



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 16-201D, Version: 1

Subject:

Grant Application with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for the Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals.

Recommended Action:

Approval and execution by the County Administrator of the grant application with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for the Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI).

Strategic Plan:

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener and purchaser of services for those in need

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and our Customers

5.1 Maximize partner relationships and public outreach

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources

Summary:

Human Services is preparing a grant application to SAMHSA for the 2016 Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals. The purpose of this program is to enhance and/or expand the infrastructure and mental health and substance use treatment services. CABHI grants increase the capacity to provide accessible, effective, comprehensive, coordinated, integrated, and evidence-based treatment services; permanent supportive housing; peer supports; and other critical services for individuals, Veterans, families, and youth who experience chronic homelessness and have substance use disorders, serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, or co-occurring mental and substance use disorders.

Background/Explanation:

Since 1988, medical, dental and behavioral health care referrals have been provided to the homeless population in the County. Primary health care is provided at no charge to homeless patients with incomes at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level. In 2015, the County served 2,239 unduplicated homeless patients through the Mobile Medical Unit and Safe Harbor medical clinic.

The County, a Federally Qualified Health Center serving homeless individuals, has recognized that behavioral health continues to be a pervasive concern within the community, often affecting the physical health and safety of the most vulnerable citizens. A critical lack of funding has impacted the availability and integration of services and information sharing, inhibiting stability for many individuals. The result is a greater demand for deep-end, expensive crisis care and repeated entry into the criminal justice system and emergency rooms. The County's internal data from its Health Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 indicates that there were 6,764 total emergency room visits by 3,440 clients.

The County is seeking this additional federal funding to address this critical health care need among the homeless population served by its Health Care for the Homeless program. One hundred percent (100%) of clients served in the program are screened for behavioral health issues including substance abuse. Of the patients referred, a small percentage of clients actually overcome the barriers and receive treatment. Barriers to treatment for this target population include lack of adequate transportation, lack of insurance, and lack of assistance with follow up treatment.

Funding from this grant opportunity will increase capacity to provide evidence based mental health and substance abuse treatment services for individuals who experience homelessness and have serious mental illness, substance use disorder, serious emotional disturbance, and/or co-occurring disorder.

The County will partner and contract with several local agencies providing services including agencies that work with homeless youth, families, and veterans. This funding opportunity also strongly encourages a commitment to permanently house eligible clients. While funding does not support housing, we are looking to increase local housing placement specialists working with the population. It will also allow the County to provide outreach and other engagement strategies for individuals served, including screening and assessment.

If awarded, the County's homeless population will be on a path to secure housing, coordinated behavioral health services and reduce their likelihood to use the emergency room for behavioral health and linkage services.

Fiscal Impact:

The County is applying for the maximum award amount of \$800,000 per year for local governments for SAMHSA CABHI. No Cost Sharing/Match is required.

Delegated Authority:

Authority for the County Administrator to approve and execute this grant application is granted under Code Section 2-62 (a)(4).

Staff Member Responsible:

Lourdes Benedict, Director, Human Services

Partners:

Catholic Charities/Pinellas Hope
Homeless Empowerment Program
Boley Centers, Inc
WestCare Gulf Coast Florida, Inc.
Ready for Life
Pinellas County Housing Authority
Operation PAR
Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County

Attachments:

OMB Intent to Apply Approval
SAMHSA Grant Application Package