

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: Silver Tsunami Warning

Report Date: June 14, 2022

Response by: Department of Health & Human Services

FINDINGS

1. The county agrees with the findings numbered F2, F3, F3, F5, F7, F8, and F9.
2. The county partially agrees with the findings numbered F1 and F6.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendation numbered R3 has been implemented.
2. Recommendations numbered R2 and R4 will be implemented.
3. Recommendation numbered R1 will not be implemented by DHHS.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Number of pages attached: 5



Administration
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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FROM: CONNIE BECK, DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORT "SILVER TSUNAMI WARNING"
DATE: AUGUST 16, 2022

In the Grand Jury Report, "Silver Tsunami Warning" the Grand Jury has requested that the Department of Health & Human Services (Keri Schrock, Program Manager, and Connie Beck, Director, specifically named) respond to Findings F4, F9 through F12, F14, F15 and Recommendation R3. I am proposing the following response for both Connie Beck and Keri Schrock as detailed below.

FINDINGS

Finding 1: Reporting elder abuse is needlessly difficult, which results in its underreporting. (R1, R2)

Partially Agree

Reporting is easy in that it just takes a phone call, but sometimes people don't understand the process. When reports are made, it can take a while because the staff person taking the report needs to gather as much information as possible to determine the most appropriate response.

Finding 2: We can better protect seniors by making it as easy as possible for the public at large, and seniors specifically, to understand what elder abuse is and how to report it.

Agree



Finding 3: Adult Protective Services (APS) could do more to publicize elder abuse awareness. (R2)

Agree

Finding 4: The Elder and Vulnerable Adult Services Team (EVAST), funded with Measure Z dollars, has significantly improved the prosecution and conviction rates for elder abuse cases.

Agree

Finding 5: Governor Gavin Newsom has made available hundreds of millions of dollars in various programs and grants to address housing needs and homelessness in the State of California. Because these grants are competitive, now is the time to actively pursue the many grant funding opportunities specific to senior homelessness. (R4)

Agree

Finding 6: Without a more accurate survey methodology than what is currently used by the Homeless Point in Time Count, many seniors who are homeless will not be counted.

Partially Agree

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sets the parameters for the PIT count and requires DHHS to report data on the number of people under age 18, the number age 18-24 and the number who are age 25 and older. DHHS does collect more detailed age information in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Numbers served per HMIS:

Out of 931 people:

- 148 ages 55-61
 - 110 ages 61+
 - 1 client doesn't know/refused
 - 22 Data Not Collected
-

Finding 7: A There is a dire need for senior emergency housing and shelters in Humboldt County. (R4)

Agree

Finding 8: We acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the staff in Humboldt County, especially those in law enforcement and the various agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), who help combat elder abuse and senior homelessness.

Agree

Finding 9: We acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the staff of all the nonprofits and volunteers working on the frontlines of elder abuse and senior homelessness.

Agree

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends all law enforcement agencies add a prominent elder abuse reporting link and phone number to APS and other appropriate agencies on their websites by December 31, 2022. (F1, F2)

This recommendation will not be implemented by DHHS.

This recommendation is under the control of other agencies; DHHS will support implementation by these agencies. DHHS-APS can provide the necessary information to all law enforcement agencies.

Recommendation 2: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends APS and the District Attorney (DA) develop a multi-faceted marketing approach to educate seniors and the public in general about elder abuse and make the process of reporting easier. The plan should be developed by December 31, 2022, and fully implemented by July 1, 2023. (F1, F2, F3)

This recommendation will be implemented.

This can be a standing item added to the agenda for the monthly EVAST meeting. EVAST needs increased participation and representatives from each Law Enforcement agency at every meeting to accomplish this recommendation. It is realistic to develop a plan by March 31, 2023 and begin implementation by July 1, 2023.

Recommendation 3: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the DA and APS continue their annual joint application for Measure Z funds for EVAST. (F4)

This recommendation has been implemented.

DHHS submitted the request for FY 2022-2023; DHHS decreased the request for training funds from \$8,000 to \$5,000 per Measure Z Committee's request for all applicants to reduce their amounts. Measure Z pays for staff positions and the extra \$5,000 is slated for training. DHHS would need to increase our request next year to meet

the Grand Jury recommendations. Additional monies could go towards outreach events and materials. DHHS plans to apply for Measure Z funding every year.

Recommendation 4: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends DHHS proactively expand efforts to identify, apply for and utilize housing and shelter funding for homeless seniors to take advantage of state monies. We also recommend DHHS present quarterly progress reports to the Board of Supervisors beginning June 30, 2023. (F5, F7)

This recommendation will be implemented in part.

DHHS is in the process of requesting CCE funding (through CDSS), which will support care facilities that have beds for SSI clients. DHHS-APS could collaborate with Housing, Outreach, and Mobile Engagement (HOME) and other DHHS programs to set aside some housing specifically for seniors and those with disabilities.

DHHS is planning semi-annual updates to the Board on housing, and will incorporate reporting out on senior housing and housing for persons with disabilities as part of that report. DHHS recognizes that housing for seniors is a specific need, and, at the same time, does not want to silo efforts as we discuss housing as a whole.
