



Interoffice Memorandum

October 23, 2023

TO: Mayor Jerry L. Demings
-AND-
County Commissioners

FROM:  Carrie Mathes, CFCM, NIGP-CPP, CPPO, C.P.M., Manager II,
Procurement Division

CONTACT: Donna Wyche, Manager, Mental Health and Homelessness Division
407-836-7608

SUBJECT: Approval of Federal Subrecipient Agreement Y22-2419, Providing
Preventative and Maintenance Mental Health Services to Minors

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approval of Federal Subrecipient Agreement Y22-2419, Providing Preventative and Maintenance Mental Health Services to Minors, between Orange County and Adventist Health System/Sunbelt, Inc. dba AdventHealth Orlando dba AdventHealth for Children, in the not-to-exceed amount of \$1,319,277.44.

Request delegation of authority to the Procurement Manager or designee to execute such Federal Subrecipient Agreement on a form approved by the Orange County Attorney's Office and the Risk Management Division.

PURPOSE:

This subaward is issued from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (the "Recovery Fund") allocation received by the County on May 18, 2021.

This agreement will increase the availability of mental and behavioral health services and support to minors while they are patients of AdventHealth facilities, as well as provide resources and referrals for treatment and follow-up assistance to the local community. The subaward period of performance is upon contract execution through September 30, 2024.

DISCUSSION:

In accordance with the Code of Ordinances, Part I, Chapter 17, Article III, Section 17-286 – Application and Exclusions, agreements between the Board and nonprofit organizations are excluded from competitive procurement requirements.

Public Health precautions such as social distancing and the closing of schools, early learning centers, after school programs and limited group activities created a disruption of normal routine and access to activities outside of the home. This led many children and adolescents to feel isolated, lonely, and caused an increase in stress and anxiety. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a public health need for increased access to mental health services for this age group.

This agreement provides mental and behavioral health services by masters level clinical social workers and other mental health care professionals in the emergency department, primary care offices, and a newly created outpatient psychiatry practice. These providers will assess and treat minors in acute mental health crises and navigate them to appropriate ongoing care when indicated.

Further support to the community will be provided by the family connect call center which will be available to anyone in the community via telephonic and tele-video technology to assess mental and behavioral health needs and connect such individuals to appropriate resources.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a public health need for increased access to mental health services for children and adolescents. While emergency department (“ED”) visits for other medical causes for children declined in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of children's mental health-related ED visits rose 24% among 5 to 11-year-olds and surged 31% among 12 to 17-year-olds in April 2020 through October, compared to that period in 2019, according to a November Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report. The pandemic also saw a rise in ED visits for suspected suicide attempts among young people. Among teen girls such visits were up 51% from February to March earlier in 2021 compared to 2019, according to a June CDC report.

The “Impacted Class” for this project is any minor (under 18 years old) who: (a) resides in Orange County, Florida; and (b) experienced disruption in their normal routine and access to others and activities outside their home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Project will increase the availability of mental and behavioral health services to minors, through use of the Subrecipient’s Mental Health Navigators who will be experts in mental health care and masters level clinical social workers or mental health counselors. These Navigators will assess and screen each minor patients’ clinical needs and work towards connecting such patients with the proper treatment in a lower level of care, less-restrictive, outpatient program, when clinically indicated, safe, and appropriate.

Based on these screenings and biopsychosocial assessments, patients will be navigated to care within an AdventHealth for Children facility or to a community partner agency when appropriate. AdventHealth for Children counselors will utilize evidence-based and culturally appropriate interventions to address the mental health needs identified. Most importantly, AdventHealth for Children care navigators will partner with patients and families and provide support and follow up throughout the patient’s mental health care journey, ensuring patients are accessing and receiving the services and care they need. A key component of the Project will be continued follow-up to ensure patients are receiving the right care, in the right place, at the right time. After initial assessment and referral, Navigators will contact families for at least three months to ensure they have been connected to community-based resources and are receiving the mental health support they need.