



SANTA CLARA COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT

Update on Technological Needs Projects April 2010

The Technological Needs Plan (TN) was submitted to the state Department of Mental Health (DMH) and approved in October 2009. DHM approved six of the seven projects contained in the plan and funded five of those six in its first distribution. The other approved project will be funded in the next distribution, consistent with the implementation timeline. At full funding, the TN program will receive over \$17 million. We have received \$13.8 million, the amount requested for the first two years of implementation.

The five funded projects are:

- Electronic health record (EHR)
- Enterprise-wide data warehouse
- Consumer health record
- Bed and housing exchange database
- Consumer learning centers
- Consumer portal and website redesign

We are starting with the EHR for several reasons:

- It will take 2-3 years to complete
- There is a federal and state mandate to use EHR systems by 2014, and a county goal of 2013
- It needs to precede and be the foundation for the development of the data warehouse and the consumer health record projects
- It involves two separate strategies, one for county operations and one for contract providers

To date we have initiated the following:

- Held an initial meeting with county Mental Health and Department of Alcohol and Drug Services managers and directors to orient them to the TN program
- Established an infrastructure including existing and planned staffing to assure successful program implementation and oversight
- Held discussions with Unicare to re-implement their system including the necessary modules to become a full EHR
- Completed specifications for upgrades to computer servers and other hardware
- Initiated discussions with contract providers to have each become independent of the county's Unicare system
 - Conducted a survey of all contract providers on their current information system capability and plans for upgrading to EHR
 - Set up a joint county-contractor work group to prepare a methodology and criteria for distributing TN funds to assist contractors in selecting their individual approach to operating without Unicare.