

Response to Questions on the FY 2016 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Hyland

Question: What are the alternatives and how will issues be addressed if the proposed reduction to reduce one service director position and restructure staff within jail-based behavioral health services at the Adult Detention Center (ADC) is not restored?

Response: The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) Service Director position proposed for reduction is responsible for developing, servicing and administering a program of behavioral health services for incarcerated individuals and their families, as well as serving as CSB's liaison to the Sheriff's Department, courts, attorneys, state hospitals and family members. If the position is eliminated, the on-site management and supervision responsibilities would likely be absorbed by remaining staff. This could reduce responsiveness to complicated, sensitive clinical and legal issues.

At present, there is also a Mental Health Manager and two supervisory positions that provide administrative oversight for CSB staff at the ADC. As services in the ADC are not mandated, it would be difficult for the CSB to eliminate other mandated services to replace the proposed reduction. The CSB agrees with the testimony of the CSB Board, as well as other stakeholders, which seeks the restoration of this item. Should this item be restored, the CSB would recommend reclassifying the Service Director position as a direct service position to provide increased discharge/release planning and diversion services. Appropriate discharge/release planning has been shown to be an effective intervention to reduce recidivism in the criminal justice system. Currently, there is not a dedicated staff person responsible for these services, as those services are a part of the array of services provided by CSB staff at the ADC.

Reclassifying a vacant MH/ID/ADS Senior Clinician to a Mental Health Therapist reclassification will result in a cost savings to the County. Although this reduces capacity to engage individuals early in their incarceration, it allows the CSB to have an additional position that will focus efforts on discharge/release planning for those individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues leaving the ADC.