



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/16/2022

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File #: 22-1014

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** DHHS: Behavioral Health

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Professional Services Agreement with Dr. John L. Shaeffer, Inc., Doing Business As American Telepsychiatrists, Regarding the Provision of Telepsychiatry Services to Children and Adults Suffering from Mental Illness

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Chair of the Board to execute the attached professional services agreement with Dr. John L. Shaeffer, Inc., doing business as American Telepsychiatrists, regarding the provision of telepsychiatry services to children and adults suffering from mental illness for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025;
2. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services - Behavioral Health Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached professional services agreement with Dr. John L. Shaeffer, Inc. after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management, and the County Administrative Office; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the board to return one (1) fully executed original copy of the attached professional services agreement to the Department of Health and Human Services - Contract Unit.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Behavioral Health Fund (1170)

**DISCUSSION:**

On July 27, 2019 (Item C-14), the Board of Supervisors approved the current professional services agreement with Dr. John L. Shaeffer, Inc., doing business as American Telepsychiatrists, (“American Telepsychiatrists”) regarding the provision of telepsychiatry services to children and adults suffering from mental illness for the period of July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022.

Despite the County of Humboldt’s ongoing recruitment efforts, the Department of Health and Human Services - Behavioral Health (“DHHS - Behavioral Health”) continues to experience significant difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified psychiatrists to provide mandated mental health

treatment services. Due to the shortage of available psychiatrists and other behavioral health treatment providers, the United States Department of Health and Human Services - Health Resources and Services Administration defines Humboldt County as a federally designated Mental Health Care Health Professional Shortage Area (“HPSA”). Mental Health HPSAs are based on a psychiatrist to population ratio of 1:30,000. However, this shortage in specialty behavioral health care providers is not endemic to Humboldt County or limited to the northern region of the state. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - Center for Integrated Health Solutions states that “rural communities have a chronic shortage of behavioral health providers and limited access to services.”

The attached professional services agreement will allow eligible DHHS - Behavioral Health clients to receive continued telepsychiatry services from American Telepsychiatrists for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025. Accordingly, DHHS - Behavioral Health recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve, and authorize the Chair of the Board to execute, the attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists regarding the provision of telepsychiatry services to children and adults suffering from mental illness.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists has a maximum amount payable of is Two Million Eight Hundred Sixty-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$2,868,000.00) for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025. However, if local, state or federal funding is reduced or eliminated, the County of Humboldt may reduce the above-referenced maximum amount payable or terminate the attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists in its entirety.

Expenditure appropriations related to the attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists have been included in the proposed fiscal year 2022-2023 budget for DHHS - Behavioral Health Medication Support budget unit (1170-498). Funding for the attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists is available through the federal Medi-Cal and Medicare programs, state realignment for mental health managed care and early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment and Mental Health Services Act revenues received by DHHS - Behavioral Health. As a result, approval of the attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board’s Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health, protecting vulnerable populations, and providing community-appropriate levels of services.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to approve the attached professional services agreement with American Telepsychiatrists regarding the provision of telepsychiatry services to children and adults suffering from mental illness. However, this alternative is not recommended since it would cause a reduction in available services in DHHS - Behavioral Health’s children and adult outpatient clinics.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Professional Services Agreement with Dr. John L. Schaeffer, Inc., Doing Business As American Telepsychiatrists, Regarding the Provision of Telepsychiatry Services for Fiscal Years 2022-2023 through 2024-2025.

**PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:**

Board Order No.: C-17, C-17, C-17, C-11, C-14

Meeting of: 6/28/16, 6/27/17, 7/10/18, 7/23/19

File No.: 16-4691, 17-2059, 18-840 19-1058; 22-1014