

STAFF REPORT

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** December 19, 2023

**CATEGORY:** Consent Calendar {{item.number}}

**SUBJECT:** Approve an agreement with Community Connections Psychological Associates, Inc., for suicide prevention training and designate signing authority for amendments.

**DEPARTMENT:** Health and Human Services Agency-Public Health

**SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #:** All

**DEPARTMENT CONTACT:** Robin Schurig, MPH, CPH, Public Health Branch Director, (530) 245-6869

**STAFF REPORT APPROVED BY:** Robin Schurig, HHSA Branch Director

<b><u>Vote Required?</u></b> Simple Majority Vote	<b><u>General Fund Impact?</u></b> No General Fund Impact
--	--

**RECOMMENDATION**

Take the following actions: (1) Approve an agreement with Community Connections Psychological Associates, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$59,740, for suicide prevention training for licensed mental and behavioral health clinicians effective date of signing, ending June 30, 2025; (2) authorize the County Executive Officer, or their designee, to terminate this agreement; and (3) authorize the HHSA Director or their designee, to sign minor amendments, including retroactive, that do not result in a substantial or functional change to the original intent of this agreement and do not cause an increase to the maximum amount payable, so long as they otherwise comply with Administrative Policy 6-101, *Shasta County Contracts Manual*.

**DISCUSSION**

In the United States, suicide is the second leading cause of death among those age 10-14 and the third leading cause of death for those age 15-24. It is the fifteenth leading cause of death worldwide. At a local level, Shasta County's age-adjusted suicide death rate from 2019-2021 (25.6 per 100,000 individuals) is more than double California's suicide death rate (10.3 per 100,000 individuals) from the same time period. Local data indicates that men and individuals 85+ years old are most impacted by suicide, and firearms are the most frequently used means in suicide deaths in Shasta County.

Shasta County was one of three counties in California to receive a multi-year award from the California Department of Public Health for the California Injury and Violence Prevention Branch Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Project. With this funding, Health and Human Services Agency Public Health Branch (HHSA-PHB) has prioritized training for medical and behavioral health providers. As such, Suicide Prevention 201 and 202: Advancing Suicide Prevention & Management Training will allow local providers to effectively recognize, engage, and best serve diverse patients who present with suicide risk through evidence-based training methods. These trainings will also meet the required state licensure requirements for behavioral health staff.

While the number of suicide deaths prevented by providing this training cannot be counted, research supports that training providers in suicide prevention skills is an effective way to increase intervention with those contemplating suicide. It is the purpose of the trainings to support providers in conducting intentional and standard assessments of suicide risk by expanding the skills and comfort with which these professionals administer appropriate assessment materials. Nationally, rates of suicide and self-harm, especially in adolescents and young adults, are increasing. Additionally, research indicates suicide loss survivors are at increased risk of suicidal ideation and death themselves following the suicide death of a loved one. By not equipping more local mental and behavioral health professionals with this training to recognize warning signs and utilize intervention skills, it is likely that our community will see continued increases in suicide deaths and attempts. By increasing the capacity of providers in our community, we are increasing access to support for those experiencing suicidal ideation and attempt risk. With rising rates of youth self-harm, it is important to equip our providers with the tools and skills appropriate to intervene to prevent self-harm and death by

suicide. Increasing the acceptance of mental and behavioral health support in younger populations will help normalize help-seeking and decrease stigma in our community.

Approving this agreement will allow HHSA-PHB to provide high quality, evidence-based training to our local behavioral health providers to increase suicide risk assessments, standardize risk assessments, and learn treatment plans to better serve those at risk of suicide. Providing training for providers is one strategy to increase suicide prevention activities in the community with an aim of reducing suicide morbidity and mortality rates.

Delegation and designation of authority to terminate this agreement allows for timely termination of this agreement by the CEO or their designee directly, in the event the consultant is unable to meet expectations, funding is no longer available, or services are no longer necessary, without having to return to the Board.

Delegation and designation of authority to sign minor amendments to this agreement allows for timely and efficient resolution of minor corrections or adjustments by the HHSA Director or their designee directly, without having to return to the Board. Future amendments eligible for approval by the HHSA Director will not increase the maximum amount payable and will not result in substantial or functional changes in regard to the original intent of this agreement, and will otherwise comply with Administrative Policy 6-101, *Shasta County Contracts Manual*.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The Board could choose not to approve the agreement, only approve a portion of the recommended actions, defer consideration to a future date, or provide alternate direction to staff. Should the Board opt to not approve this agreement, HHSA-PHB would be unable to spend grant funding previously awarded by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

County Counsel has approved the agreement as to form. Risk Management has approved the agreement. The recommendation has been reviewed by the County Administrative Office.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget includes sufficient appropriation authority for the activities described in this agreement and will be requested in future budget submissions. Funding for this agreement is provided by the CDPH Injury and Violence Prevention Branch (IVPB) through the Comprehensive Suicide Prevention (CSP) Award – Grant Agreement 21-10817 A1. There is no additional General Fund impact with approval of the recommendation.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1: Personal Services Agreement