

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
TUESDAY, APRIL 09, 2024**

**MINUTE ORDER NO. 22**

**SUBJECT: REPORT BACK ON THE RURAL HEALTH POST-HOSPITAL DISCHARGE  
PILOT PROGRAM (DISTRICT: 2)**

**OVERVIEW**

On March 14, 2023 (6), the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Administrative Officer to work with Grossmont Healthcare District to initiate a rural health post-hospital discharge program in Mountain Empire which includes the communities of Boulevard, Campo, Jacumba, Potrero, and Tecate. From July 2020-June 2023, the 30-day unplanned readmission rate averaged 12.1% for rural communities where Sharp Grossmont Hospital was the primary receiving hospital. While Sharp Grossmont Hospital has operated a post-hospital discharge program in more urban communities, no program has existed in rural areas.

County Fire partnered with the Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Grossmont Healthcare District, Sharp Grossmont Hospital, Mountain Empire School District, San Ysidro Health, and Southern Indian Health Council, Inc. to establish the pilot program. Launched in June 2023, the pilot program's medical team includes a County Fire/CAL FIRE paramedic (paramedic) and HHS Public Health Nurse (Nurse). The Nurse reinforces the hospital discharge medical direction, assists clients with making follow-up appointments with a primary care provider, performs clinical and social assessments, provides case management services, and links clients to the County's Aging and Independence Services and Self-Sufficiency Services such as In-Home Supportive Services and CalFresh. The paramedic conducts voluntary defensible space inspections, looks for trip hazards and other household dangers, and can initiate an ambulance transport for medically critical patients, as needed. In the first six (6) months of the pilot program, the unplanned 30-day readmission rate has dropped to 4.0% for patients receiving those services compared to 13.9% for those who did not participate and resulted in an estimated cost avoidance of \$350,000, when annualized to the Sharp Healthcare system.

Today's recommendations include receiving a presentation regarding the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge program and potential next steps for County staff to make the program permanent or end it after the pilot phase concludes on June 30, 2024.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. Receive a presentation from County staff on the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge program.
2. Provide direction regarding funding for the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge program.
  - a. Conclude the program on June 30, 2024, when pilot funds from County Fire, HHS, and Grossmont Healthcare District end.
  - b. Direct County staff to work with Sharp Healthcare, Grossmont Healthcare District, health insurance plans, or any other government, healthcare, or non-profit agency, to identify non-County funding to fully support the program and return to the Board if there are any needed actions.

If the Board selects option 2b:

3. Approve and authorize the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to execute Revenue Agreements, upon receipt, for the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge Program including any annual extensions, amendments, and/or revisions thereto that do not materially impact or alter the services or exceed \$500,000 annually from Sharp Healthcare, Grossmont Healthcare District, or insurance agencies for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2029.

### **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge program has supported equitable outcomes in traditionally underserved communities. According to the Health and Human Services Agency Community Health Statistics 2021 Demographics profile, the Mountain Empire region has the highest percentage of population living under the Federal Poverty Level, highest percentage of the population living with a disability, second lowest household income, second highest percentage of senior citizens, and second highest percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native population in our region. A focused program on the health and social needs in Mountain Empire can improve long-term outcomes and support a more resilient population.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Today's recommendations support the County's Sustainability Goal of providing just and equitable access to County services by focusing investment in chronically underserved communities in the Mountain Empire area.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with today's actions. However, today's recommended actions may result in future fiscal impacts, for which staff will return to the Board with funding source identified for consideration and approval.

### **BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

### **ACTION:**

ON MOTION of Supervisor Anderson, seconded by Supervisor Desmond, the Board of Supervisors took the following actions:

1. Received a presentation from County staff on the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge program.
2. Provided direction regarding funding for the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge program by selecting Option 2b:
  - b. Direct County staff to work with Sharp Healthcare, Grossmont Healthcare District, health insurance plans, or any other government, healthcare, or non-profit agency, to identify non-County funding to fully support the program and return to the Board if there are any needed actions.
3. Approved and authorized the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to execute Revenue Agreements, upon receipt, for the Rural Health Post-Hospital Discharge Program including any annual extensions, amendments, and/or revisions thereto that do not materially impact or alter the services or exceed \$500,000 annually from Sharp Healthcare, Grossmont Healthcare District, or insurance agencies for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2029.

AYES: Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond  
NOT PRESENT: Vargas

State of California)  
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



**Signed**  
**by** Andrew Potter