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Alcohol, Drug & Mental Health Services  
Administration

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BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Ann Detrick, PhD  
Director

July 13, 2011

Kathryn D. McKee  
Foreperson  
Santa Barbara County  
Civil Grand Jury  
Grand Jury Suite 12  
411 E. Canon Perdido Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101-7531

Dear Ms. McKee:

This letter transmits the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services response to the Civil Grand Jury's 2010-2011 Report entitled, "Homeless Mentally Ill Indigent Recidivism - This in Not Good for the County".

The signed original response will be delivered to Judge Arthur A. Garcia and 4<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor Joni Gray. I wish to thank the Grand Jury for its findings and recommendation on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ann Detrick, Ph.D.  
Director

AD/mc

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**Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Department Response  
Santa Barbara County 2010-2011 Grand Jury Report**

**Findings and Recommendations**

**HOMELESS MENTALLY ILL INDIGENT RECIDIVISM –  
THIS RECYLING IS NOT GOOD FOR THE COUNTY**

**Finding 3a:**

**There are not enough mental health treatment beds in the community to treat sufficiently the number of chronic homeless mentally ill.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services agrees with this finding.

**Finding 3e:**

**There are limited community out-patient treatment facilities for the mentally ill, indigent, homeless population.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) partially disagrees with this statement. The Department agrees that if a person in Santa Barbara County who is indigent does not meet the State mandate of severe and persistent mental illness, there are limited facilities or resources for referrals within the community. When persons who are indigent experience a mental health crisis, they are evaluated and provided acute treatment services in the Crisis and Recovery Emergency Services (CARES) environment. All persons seeking services, including those without a payor source, have access to AMDHS' CARES intake and assessment services. The CARES' sites are centrally located in Santa Barbara, Santa Maria and the Lompoc Mental Health Center.

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services disagrees that there are limited facilities or resources for indigent persons whose treatment needs fall within the State mandated criteria for severe and persistent mental illness. These persons have access to both acute and ongoing treatment, as needed, through the ADMHS "Innovation Program." The Innovation Program provides needed treatment services to indigent persons with serious and persistent mental illness, while also helping them obtain the disability and eventually Medi-Cal insurance benefits to which they may be entitled.

**Finding 4:**

**Mental Health Treatment Courts are found to be effective in reducing both recidivism and relapse in mental illness.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services agrees with this finding.

**Finding 5:**

**Although Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services is utilizing funding from SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery Initiative (SOAR) to reach the chronic homeless, current SOAR training is primarily limited to Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Staff.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services partially disagrees with this finding, disputing the portion of the finding that indicates ADMHS is utilizing funding from SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery Initiative (SOAR). Mental Health Services Act Innovation Plan dollars are the funding source for SOAR training.

The SOAR training was provided and sponsored primarily to give the newly formed ADMHS MHSA-funded Benefits Acquisition Teams, and selected ADMHS clinic-based staff, an evidenced-based model that could be used to secure Social Security benefits in a streamlined and timely manner.

National SOAR experts highly recommended that the two-day SOAR training be limited to no more than 30 individuals so the training would be as effective as possible.

Representatives from the Public Health Department and the Department of Social Services participated in the SOAR training.

SOAR experts strongly encouraged Social Security Administration staff participation in the SOAR training. Participating in the entire two-day training were the local SSA Regional Manager, the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria Branch Managers and each branch's SSA Technical Experts. Additionally a manager from Disability Determination Services (makes medical eligibility determination on SSI/SSDI applications) in Fresno participated in both days of the SOAR training. Bringing Our Community Home's (BOCH) Jail Discharge Planner also participated in both days of the SOAR training.

**Finding 6a: There are over 50 agencies, including public and private non-profit, providing some aspect of support to the mentally ill, indigent, homeless, and jail recidivist.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services agrees with this finding.

**Finding 6b:**

**There is no centralized, coordinating entity with the authority to marshal all public and private non-profit resources engaged in providing services to the mentally ill, indigent, homeless, and jail recidivist.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services agrees with this finding.

**Recommendations**

**Recommendation 3b:**

**That Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services apply for capital expenditure funds available in Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act) for an out-patient treatment center for the mentally ill indigent at the Santa Barbara juvenile hall or some other location.**

Response:

This recommendation will not be implemented by ADMHS as all Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act) Capital Information Technology (CIT) expenditures have already been allocated. There are no additional CIT Proposition 63 funds available for allocation. In the event that such funds were to become available, they would follow the existing requirements for community stakeholder input on allocation decisions.

**Recommendation 4:**

**That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors seeks funding to expand Mental Health Treatment Courts in both north and south county to achieve levels of service found in 2001-02.**

Response:

This recommendation is directed to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. As stated in the report, Mental Health Court services continue in North and South County, but participants must meet medical necessity or target population criteria to receive treatment through ADMHS. The recommendation by the Grand Jury to the Board of Supervisors is to expand services to individuals who do not meet ADMHS' mandate.

**Recommendation 5:**

**That Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services expands its SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery initiative training to include the staffs of public and private non-profit agencies most likely to come in contact with the mentally ill, indigent, homeless, and jail recidivist.**

Response:

The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services has not implemented this recommendation but has plans to do so.

The Department has already implemented a plan to provide SOAR training to include relevant staff of public and private non-profit agencies most likely to assist individuals with mental illness, who are indigent, homeless and possibly have experienced jail recidivism.

The Department was recently awarded two slots set aside for participants from the State of California at a SOAR Train-The-Trainer conference held on June 14 - June 17, 2011. Thirty individuals throughout the nation attended the SOAR Train-The-Trainer conference, held in Los Angeles.

An expectation of attending the SOAR Train-The-Trainer conference, funded by MHSA, was that the trainers would return to their local communities and provide three SOAR two-day trainings within the following year.

While not all three SOAR trainings have been scheduled, the first of the two-day trainings will occur in mid September.

The Department has a representative on Bringing Our Community Home's (Santa Barbara County Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness) Board of Governors and will use that as a forum to discuss possible attendees of upcoming SOAR trainings.

**Recommendation 6a:**

**That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors directs Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services to take leadership and responsibility in planning and coordinating all public and private non-profit agency efforts in providing services to the mentally ill, indigent, homeless, and jail recidivist.**

Response:

This recommendation is directed to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services is the Mental Health Plan for the County of Santa Barbara and as such, coordinates mental health services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries and indigent clients who meet target population criteria. The recommendation by the Grand Jury is for ADMHS to take on a role not defined by State mandates for a local Mental Health Plan.

**Recommendation 6b:**

**That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors directs Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services to establish measurable outcomes and report its progress in addressing the issues related to the mentally ill, indigent, homeless, and jail recidivist to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors at least twice yearly.**

Response:

This recommendation is directed to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. The Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services collects data on measurable outcomes related to persons receiving crisis, intake or assessment services; Medi-Cal beneficiaries, indigent clients with serious and persistent mental illness, and persons with alcohol/drug conditions, many of whom have co-occurring mental health conditions. Examples of outcomes measured by ADMHS include: timeliness of assessments carried out in the community by the CARES Mobile Crisis Teams; percentage of all clients discharged from psychiatric inpatient services who are seen by ADMHS' CARES or Clinic staff within seven days; and length of treatment stays for alcohol/drug treatment clients, many of whom have co-occurring mental health conditions.

**Recommendation 6c:**

**That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors evaluates the effectiveness of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services' leadership in achieving measurable outcomes in addressing the issues related to the mental, indigent, homeless, and jail recidivist on a yearly basis.**

Response:

This recommendation is directed to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. Through the County's Departmental Recurring Performance Measures (RPMs), the Board of Supervisors regularly evaluates the effectiveness of ADMHS' leadership in achieving measurable outcomes as they relate to persons receiving crisis, intake or assessment services; Medi-Cal beneficiaries, indigent clients with serious and persistent mental illness and persons with alcohol/drug conditions, many of whom have co-occurring mental health conditions. Prison Health Services provides mental health services at the jail and collects data relevant to those services.