



City and County of San Francisco
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

Department of Public Health
Barbara A. Garcia, MPA
Director of Health

October 13, 2016

Supervisor Jane Kim
Executive Director
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, Ca. 94102-4689

Re: Behavioral Health Justice Center Report

Dear Supervisor Kim,

I know you have called a hearing on the Behavioral Health Justice Center for this afternoon. Unfortunately, DPH will not be able to have a representative at the hearing, however, below I have provided responses to the questions you raised.

- 1) I know that the Department does an incredible amount of work already with mentally ill patients who are also in contact with the criminal justice system. Can you please provide us with the annual average number of contacts and note whether the # is unduplicated individuals or repeat patients?**

Looking back five years, approximately 30,000 unique clients accessed services through DPH's Behavioral Health Services each year. Of these, on average approximately 8% or about 2,400 are seen in the jail in the same fiscal year.

- 2) What is the process/response of DPH currently when an individual comes to the attention of the department either through SFGH, law enforcement or otherwise, and is suffering from either mental illness and/or substance abuse and is also a danger to themselves or others?**

The San Francisco Department of Public Health has a robust system of care to support individuals with complex behavioral health needs. Services vary depending on the needs of each

individual and DPH is continually working with stakeholders to identify innovative interventions to serve the population. Our goal is to create multiple avenues for individuals to access the appropriate level of care.

When an individual has contact with police officers, SFPD may consider the need for a Welfare & Institutions Code Section 5150 hold and/or diversion to Psychiatric Urgent Care or the Sobering Center. SFPD is also able to consult with our Comprehensive Crisis Services Team. In the event that an individual is brought to the SF County Jail, behavioral health staff is available to assess an individual and provide services throughout their incarceration, as well as develop a plan for re-entry.

When an individual has contact with Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, and is at risk of being a danger to themselves or others, they are assessed by Psychiatric Emergency Services. If the legal criteria for an involuntary hold is met they can be admitted to an inpatient unit for ongoing assessment. The length of stay for each person varies as the Welfare and Institutions Code requires that an individual be released when they no longer meet the statutory threshold. In any case, staff at ZSFG work closely with each individual to develop a re-entry plan and connect individuals to the appropriate level of care prior to discharge.

3) Does the Department have the capacity and bed space needed to treat this population effectively?

DPH and the community have consistently prioritized the provision of care in the least restrictive, community-based settings. We could improve the effectiveness of our work with those coming out of jail with more community-based residential treatment beds.

4) What would the role of DPH be if the City created a BHJC?

The role of DPH is not specified in the white paper. However, behavioral health treatment for the re-entry population should be done in collaboration with DPH.

5) Do you have any other feedback that you would like to provide in regards to the concept of the BHJC?

Consideration of the input and recommendations of the Work Group not only on the BHJC but also on the other ideas that have surfaced and will be prioritized by the Work Group is critical.

The Work Group to Re-Envision the Jail Replacement Project, of which I am a co-chair, is nearing its conclusion. This has been a very important community process that has inspired thoughtful dialogue and generated new ideas. In its remaining meetings, the Work Group will

further discuss and prioritize the ideas that have emerged. I'm looking forward to learning from the outcome of this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a trailing line extending to the right.

Barbara Garcia, MPA
Director of Health