



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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*Leland W. Collins, Director*

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To: Board of Supervisors  
From: Leland Collins, Director, Department of Social Services  
Date: July 20, 2004  
Subject: 2003-2004 Annual Report of the Adult Services Policy Council

**Recommendation:**

Receive the report and presentation by the Adult Services Policy Council.

**Discussion:**

In April 1999, your Board formally recognized the Adult Services Policy Council as the countywide cooperative tasked with providing planning, development and system design, and service integration to improve and expand services for adults and seniors. Our target population is seniors and adults with disabilities who utilize publicly funded health and human services. At that time you asked that the Policy Council report to your Board on an annual basis.

Report is attached.

**Other Agency Involvement:**

The Department of Social Services provides a management employee to act as the Adult Services Policy Council Coordinator, on ½ time basis.

The Adult Services Policy Council members represent more than forty (40) private, non-profit and public service providers; and boards and commissions.

Public Agencies:

Board of Supervisors  
Behavioral Health Department  
Mental Health Services  
Drug and Alcohol Services  
Probation Department  
Public Health Department  
Social Security Administration  
Veteran's Services

County Administrative Office  
Department of Social Services  
Department of Rehabilitation  
District Attorney's Office  
Victim Witness Assistance Center  
Sheriff's Department  
Superior Court  
IHSS Public Authority

Non-Profit Agencies:

Area Agency on Aging  
Community Health Centers  
HOTLINE  
Independent Living Resource  
Center  
Senior Nutrition  
Transitions/Mental Health  
Association  
French Hospital Medical Center

Arroyo Grande Community Hospital  
Economic Opportunity Commission  
Housing Authority  
Lifesteps Foundation  
Senior Volunteer Services  
Sojourn  
Tri-Counties Regional Center  
United Way

Boards and Commissions:

Adult Abuse Prevention Council  
Drug and Alcohol Advisory Board  
HIV Prevention, Advocacy and  
Care Consortium  
Medical Society

Commission on Aging  
Health Commission  
Homeless Services Coalition  
Mental Health Board  
Supportive Housing Consortium

Private Entities:

Gentiva Health Systems  
Your Problem Solved

Sierra Vista Medical Center  
Twin Cities Community Hospital

**Financial Considerations:**

The Policy Council is not requesting any funds at this time.

**Results:**

The activities of the Adult Services Policy Council improve the quality of life for seniors and adults who utilize publicly funded health and human services. Results of specific activities are included in the attached report.

# ADULT SERVICES POLICY COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2003 - JUNE 2004

Over the past year, the primary focus of the activities of the Adult Services Policy Council has been improving access to healthcare and retention of health and human services. Seniors and adults with disabilities have been significantly impacted by reductions in local healthcare. They are becoming more dependent on the public healthcare system because private physicians are reluctant to accept the low Medicare and Medi-Cal reimbursement rates.

We want to thank the Board of Supervisors for its recent actions to expand access to primary care through its contract with Community Health Centers. At a time of budget deficits and service reductions, we commend the Board for following through with its commitment to provide health services for our low-income county residents.

In the past 12 months, the Policy Council members have worked together to put in place projects that expand information resources on how to access healthcare, reduces the need for re-hospitalization, maintains the current level of services our clients depend upon and provides tools to better understand our target population.

The Policy Council developed and implemented **Healthline** (funded with a Preventive Health Grant). **Healthline** was developed so that all county residents can find the healthcare provider they need. **Healthline** has three partners - the Policy Council got the project off the ground, HOTLINE operates **Healthline** as part of its countywide information phone services, and the Medical Society provides up-to date information on healthcare services to HOTLINE. HOTLINE uses the data provided by the Medical Society to train its volunteers who answer the phones. Data from the first six months of **Healthline** are attached.

The Aftercare Intervention Demonstration Project was completed this year. The purpose of the two-year project was to find out which adults and seniors have difficulty when they return home after a hospitalization and what types of intervention are effective in preventing re-hospitalization. LifeSpan Services Network operated the project for the Policy Council. Hospital discharge planners and emergency room staff referred patients who were assessed as having problems managing their discharge plan once they returned home. A nurse visited the patients at home and helped them get needed services started. The nurse returned in one week to check on how the patient was doing.

Results:

- The nurse worked with 237 patients
- Only 11% of the patients had to return to the hospital
- 45% were older than 75 years of age
- 29% had a cognitive impairment

- 45% were unable to find or discuss their discharge plan
- 57% had improved by the second home visit
- Lack of family or social support was the leading reason for a referral by hospital staff

The Policy Council continues to sponsor case consultation through its **Interagency Resources Team (IRT)**. Staff members from Adult Protective Services, Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Services, Public Health, Public Guardian and the Sheriff's Department are on the team. The team is available weekly to services providers, family members and friends who request a consultation. There have been 47 case consultations. The major issues have been the need for affordable housing, the need for residential drug/alcohol treatment, clients who may need a conservatorship, clients whose behavior keeps them from being permitted at homeless service facilities, and clients who are unwilling to comply with treatment plans or program requirements.

To maintain the program services our clients depend upon, the Policy Council created the **Technical Assistance Team**. This team is available to provide assistance to a Director of an agency who is experiencing financial problems. The team provides a confidential setting to help the Director put a plan together to meet the crisis and maintain program services for our target population.

The Policy Council has become very involved in advocating for maintaining basic services that are slated for reduction or elimination by the state or federal governments. We have just produced a **video** to show how the health and human service reductions the Governor is proposing will impact our clients' lives. "***Sharing our Stories: There Is No Place Like Home***" gives our clients an opportunity to tell how they depend on these services to live independently. How these services improve their lives. We have enclosed a copy of the video with this report.

Our final project this year was to develop and produce a **DATA BOOK** about our target population. The **DATA BOOK** describes the seniors and adults with disabilities who live in our county. Clients of Policy Council agencies completed a special target group questionnaire that was part of the 2003 ACTION for Health Communities Survey. The target group survey focused on the need for in-home assistance and healthcare.