

Analysis of Suggestions for Improvement as part of the FY 2010 County's Line of Business & Schools Program Review Processes Fall 2008

Request By: Public

Suggestion: Reduce the number of hours for Clinic Room Aide (CRA) employees. For example, schedule CRAs 5 hours less per week.

Response By: Health Department

Background: The Health Department last modified CRA service hours during the last economic downturn in 1993. During this time the CRA service hours were reduced from 35 hours to 30 hours at the start of the 1993-94 school year. Hours were subsequently reinstated to 35 hours in January 1994 as a result of community concerns related to the need to provide services to ill and injured students during all school hours.

The Health Department originally proposed the elimination of the entire CRA program (\$4.5 million) as one of its line of business (LOBS) reduction options to meet the projected FY 2010 revenue shortfall. This proposal was subsequently modified by the County Executive, who included a CRA program reduction of \$750,000, or 16.7 percent, in the FY 2010 Advertised Budget. As a result of the proposed \$750,000 reduction, funding would not be available for 100 percent of school hours at all 189 schools.

Recommendation:

The Health Department has reviewed various alternative plans related to the Clinic Room Aide (CRA) program. An analysis was conducted to determine the impact and potential cost savings from: reducing service hours consistently in all schools; reducing service hours selectively at a subset of schools; reducing services hours only at the elementary, middle, or high school/secondary level; and reducing services at all schools one day per week (e.g. eliminate CRA coverage on Mondays in all elementary schools). Discussions are currently being held with Fairfax County Public Schools to identify the best arrangement between the County and Schools to meet the \$750,000 reduction if approved by the Board of Supervisors. Since the care of sick and injured students cannot be unassigned, if CRAs are not available, Fairfax County Public School staff would need to be trained to provide necessary care.