



1736 Family Crisis Center
Alcott Center for Mental Health Services
Alliance Human Services, Inc.
Alma Family Services
Almansor Center
Amanecer Community Counseling Services
Aviva Family & Children's Services
Bayfront Youth & Family Services
Bienvenidos Children's Center
BRIDGES, Inc.
Center for Aging Resources
Child & Family Center
Child and Family Guidance Center
ChildNet Youth and Family Services
Children's Bureau of Southern California
Children's Hospital Los Angeles
Children's Institute, Inc.
Community Family Guidance Center
Concept 7 Family Support & Treatment Ctrs.
Counseling4Kids, Inc.
Crittenton Services for Children and Families
D'Veal Family and Youth Services
David & Margaret Youth and Family Services
Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services
Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center
ENKI Health & Research Systems, Inc.
Ertie Lee Youth & Family Services
Exceptional Children's Foundation
Exodus Foundation
Families Uniting Families
Five Acres
Foothill Family Service
For The Child
Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Center
The Guidance Center
Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Svcs.
The Help Group
Hillsides
Hillview Mental Health Center, Inc.
Hollygrove, An EMQ FamiliesFirst Agency
Homes for Life Foundation
Institute for Multicultural Couns. & Ed. Svcs.
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
Junior Blind of America
Kedren Community Mental Health Center
Koreatown Youth & Community Center
LeRoy Haynes Center
Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Maryvale
Masada Homes
McKinley Children's Center
Mental Health America of Los Angeles
Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services
Olive Crest
Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services
Pacific Asian Counseling Services
Pacific Clinics
Pacific Lodge Youth Services
Para Los Niños
Penny Lane Centers
Personal Involvement Center, Inc.
Phoenix House
Prototypes
Providence St. John's Child & Fam. Dev. Ctr.
Rancho San Antonio Boys Home, Inc.
Rosemary Children's Services
San Fernando Valley C.M.H.C., Inc.
San Gabriel Children's Center, Inc.
Social Model Recovery Systems
S.C.H.A.R.P.
So. Cal. Foster Family and Adoption Agency
Special Service for Groups
SPIRITT Family Services
St. Anne's
St. Joseph Center
Star View Children & Family Services
Tarzana Treatment Centers
Tessie Cleveland Community Services Corp.
Tobinworld
Trinity Youth Services
The Village Family Services
VIP Community Mental Health Center, Inc.
Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services
The Whole Child
WISE & Healthy Aging
Youth Services Network

June 3, 2015

Honorable Mike Antonovich, Mayor
Honorable Hilda Solis
Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas
Honorable Sheila Kuehl
Honorable Don Knabe
Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support for an Alternative to a Proposed Health Agency for Los Angeles County

Dear Supervisors:

The Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA) represents over 85 nonprofit, community-based mental health, child welfare, and juvenile justice agencies serving vulnerable individuals in need and their families throughout Los Angeles County. ACHSA supports the position of the Los Angeles County Coalition for an Office of Healthcare Enhancement in believing that there is a better way to promote integrated health care in this County for clients with conjoint mental health, health, and substance use problems than the creation of a new health agency, which would bring with it significant unnecessary disruption for all of the stakeholders of the mental health system.

As has the Coalition, we would like to acknowledge and thank you for listening to our mental health stakeholders when you agreed last January to reconsider the proposed integration of the County Departments of Mental Health and Public Health into a single County Health Department, and at the same allow stakeholder input into an analysis of the pros and cons of an alternative health agency model. Our Association has reviewed that analysis, done by the CEO's office in its Draft Report, in great detail, and is unconvinced that it would best serve the needs of our clients.

A new health agency would give the director of that agency line authority over the Directors of the Departments of Mental Health and Public Health, muting those Departments' current autonomy and voice, and therefore the voices of their clients and family members. The Coalition's alternative of having your Board direct a collaborative problem solving approach among the three departments, we believe would be much more cost effective and less disruptive. It would also, as stated in the Mental Health Commission's letter to you, ensure that DMH, DPH, and DHS "continue to be recognized as equals, along with the other County Departments, in terms of accountability and direct reporting to the Board of Supervisors."

Honorable Board of Supervisors
June 3, 2015
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Importantly, ACHSA also strongly endorses the Mental Health Commission's position that the development of a strategic plan for integrated care is the best mechanism for replicating, enhancing, and expanding currently successful models of integrated care among the three Departments, while working to identify and remove those barriers that would allow for their replication, enhancement, and expansion.

ACHSA, which equally represents agencies serving both children and adults, was very disturbed to see that the CEO's Draft Report basically ignored the needs of children with serious emotional disturbances. Importantly, the children's system of care philosophy upon which our county mental health system's delivery of services to children with serious emotional disturbances is based, with its focus on family driven, community-based services which are culturally and ethnically proficient, is inconsistent with the adult-focused, clinic-based orientation of the Draft Report.

This, we believe, is just one glaring example of how the Draft Report has failed to make the case for the creation of a new health agency, and how the tens of thousands of individuals and their families who today benefit from the county mental health system will not be well served. It is important to point out that neither the initial idea of an integrated health department nor the alternative proposal of a consolidated health agency came from them, based on a groundswell of discontent. In fact, we are proud to say, unconditionally, that the Los Angeles County Mental Health system is today the best in California, bar none. Accordingly, we respectfully reject the need for a new health agency and urge your support for the alternative being recommended by the Coalition and the County Mental Health Commission.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support for our agencies and the clients that we serve, as well as for your support for the highest quality healthcare possible for Los Angeles County's residents.

Very truly yours,


John Griffith, Ph.D.
President

c: Health and Mental Health Deputies
Mitchell Katz, MD
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