



Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

May 27, 2015

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TO:

Mitchell H. Katz, MD
Director, Department of Health Services

Nina J. Park, MD
Chief Executive Officer and Chief Medical Officer, ACN

Christina Ghaly, MD
Director of Health Care Integration, CEO

FROM:

Sheila Shima
Chair, ACN Advisory Board

Enrique Peralta
Vice Chair, ACN Advisory Board

SUBJECT:

**INTEGRATED HEALTH AGENCY PROPOSAL –
ACN ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

At our May 19, 2015 meeting, the Department of Health Services (DHS) Ambulatory Care Network (ACN) Advisory Board adopted recommendations regarding the draft report on the proposed new County Health Agency, developed by the Interim Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) Office of Health Care Integration. We are submitting our written comments and recommendations for consideration in accordance with the public comment period ending May 29, 2015.

We on the ACN Advisory Board thank both Dr. Ghaly and Carol Meyer for meeting with us to discuss the pending proposal, both prior to the development of the draft report and again after the release of the report for public comment. This proposal would have a potentially significant impact on the provision of medical and behavioral health ambulatory care services for County residents, and we appreciate the opportunities to share our comments and recommendations about the proposed change.

To ensure access to high-quality, patient-centered, cost-effective health care to Los Angeles County residents through direct services at DHS facilities and through collaboration with community and university partners.

We commend the writers of the draft report for capturing the extensive amount of information from the various stakeholder groups in the document, including the list of issues submitted to the Interim CEO's Office of Health Integration after our ACN Advisory Board's March 26, 2015 meeting.

However, we are concerned that many community members, including patients receiving services from County Departments, will continue to have difficulty in understanding the proposed creation of a health agency, despite the Executive Summary which was prepared to help the general public understand the key issues and recommendations in the report.



Health Services
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The ACN Advisory Board members have adopted the following recommendations:

- 1) We continue to strongly support the goal of improving care coordination and ensuring better integration of services. The critical role of the DHS Ambulatory Care Network, as DHS primary care providers, should be more clearly referenced in the draft report. The report should also reference the opportunities to improve care coordination within DHS itself between ACN outpatient, hospital outpatient and hospital inpatient services.
- 2) It is critical to provide adequate resources for the proposed new Health Agency and the departments in order to achieve the goal of improving integrated care coordination.
 - a. We are concerned about comments in the report that no additional resources would be provided.
 - b. New resources may only be needed for a limited time to allow the new Agency to achieve longer-term savings.
- 3) It is critical to clearly define the mission, purpose and responsibilities of the new Agency and to establish measurable outcomes the Agency should achieve in improving care coordination.
 - a. We recommend that the metrics be developed before the decision is made to create the new Health Agency to ensure a shared understanding of the Agency's purpose and expected outcomes.
 - b. If the Agency is created, parameters should be developed for evaluating Agency success at achieving outcomes and to determine whether changes to the Agency structure and/or operations are needed.
- 4) The report to the Board of Supervisors should reference the need to address, with or without new resources, the logistical issues of establishing and staffing the new Health Agency as a separate and distinct entity from the three County Departments.
- 5) The report should reference how the new Health Agency could participate in opportunities for innovation and integration for improving the health and lives of all County residents, many of whom may be served by non-County primary care providers.
 - a. What is the agency's role in engaging with private, non-County entities in discussing policy changes and strategic issues in the larger healthcare arena? This is especially critical with the expanding roles of behavioral health, long-term care and social determinants in affecting individual health outcomes.

- 6) The new Agency should be responsive, on a continuing and more proactive basis, not only to the Board of Supervisors, the Departments and other County agencies, but also to the various stakeholder groups and community advocates who support the departments and to the patients/clients receiving County services. The Agency should ensure appropriate transparency at all times and that all communications appear in major languages represented in the County's ethnic communities.
 - a. A process should be developed to ensure input from patients on operational changes the Agency and/or Departments are considering, prior to implementation of the changes, which would have an impact on patient access to care.
 - b. It is critical to seek community input, particularly from consumers, in all parts of the County.
 - c. It is also critical that community involvement reflect an understanding of differing needs and perspectives of ethnic populations.

We on the ACN Advisory Board look forward to continuing our involvement in issues, such as this proposal, which affect the health care outcomes for DHS ambulatory care patients and other Los Angeles County residents.

SS

- c: ACN Advisory Board Members
Carol Meyer, RN, BSN, MPA, Community Outreach Coordinator, CEO
Board Health Deputies
Board Mental Health Deputies
Board Public Health Deputies