

ATTACHMENT

For Item

#10

Tuesday,
October 11, 2022

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION RECEIVED BY THE
CLERK OF THE BOARD

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Cc: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External] BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKER SHORTAGE (Please file with agenda item 10.)
Date: Thursday, October 6, 2022 1:13:34 PM

Hi Supervisors,

On 8/30, in connection with the Alvarado Hosp Contract, I said of the BHC Worker shortage "You seem to want to throw money at the problem rather than focussing on quality" but many of these issues are not a money issue...here are the real causes:

Exhausting working conditions and long delays in care for their patients; County mental health departments are struggling to hire. So are commercial health plans. So are nonprofits; Some clinicians don't accept any insurance at all, and thus aren't accessible to the vast majority of patients who can't pay cash; New telehealth (one-size-fits-all) startups specializing in mental health treatment offer good pay and flexible hours and siphoning off providers from the public sector; Need more 'bilinguals.'

Here are some solutions beyond the obvious:

- Team-based models with a therapist; case worker; parenting, housing or employment specialist; and peer provider who has lived with mental illness and can support others in crisis.
- Expanding the provider class to include the people who cut or braid your hair, live on your block, or work where you work.
- Investing in career ladders, so people who enter the field as peer providers have the option to earn more advanced degrees.

Regards,

Paul Henkin