



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 12/17/2019

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Nick Honey, 707-565-4343; Briana Downey, 707-565-4348

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): All

Title:

Valley of the Moon Children's Center Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program Consulting Services Contract

Recommended Action:

Authorize the Human Services Department Director to execute a contract with Resource Development Associates for \$300,000 to develop a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program at Valley of the Moon Children's Center.

Executive Summary:

Resource Development Associates (RDA) will provide consultancy to the Human Services Family, Youth & Children's Division to develop a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) at Valley of the Moon Children's Center for foster youth that need intensive therapeutic treatment. The program will provide time-limited, high-quality intervention services and supports that are tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual children and families being served, with the ultimate goal of transitioning children to permanent families and/or preparing them for a successful transition into adulthood. Creation of a STRTP will meet upcoming federal guidelines slated to come into effect in late 2021 for Qualified Residential Treatment programs.

Discussion:

The Human Services Department is implementing changes in service delivery based on the legislative action Assembly Bill 403 that put Continuum of Care Reform into law on January 1, 2016. Continuum of Care Reform involves a restructuring of California's foster care system to increase accessibility of family homes for youth while they are in the foster care system. The law envisions that all children will live with committed, permanent, nurturing families as opposed to institutional settings. It ensures that congregate care is a short-term, high-quality intervention that is part of a continuum of care for youth, with services and supports tailored to meet the individual needs of the children and families being served.

In order to realize the goals of Continuum of Care Reform, Valley of the Moon Children's Center (VMCC) engaged in an extensive literature review and initiated a robust stakeholder feedback process in 2016-2017. The process was undertaken to ascertain how VMCC could meet the vision for improved congregate care within the existing Emergency Shelter, and how to best meet the evolving needs of Sonoma County foster youth. A comprehensive plan emerged to:

- a) Reduce the length of stay in the Emergency Shelter to 10 days by transforming it into a Temporary Shelter Care Facility

- b) Develop coordinated transitions from the shelter with services and supports attached to ensure stabilization of youth in new homes
- c) Build a resource hub for caregivers to develop networks, find mentorship, and access resources and support
- d) Design a STRTP to supplement the existing local options for intensive therapeutic services, so that Sonoma County youth can be served within their own community

To date, VMCC has already transitioned to a Temporary Shelter Care Facility, created a Transition Support Team, and grown the Caregiver Resource Unit. The focus is now on designing and implementing a STRTP to provide much needed local therapeutic services for Sonoma County foster youth.

Sonoma County serves approximately 450 foster youth each year. On average, ten percent of those youth are in need of intensive treatment services to address past and/or current trauma, mental health needs, or substance use issues. The STRTP will provide a coordinated trauma-informed, individualized, strengths-based treatment approach with highly trained staff to address the immediate and underlying needs of each youth. The proposed STRTP will be co-located with the existing Emergency Shelter program and will provide 3-12 months of intensive treatment services to foster youth.

Of the Sonoma County youth receiving intensive treatment at a STRTP, only one quarter are being served within Sonoma County, while the rest are receiving services in other areas of California or in other states. Out of County and Out of State placements can delay progress towards strengthening family connections with a youth as travel and schedules must be arranged for visits. Additionally, Social Workers must also travel monthly to visit youth out of the area leading to a strain on their work time as well as the Department incurring travel costs that would otherwise be unnecessary. STRTPs must go through a robust authorization process including a state application process with the California Department of Social Services, approval from the Department of Health Care Services to deliver mental health services, as well as become a nationally accredited program. As a result of these changes, the capacity of STRTPs statewide is significantly limited which is similarly reflected in Sonoma County; there is one fully-licensed STRTP, one provisionally-licensed STRTP, and one group home that is planning on transitioning to a STRTP. All three have limited capacity and serve youth from across the entire state. The intention of the VMCC STRTP is to add capacity within the community and serve local youth, so that youth can remain in their community and stay connected to their families and support networks.

The contract is inclusive of a multi-phase project design and implementation plan.

- Phase 1 (1-2 months): Research and Program Design: to build on the research that the Family Youth & Children's Division has already begun toward developing an STRTP program, including developing a staffing model, operating budget, and trauma responsive program design
- Phase 2 (1-2 months): Application and Plan of Operation: to complete the California Department of Social Services STRTP application and Plan of Operation
- Phase 3 (9-12 months): Implementation: to develop position descriptions, policies & procedures, and a staffing model
- Phase 4 (9-12 months): Accreditation and Certification: to coordinate the national accreditation process for the STRTP through the Council on Accreditation (COA), as well as the Mental Health Plan Certification with County Behavioral Health services

A Request for Proposals was released on July 22, 2019, to find an individual or agency with expertise in designing and implementing youth residential programs with knowledge of Child Welfare and Continuum of Care Reform. Two submissions were received. A review committee was convened on September 13, 2019, consisting of 4 members and 1 facilitator. Resource Development Associates was selected as the winning bidder. Resource Development Associates has extensive experience with program management of residential facilities, designing and implementing clinical programs as well as applying evidence-based programming and innovative practices into new program design. Human Services will come back to the Board in mid to late 2020 with an update on STRTP.

Prior Board Actions:

9/20/16: Approved the Human Services Department's Continuum of Care Reform initiatives.

2/11/14: Approved the Human Services Department's System Improvement Plan, which included goals in the area of developing a full continuum of placement options.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$75,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$75,000
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$75,000
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$75,000

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

\$300,000 in funding is being budgeted through Child Welfare funding savings for the implementation of Continuum of Care Reform for the Valley of the Moon Children's Center. A new Valley of the Moon Children's Center (VOMCC) budget to replace the current operating budget will be proposed as part of Phase 1 of contract approval. State, Federal, and Realignment funding to cover operational expenses will come in the form of reimbursements from claiming procedures set forth by the new STRTP guidelines.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

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Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Contract

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

None