

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with preparation of this board item and related activities are included in the Department's FY2019/20 Adopted Budget. There is no additional financial impact to the County General Fund.

DISCUSSION:

One in five adults experience mental health conditions each year, ranging from mild episodes to serious and persisting illness. According to National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), three out of four of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 24, and the average delay between the onset of symptoms and intervention is eleven years. The Solano County Behavioral Health Division provides a range of specialty mental health services to over 5,000 individuals, both children and adults, experiencing serious mental health conditions. Behavioral Health provides services and supports that are person-centered, safe, effective, efficient, timely and equitable, that are supported by friends and the community, and that promote wellness and recovery. Prevention and early intervention (PEI) programs and services include strategies to reduce stigma and discrimination of individuals with mental health conditions and suicide prevention. In addition, over 800 individuals are served by the Medical Services Division in the County's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC).

Solano County Behavioral Health and community-based mental health providers had planned to sponsor or organize a variety of activities and events throughout the month of May to celebrate mental wellness; however, due to COVID-19 and the need for social distancing these activities and events have been postponed. Efforts will be made to utilize social media platforms to raise awareness about mental health, available services and appropriate resources.

World Maternal Mental Health Day draws attention to essential health concerns for mothers and families. Life changes around pregnancy make women more vulnerable to mental illness. As many as one in five new mothers experience some type of perinatal mood and anxiety disorder and according to California Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) reports, one in five women in California who recently gave birth experienced symptoms of depression during and after pregnancy, translating to approximately 100,000 women in California annually. This may have long-lasting physical, cognitive and emotional outcomes as women of every culture, age, income level and race can develop perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The prevalence is estimated to be even higher in certain populations. For example, one in four African American and Latina mothers in the State reports depressive symptoms as do as many as half of all mothers living in poverty. Symptoms can appear any time during pregnancy and within the first twelve months after childbirth.

The Solano Public Health MCAH Bureau screens for symptoms of depression using validated tools and provides appropriate referrals and ancillary support for women in need of care. Through a partnership and braided funding between Solano County Behavioral Health and Public Health, an evidence-based intervention titled the "Mothers and Babies Perinatal Depression Prevention Program" promotes healthy mood management. Providing the intervention during the perinatal period (pregnancy through baby's first year) may also prevent adverse childhood experiences in early childhood that can have lifetime effects. By design, the curriculum is delivered by staff of varied educational and professional backgrounds, in one-on-one and group modalities. Furthermore, a mental health clinician provides crisis support, brief counseling, and linkage for women who are experiencing mild to moderate mental health conditions. For individuals that need more intensive mental health services the MCAH staff link consumers to the Behavioral Health Division.

Increasing awareness will drive social change and support the goal of improving quality of care for people who experience mental illnesses as well as women experiencing all types of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, thereby reducing the stigma of experiencing mental health issues and seeking supports. Solano County Behavioral Health and healthcare professionals, friends, and relatives of new moms are encouraged to listen

and ask how people are truly feeling. Mental Health Awareness Month and Maternal Mental Health Day create opportunities for people to speak out about their mental health, ensure they know that seeking help is not a weakness and emphasize that they are not alone.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to adopt the resolutions. This is not recommended because the resolutions are an opportunity to raise awareness and promote community discussion regarding the impact of mental illness and the services available to address these issues.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Solano County Mental Health Advisory Board endorses the resolutions and activities. Additionally, H&SS Behavioral Health Division will continue to partner with various community-based mental health providers and community organizations to support Mental Health Awareness Month in May. Similarly, the MCAH Bureau of H&SS Public Health will partner with various organizations to promote World Maternal Mental Health Day.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION