



Board Agenda Item 38

DATE: May 20, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Susan Holt, Director of Behavioral Health

SUBJECT: Amendment to Participation Agreement with California Mental Health Services Authority for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute a First Amendment to Participation Agreement No. 24-304 with California Mental Health Services Authority, extending the term for one additional year, to manage on behalf of counties the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program, and adhere to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14045.14 (a)(3) State reporting requirements, effective June 18, 2025 to June 18, 2026 (\$0).

Approval of the recommended action will allow the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) the ability to continue participating in the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program. This will allow CalMHSA to manage the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program for Fresno County and adhere to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14045.14(a)(3) reporting requirements. As with the original Participation Agreement No. 24-304, the term of this amendment is for one year. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Should your Board not approve the recommended action, DBH would need additional staff resources to implement a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program. This program would be required to submit a plan for Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) approval that explains how the certification program will meet all the Federal and State requirements for the certification and oversight of peer support specialists (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14045.14 (a)(3)). The plan must include Initial Certification Policies and Procedures, Certification Exam, Biennial Certification Renewal Policies and Procedures, Training Curriculum for: Peer Support Specialist, Parent, Caregiver and Family Member Peers, and Peer Supervisors, Certification Fee Schedule, Reciprocity Process, Complaints/Corrective Actions Process, and Reporting Process. Furthermore, additional resources would be needed to report on the required data elements of this program set forth in Behavioral Health Information Notice (BHIN) 21-041. Without the ability to utilize CalMHSA's Peer Support Specialist Certification Program immediately, the County may be unable to certify additional Peer Support Specialists, which would impact DBH and its contracted providers' ability to increase the number of Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists (MPSS) in the network, provide peer support services to Fresno County persons served, and generate revenue by claiming for MPSS services rendered.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions.

DISCUSSION:

On September 14, 2010, the Board approved Agreement No. 10-489 with CalMHSA, authorizing the Department to join the CalMHSA Joint Powers Authority (JPA), to develop, implement, administer and provide fiscal oversight of Mental Health Services Act projects.

On June 18, 2013, the Board approved Amendment No. 10-489-1 with CalMHSA, broadening the stated purpose for the JPA to allow CalMHSA to perform additional services for behavioral health departments acting alone or in collaboration with other departments, which includes but is not limited to data management, research and development.

On September 25, 2020, legislation SB-803 Peer Support Specialist Certification Act was signed into law. This legislation required DHCS to establish statewide requirements for counties or their representatives to use in developing certification programs for the certification of peer specialists, who are individuals who self-identify as having lived experience with the process of recovery from mental illness, substance use disorder, or both. The established Peer Support Specialist Certification program allowed California to join 48 other states and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in using standardized curricula and certification protocols for having peer support services bill for the work provided.

On March 22, 2022, the Board approved Agreement No. 22-095 with CalMHSA, authorizing the Department to participate in the initial implementation of the Peer Support Specialist Certification program.

On June 18, 2024, the Board approved Agreement No. 24-304 allowing DBH to continue to participate in the certification program developed by CalMHSA, and therefore continue to allow more Peer Support Specialists to become certified and be able to bill the State for Medi-Cal services provided to County persons served. This agreement updated the previous agreement to include data reporting to DHCS on behalf of counties in adherence with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14045.14 (a)(3), and data sharing with participating counties regarding candidates seeking certification based on county of residence. For Fiscal Year 2023-24, CalMHSA reported there were 41 Peer Support Specialists certified for Fresno County. It is essential to clarify that the data is organized based on the county of residence for certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists, rather than their county of employment.

The Amendment varies from the standard County template as it was drafted by CalMHSA. The template is utilized by CalMHSA to execute amendments to Participation Agreements with different counties and is consistent statewide.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

The Behavioral Health Board was notified of this agreement at the May 2025 meeting.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #43, June 18, 2024
BAI #40, March 22, 2022
BAI #57, June 13, 2013
BAI #39, September 14, 2010

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Amendment No. 1 to Agreement with CalMHSA

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander