



Office of Chairwoman Lisa A. Bartlett, 5th District

Memorandum

SJA

To: Robin Stieler, Clerk of the Board

Date: 3/8/2019

From: Chairwoman Lisa Bartlett

Re: Supplemental Agenda Item – Orange County Suicide Prevention Initiative

Please add a supplemental item of business to the March 12, 2019 Board of Supervisors agenda. Unless otherwise directed by County Counsel, the title of the supplemental item should read:

Orange County Suicide Prevention Initiative

cc: Frank Kim, County Executive Officer
Leon Page, County Counsel
Richard Sanchez, OC Health Care Agency
Victor Cao, Chief of Staff, Fifth District Office
Sara May, Senior Policy Advisor, Fifth District Office

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CLERK OF THE BOARD
ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



**SUPPLEMENTAL
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

ASR Control 0-

MEETING DATE: 3-12-19

LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION: Board of Supervisors
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT(S): All
SUBMITTING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Chairwoman Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District

DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S): Sara May (714) 834-3550
Victor Cao (714) 834-3550

SUBJECT: Orange County Suicide Prevention Initiative

CEO CONCUR

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW

CLERK OF THE BOARD
Discussion
3 Votes Board Majority

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Direct the Health Care Agency to allocate \$600,000 of Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding to MindOC, the fiscal entity of Be Well Orange County, to create a countywide suicide prevention initiative.

SUMMARY:

Approval directs the Health Care Agency to allocate \$600,000 to MindOC, the fiscal entity of Be Well Orange County, to create a countywide suicide prevention initiative with the goal of increasing awareness and access to available resources, hosting community educational events, and reducing suicide.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States, with more than 33,000 people taking their own lives each year according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An estimated 25 attempted suicides occur per every suicide death.

LOCAL IMPACT:

In recent years, suicide rates and mental health related hospitalizations have increased throughout Orange County. The County's per-capita rate of suicide jumped 45 percent between the three-year periods of 1999 to 2001 and 2011 to 2013. This compares to an average increase

of 22 percent nationwide during the same time frame, and was the largest jump in any metropolitan county in the US. The most recent data from 2017 indicates that the rate of suicide in Orange County was 9.9 per 100,000, the highest rate of the previous 3 years (2015-2017) and a 14% increase since 2000, when the rate of suicide death was 8.7 per 100,000. The average number of suicide deaths from 2000 to 2017 for all county residents was 310 deaths per year.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for children and youth between the ages of 10 and 24. In Orange County, teen suicides averaged 13.3 deaths per year over the past 10-year period. Suicide is a leading cause of non-natural death for youth and teenagers between the ages of 10-19 years old. In Orange County, suicides accounted for 29% of non-natural deaths, making it the second leading cause of non-natural death behind motor vehicle collisions. This is higher than the statewide average in California, in which 22% of deaths among teens were due to suicides.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT:

The Mental Health Services Act, which was passed by California voters in 2004, provides funding to Counties in order to address a continuum of prevention, early intervention, service needs and the necessary infrastructure, technology and training elements that will effectively support mental health systems. The Mental Health Services Act states that Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) programs should emphasize strategies that reduce suicide that may result from untreated mental illness.

ORANGE COUNTY MHSA STEERING COMMITTEE:

The Mental Health Services Act requires a community stakeholder engagement process to inform priorities for the expenditure of local MHSA funds. The allocation of MHSA PEI dollars is consistent with the recommendations of the Orange County MHSA Steering Committee. During FY 2018/19, the MHSA Steering Committee supported the recommendation to expand school-based suicide prevention campaigns and activities for students in grades, K-12, as well as for transitional-age youth in higher educational and other settings. The MHSA Steering Committee also supported several other recommendations, targeting underserved individuals throughout the life span including strategies to increase timely access to services and to promote recovery/resilience, thereby preventing suicide.

CONCLUSION:

On February 15th, Chairwoman Lisa Bartlett hosted a forum on Children's Mental Health with the Orange County Children's partnership. Stakeholders which included both parents and students expressed a lack of knowledge about existing resources and how to access them. Parents indicated that they may not be equipped to recognize warning signs or know how to respond when family members display signs of mental illness. Similar concerns have been expressed by participants of the Be Well Orange County Zero Suicide Task Force. Currently, the County of Orange, the Orange County Department of Education and school districts have several resources and programs in place to prevent suicide and provide care to those in need. Be Well Orange County will serve as a much-needed resource that will effectively target parents and students with suicide prevention education to ensure that more young lives aren't needlessly lost. Efforts will include culturally sensitive materials targeting various ethnic communities.

Be Well Orange County is a transformative initiative bringing together public, private, academic and faith-based organizations, as well as others, to create a coordinated system of mental health care and support for all Orange County residents. Because Be Well Orange County is comprised of key stakeholders, this Suicide Prevention Initiative will enhance and maximize current efforts, resulting in a greater countywide impact.