be a very high priority. We appreciate the Grand Jury's attention and suggestions on strategies for maximizing this unique resource in Santa Barbara County.

As directed by the Grand Jury, responses are provided in accordance with Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code.

Finding 1a

CARES Crisis Residential North, with a 12-bed capacity, has averaged 7.4 full beds in the last five months through March 2012.

The Board agrees with this finding.

Finding 1b

The Santa Barbara County medical community is not fully aware of the capabilities of CARES Crisis Residential North and its benefit to recovering mentally ill patients.

The Board agrees with this finding.

It should be noted that the Probation Department is not a part of the medical community but were asked to respond to this finding.

Finding 1c

CARES Crisis Residential is the only unlocked facility for mentally ill patients who have no insurance in both Santa Barbara County and San Luis Obispo County.

The Board agrees with this finding.

Finding 1d

CARES Crisis Residential North helps mentally ill indigent patients obtain food stamps and Med-Cal insurance, as well as, helping them find homes and jobs.

The Board agrees with this finding.

Finding 1e

Utilization of the CARES Crisis Residential North facility has been shown to be a cost effective treatment option for Santa Barbara County post-acute mentally ill patients.

The Board agrees with this finding.

Finding 2

When Emergency Room physicians are not provided the patient's mental/medical history, they are reluctant to sign a patient's admission package to CARES Crisis Residential North.

The Board agrees with this finding.

Finding 3

CARES Crisis Residential North is a safe environment for patients discharged from a locked facility to transition back into society.

The Board agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 1a

That the Mobile Crisis Team and CARES Crisis Residential North develop and coordinate an outreach program with providers of services to the mentally ill on the capabilities of CARES Crisis Residential North for possible placement of their appropriate patients.

This recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the near future.

By August 31, 2012 Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Department and CARES Crisis Residential North will have concluded their outreach efforts. The Probation Department has already implemented this recommendation and is already aware of the services provided at CARES Crisis Residential North.

Recommendation 1b

That Santa Barbara County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services coordinate with the San Luis Obispo County Psychiatric Health Facility on the unoccupied bed capacity of CARES Crisis Residential North for possible placement of appropriate patients.

This recommendation has been implemented.

In July 2012, senior executive staff from county Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Department spoke to the Director of San Luis Obispo County Department of Mental Health describing the CARES

Crisis Residential North facility capabilities and extending an invitation to discuss coordination opportunities between Santa Barbara County and San Luis Obispo County. The Director of San Luis Obispo County Department of Mental Health indicated that San Luis Obispo County does not have a clinical need for these services at this time, however if in the future they did she would instruct staff to review the CARES Crisis Residential North facility as a possible resource. While the outreach has occurred, the highest priority is to increase the use of CARES Crisis Residential North to meet the significant mental health treatment needs of Santa Barbara County residents. It is anticipated that outreach to Santa Barbara County mental health service providers (Recommendation 1a), the streamlining of admission protocols from Emergency Rooms (Recommendation 2) and the increased coordination with County and the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) will increase local utilization (Recommendation 3).

Recommendation 2

That the Mobile Crisis Team and CARES Crisis Residential North work with Emergency Room staff to facilitate a protocol for admitting their patients to the transitional CARES program.

This recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future.

By August 31, 2012, CARES Crisis Mobile Managers from North and South County will meet with emergency room staff at the five main emergency rooms within the County. The meeting will identify opportunities to streamline referral processes to enhance admissions to the CARES Crisis Residential North facility. The meeting will also seek to understand any barriers to referrals from a medical standpoint and strategize how all can work together within CARES Crisis Residential North licensing regulations.

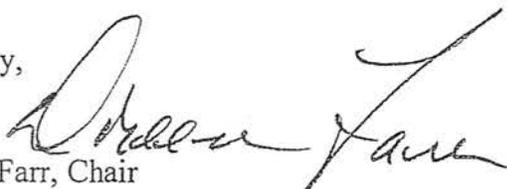
Recommendation 3

That CARES Crisis Residential North coordinate with the Santa Barbara County Main/City jails and the Santa Barbara County Psychiatric Facility on the capacity of CARES Crisis Residential North for possible placement of their appropriate patients upon release.

This recommendation has been implemented.

Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services has met with and confirmed that the Santa Barbara County Jail staff, Corizon staff, jail discharge planner and the Psychiatric Health Facility manager are aware of the capacity of CARES Crisis Residential North. In addition, Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services has instituted a daily conference call with the Psychiatric Health Facility manager, Mobile Crisis team and the Supervisor of CARES Crisis Residential North. The purpose of this teleconference is to triage and facilitate admissions within the entire system including CARES Crisis Residential North.

Sincerely,



Doreen Farr, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Lloyd G. LeCain, Foreman, Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury
Ann Detrick, Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Department
Beverly Taylor, Probation Department