



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 10/24/2023

---

File #: 23-1149

---

**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** DHHS: Administration

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**SUBJECT:**

Health Information Exchange Organization Participation Agreement with North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network Regarding the Provision of Data Transmission Services

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Department of Health and Human Services Director, or a designee thereof, to execute, the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network regarding the provision of certain data transmission services for the period of April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2029; and
2. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to, and any other agreements, certifications, attestations, documents and project addenda directly associated with, the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to provide the Department of Health and Human Services - Contract Unit with one fully executed, certified copy of the Board Order related to this item.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Behavioral Health Fund (1170); Public Health Fund (1175); Social Services Fund (1160)

**DISCUSSION:**

North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network (NCHIIN) is a California nonprofit corporation that operates an internet-based system that provides an interface for secure electronic health information exchange between participants using otherwise incompatible computer systems. NCHIIN's internet-based system essentially functions as a "translator" that interprets participants' incompatible electronic records data so that it may be shared and accessed by other participants for treatment purposes.

On March 27, 2018 (Item C-10), the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors approved, and authorized the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director to execute, a health information exchange organization participation agreement, and associated project addenda, with NCHIIN regarding the provision of certain data transmission services in accordance with any and all applicable confidentiality requirements. The Board subsequently approved the first amendment to the health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN which increased the maximum amount payable thereunder to \$200,000 for the period of March 27, 2018 to March 31, 2022 on June 8, 2021 (Item D-13).

The attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN will allow for the provision of needed data transmission services for the period of April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2029. It should be noted that the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN comes to the Board after the start date thereof due to inadvertent delays that occurred during the contract development process.

Accordingly, DHHS recommends that the Board approve, and authorize the DHHS Director, or a designee thereof, to execute, the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN regarding the provision of certain data transmission services for the period of April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2029. It is also recommended that the Board authorize the DHHS Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to, and any other agreements, certifications, attestations, documents and project addenda directly associated with, the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office, in order to avoid any unnecessary delays in the provision of needed data transmission services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding for NCHIIN projects has historically come from the grant funding associated with the state regulation that prompted the need for the project in the first place. It is anticipated that this process will continue with the DHHS branches utilizing the appropriate funding for each project as they are required to implement them. DHHS approved fiscal year 2022-23 budget for Behavioral Health Administration 1170-424 includes \$67,500 for NCHIIN projects (except for CIE and Activate Care costs, which are not a part of this HIE). Behavioral Health fund source for fiscal year 2022-2023 through fiscal year 2024-2025 is 1175-435. Social Services fund source is, and is expected to continue to be 1160-511.

The attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN has a maximum amount payable of \$300,000 for the period of April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022. Expenditure appropriations related to the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN have been included in the approved fiscal year 2021-2022, fiscal year 2022-2023 and fiscal year 2023-2024 budget for DHHS - Behavioral Health budget unit 1170-424, DHHS - Public Health budget unit 1175-435 and DHHS - Social Services budget unit 1160-511. As a result, approval of the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Approval of the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN will not impact current staffing levels.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by protecting vulnerable populations, creating opportunities for improved safety and health and providing community-appropriate levels of service.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to approve the attached health information exchange organization participation agreement with NCHIIN regarding the provision of certain data transmission services. However, this alternative is not recommended since it will not allow for the exchange of protected health information between otherwise incompatible computer systems.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Health Information Exchange Organization Participation Agreement with North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network Regarding the Provision of Data Transmission Services

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-8; C-13; C-6; C-10; C-8, D-13

Meeting of: 07/08/14; 04/26/16; 01/24/17; 03/27/18; 11/19/19; 6/8/21

File No.: 14-0537; 16-2512; 17-0529; 18-247; 19-1652; 21-664