

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND MILLIONAIRES**

### **A Report on Proposition 63 and Mendocino County Mental Health**

June 17, 2008

#### ***Summary***

The 2007-2008 Grand Jury investigated the use of funding raised through Proposition 63 (Prop. 63) and its enabling legislation, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA),<sup>1</sup> by Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency's Mental Health Branch (the branch).

The County budgets about \$19 million a year on mental health clients, but, for several years, almost all of the money has come from State and Federal sources, especially Medi-Cal.<sup>2</sup> Prop. 63, passed by voters in November 2004, infused more than \$1 million a year into the County's mental health treatment effort, but with strings attached. Most important was that little, or none, of the money could go to existing programs. The MHSA requires new programs with new types of treatment and targeting different clients in many cases. MHSA mandates experimental programs and different treatment models.

However, local mental health officials, and others, have long felt that the County's mental health system has been teetering close to collapse, with many needs unfilled. At the same time, the State's budget problems have cut support for some programs. The net effect is that there is pressure to find ways to use the Prop. 63 money to support the old systems.

The 2007/08 Mental Health Branch Budget states major policy considerations as:

- The Mental Health Branch is to move toward an "Adult System of Care" where the Primary Care Clinics, Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Programs, Public Health Nursing, Probation, and the Social Services Branch are all working together as partners to serve the citizens of the County. Policy considerations require that each initiative taken on by the branch must dovetail with the Health and Human Services Agency (HSA) Strategic Plan.
- Mental Health will define itself as a specialized psychiatric service in partnership with primary care clinics where the general health needs of clients are met. Clients will move freely between these two systems as necessary. Policy consideration requires the branch to consider ramifications of all decisions in this context.
- Adopt at every opportunity principles of the "Recovery Model" so that the Mental Health Branch is in close partnership with family members and consumers of the services available. The community will see the branch as providing a strength based and consumer driven resource that is "clinically strategic." All future efforts are designed with this underlying philosophical approach.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/Prop\\_63/MHSA/docs/Mental\\_Health\\_Services\\_Act\\_Full\\_Text.pdf](http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/Prop_63/MHSA/docs/Mental_Health_Services_Act_Full_Text.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/auditor/budget/07-08/>

Under California law, the Mental Health Branch concerns itself with only a subset of mental disorders, what is known as the Axis I of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV), published by the American Psychiatric Association.<sup>3</sup> Axis I is basically confined to schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder and anxiety disorder. Autism, dementia, paranoia, various personality disorders, etc. are not a concern of the Mental Health Branch, but may be a concern of the Public Health Branch or the Social Services Branch.

The Mental Health Branch generally serves those who qualify for Medi-Cal. MHSA tries to bypass this limitation, especially for families not poor enough to get Medi-Cal, but who cannot afford expensive private treatment.

### ***Methods***

The jury interviewed County officials and members of public groups involved in Prop. 63 efforts and budgeting. It reviewed the law and the budgets, including the separate Prop. 63 budget for the past three years.

### ***Background***

Prop. 63 imposes a 1% tax on personal income over \$1 million a year. The money goes to programs specified in the MHSA. Counties receive allocations based on population. Mendocino County receives all the money it is entitled to, and any unspent money carries over to the next year or may be deposited in the "prudent reserve." The MHSA requires a prudent reserve fund in each county to cover unexpected costs or a drop in revenue.

The first year's collection was much larger than expected. There was a scramble to put together programs to use the new funds. Also, the State held back part of the money as a State reserve for leaner years.

The next year (2006), although the law mandated that Prop. 63 funding be allocated, the governor line-item vetoed funds allocated under Assembly Bill 2034, which served the homeless. The result was a scramble to salvage programs and staff. The governor said the Prop. 63 money could be used to fund those programs, and the State officials opened the rainy day reserve for that purpose. Advocates cried "foul," and lawsuits started.

In the 2006-07 fiscal year, the State delayed Medi-Cal mental health reimbursements for months, forcing the County to borrow money to continue service. The State money eventually came through, but, by then, the County was out more than \$400,000 in interest expense.

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<sup>3</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diagnostic\\_and\\_Statistical\\_Manual\\_of\\_Mental\\_Disorders](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diagnostic_and_Statistical_Manual_of_Mental_Disorders).

## **Findings**

1. In 2005/06 the County Chief Executive Officer began the integration of the Public Health Department, Social Services Department and Mental Health Department into a single unit, the Health and Human Services Agency. Each of the former departments now is a branch of the Agency.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

2. One reason for combining departments into the agency was that clients of one department often were receiving services from another. A second reason was that it allows sharing of funds and personnel across branches. A third reason is that clients do not have to go to multiple places for services.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

3. The Mental Health Branch has a staff of about 125 and a budget of about \$19 million.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

4. Most of the Branch budget is for core services—24-hour emergency care, hospitalization, institutional care, and board and care.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

5. About half the budget goes to contractors for hospitalization and treatment programs. The rest is for staff, crisis workers, case management, therapeutic services to youth and their families, vocational rehabilitation, housing assistance, wrap-around services to families with children experiencing emotional disturbances, school-based day treatment for targeted students, early intervention for children ages zero-to-five, monitoring of medication, integrated homeless services, and administration.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

6. All hospitalizations handled through the Mental Health Branch are at out-of-county facilities, and the cost is included in the branch budget, but may be supplemented beyond Medi-Cal. The only local holding facility, the Psychiatric Health Facility, closed in 2000.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

7. The branch serves the Mendocino County Jail and Juvenile Hall.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

8. The branch serves about 2,700 individual clients.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

9. One growing problem is that many individuals with mental health problems self-medicate. That complicates things for all those, including doctors, law enforcement, family, and mental health workers, who in dealing with a crisis, need to know whether drugs or alcohol are the main problem or are masking mental health symptoms.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

10. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) appoints members to the Mental Health Board of citizens to advise the County. The Board comprises three members from each County Supervisorial District: one member represents clients, one clients' families and one the general public. At present, there are numerous vacant positions.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

**Response: (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors)**

*The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.*

11. Prop. 63, known as the MHSA, was created in 2004, and is a 1% tax on personal income over \$1 million to be used for mental health services, but it contains many conditions and limitations; one being that these funds cannot be used to supplant existing State or County funds, and current County and State mental health funding cannot be reduced based on the availability of Prop. 63 money. The State shall neither reduce mental health funding nor require an increase in the County's share of funding without reimbursement.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

**Response: (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors)**

*The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.*

12. Prop. 63 funds are distributed to counties based mostly on the size of their population.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

13. Prop. 63 has its own budget. It also has its own MHSA Advisory Committee (appointed by the BOS), which includes representatives from each Supervisorial District, stakeholders such as law enforcement, education, ethnic and cultural groups, and consumer (patients), clients' families and the public.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

**Response: (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors)**

*The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.*

14. The MHSA Committee has various work groups, and meets quarterly with the Mental Health Board. Meetings were previously each month, but lack of attendance was a problem. Work groups create proposals and negotiate with affected parties who may provide input. All meetings are public and require public notice.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

**Response: (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors)**

*The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.*

15. The State set up three year programs, emphasizing innovation, but because innovation does not guarantee success a program might be discontinued. The first year was to be for planning, training, capital improvements which include technology needs, and some administration; however, the program was not instituted quickly enough. The three year program may be extended.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

16. Staff stated there is a lack of communication and guidance on policies and planning from management.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department wholly disagrees with this finding. The policies and procedures required to fully roll out new MHSA programs are in progress and are discussed and trained with staff as they become final.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director wholly disagrees with this finding. Staff receives guidance on policies and procedures relative to new Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) programs as they are implemented.*

17. Documents show the Mental Health Branch is unresponsive to requests for meetings with providers, who are concerned about their funding. Staff states that upper management is unresponsive to their requests for input and guidelines on programs.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department wholly disagrees with the finding. The Mental Health Branch Director has responded to every request from official contractor(s) to meet to discuss funding. Management discusses new MHSA programs with staff, including considering staff input into development of specific policies.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director wholly disagrees with this finding. The Mental Health Branch Director values input, and makes every effort to invite program discuss between staff and upper management. The Mental Health Branch Director has met with providers and discussed matters of funding.*

18. The branch issues Requests for Proposals (RFP) for new programs. Prospective contractors respond. In Mendocino County, last year, the existing programs did not require a review for continued funding through Fiscal Year 2007/08. There were no RFPs put out last year for new programs, and as of May 15, 2008 no RFPs had been put out for the coming fiscal year.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

19. There is a plan to issue a new RFP for the adult community program soon. The branch expects to fund the existing programs temporarily until the process is complete.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

20. Proposed plans must be first approved by the State, then by the MHSA committee. Then, the Mental Health Board and the Mental Health Director compile and approve the components in a public hearing. Lastly, the Board of Supervisors holds a public hearing, and votes on the total plan.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department wholly disagrees with the finding. Proposed plans recommended by the MHSA workgroups are formally discussed and recommended or not recommended, jointly by the MH Board/MHSA Stakeholders committee, which meets quarterly. The MH Director submits the recommendation including public comments to the Health & Human Services Director, who puts the Plan on the Board of Supervisors' agenda for public discussion and approval of the plan. The last step is to submit the BOS approved plan to the State for final approval.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*



21. Prop. 63 money must stay in the county, so it cannot be used for placements to out-of-county facilities.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

22. One goal of the MHSA is the “recovery vision” for mental health consumers. Prevention and early intervention are other goals.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

23. There are various models for treatment. For example:

- The Medical Model—using drugs to allow patients to manage their condition,
- The Recovery Model—providing services to allow patients to gain self sufficiency with a choice of whether to use drugs, or peer support, assuming that some mental illness, like some physical diseases, may be managed without being fully cured,
- The Peer-to-Peer Model—letting current or former patients participate in the treatment protocol, based on an assumption such a person knows things a non-patient couldn't know, and that such a person can gain more rapport with a patient.
- Other models include alternative medicine, food based or mega-vitamin based.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

24. MHSA requires that funded plans be consumer driven and include the Recovery Model, which it refers to as the “Recovery Vision.”

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

25. In the Medical Model the doctor is in charge of the treatment, the patient has little input, but may refuse or discontinue use of a medication.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

26. The Recovery Model emphasizes patient control and participation in decisions.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

27. The Peer-to-Peer Model is a subset of the Recovery model; and the peer counselor is or has been a client.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

28. The MHSA requires major public and stakeholder participation in designing and setting up programs and awarding contracts.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

29. There are two classes at Mendocino-Lake Community College which would train and qualify peers to be therapeutic counselors.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

30. There are passionate advocates of the different models. Some advocates support a combination of models.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

31. There are also various definitions of the terms. Recovery for some advocates would mean less hospitalization and less need for services. For others, it means full recovery and reintegration into society. Some believe that recovery is impossible. Some say if severely schizophrenic patients recover, they weren't really schizophrenic at all.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

32. For last year the County will receive approximately \$400,000 from the Prop. 63 emergency reserve to replace vetoed money for the homeless, since many of the clients are the same.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

33. Prop. 63 funding is by age group. Because it still is being rolled out, not all groups have funded programs yet. Some funding is for children. Other money goes to the transition age group, 16-24 years old, especially youth who move out of foster care at 18. There are adult, elder care and other categories.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department disagrees with the finding. Funding has been spent on programs for all age groups; 1) Children and Families, 2) Adults, 3) Older Adults, and 4) Transition Aged Young Adults.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director disagrees with this finding. Proposition 63 funding has been spent on a variety of programs that involve groups from all four age categories.*

34. The largest contract is for an adult program, named "A Healing Cooperative."<sup>4</sup> There has been contention between the Health and Human Services Agency and the contractor's executives about the program. Part of the problem is a poorly worded contract, although the plan was approved by the State. Another problem is the difficulty in measuring results. This Cooperative operates facilities in Ukiah, Willits and Fort Bragg, and provides walk-in centers, group treatment and training. It is strongly peer oriented.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

35. Although not required, the Cooperative has created a report to measure progress for individuals, called a "Rubric for Mental Health Recovery."<sup>5</sup> Staff members rate clients upon entry to the program and track changes.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ahealingcooperative.org/templates/System/default.asp?id=41568>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ahealingcooperative.org/clientimages/41568/rubricforrecovery.pdf>

36. A Healing Cooperative will probably lose some funding, partly because the State requires that 51% of funds go to a “Full Service Partner,” that is, a client who is assessed with an Axis I disorder. It is unclear how many users of A Healing Cooperative’s services qualify as “Full Service Partners.” Also, the County must put 50% of the MHSAs communities services budget into prudent reserve.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

37. Most programs funded under Prop. 63 are grant contracts, with a fixed term, perhaps three years. It’s not certain what will happen when grants end. One reason for grants is that many programs are experiments, and the state wants to be able to stop those that don’t work.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department disagrees with the finding. Some programs are implemented through contracts with community-based providers. The county is required through review with workgroups and ultimately MHSAs Stakeholder/MH Board process to review programs for effectiveness and for deliverables described in the contract. The county in partnership with the community stakeholders has the responsibility to ensure programs are meeting the objective(s) in the plan. When county demographics and/or circumstances change and/or contractor is not meeting deliverables, the MH Branch in partnership with the community is required to redesign or develop programs to meet objectives of the plan.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director disagrees with this finding.*

38. Programs are evidence based. That is, there must be some way to measure what is working, and whether it is worth the cost in money or personnel. The County and community have authority and obligation to maintain what is working or redesign to address unmet needs.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

39. Prop. 63 requires that the County maintain the 2004 level of mental health care funding for the regular services (plus a factor for inflation). However, there is no accommodation for the increase in population or for increase in the number of clients generated by outreach.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with this finding. The Mental Health Branch will issue RFPs in a timely manner to ensure that services reach the community as soon as possible.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

40. To date, the County has received all the money it is entitled to under Proposition 63. Any unspent money rolls over to the next year.

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with the finding.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency Director agrees with this finding.*

### **Recommendations**

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. The Board of Supervisors and the Mental Health Board make a concerted effort to recruit members to fill vacant positions on the Mental Health Board; (Finding 10)

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**  
*The Department agrees with this recommendation. The Mental Health Board and the Board of Supervisors are actively recruiting members. Several vacancies have been filled and/or candidates are in the process of achieving approval.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**  
*This recommendation has been implemented, as evident by Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and Mental Health Boards continual appointment and recruitment to fill vacancies as they occur.*

**Response: (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors)**

*This recommendation has been implemented. The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, along with the Mental Health Advisory Board, make every effort possible to timely appoint qualified applicants to fill vacancies as they occur.*

2. The MHSA advisory committee make a concerted effort to recruit applicants for vacant positions; (Findings 13 and 14)

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with this recommendation. The MHSA advisory committee is actively reaching out to groups and organizations in an effort to recruit representatives to actively participate in the workgroups and the stakeholders committee.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*This recommendation has been implemented, as evident by their recruitment efforts to fill vacancies, at all levels, as they occur.*

**Response: (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors)**

*This recommendation has been implemented. The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, along with the Mental Health Board, make every effort to assist the advisory committee in their efforts to recruit applicants.*

3. The Mental Health Branch provide more visibility on MHSA programs and proposed programs; (Findings 13-17 and 19)

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with this recommendation. The Mental Health Branch will continue to participate and support the workgroups, the Stakeholders Committee and all public notice requirements.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*This recommendation has been implemented, as evident by Mental Health's commitment to participate, recruit, educate, and support Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) programs.*

4. Mental Health Branch issue RFPs for Prop. 63 funds in a timely manner; (Findings 18-20 and 34-36)

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with this recommendation. The Mental Health Branch will issue RFPs in a timely manner to ensure that services reach the community as soon as possible.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*This recommendation has been implemented, and will continue to be procedure, as evident by Mental Health's continued issuance of timely Request for Proposals (RFPs).*

5. Mental Health Branch extend current contracts one more year, through Fiscal Year 2008/09; (Findings 18-20 and 34-36)

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department disagrees with this recommendation. The County is required to ensure that services and outcomes described in contracts have been provided and have met the requirements for the funding. The county is also required to implement fair processes such as Request for Proposals that ensure that any interested organization has the information to submit a proposal to compete to provide the potential services. The Mental Health Branch plans to initiate a RFP for Recovery Centers for Ft. Bragg, Willits and Ukiah the week of August 18, 2008. Applicants will be required to meet the needs of full-service partners and comply with the MHSA regulations, which insist that 51% of the Community Support Services budget address this category.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not deemed reasonable. Contracts can not simply be extended an additional year due to the complexity of the matter; such as: quality assurance; program guidelines; RFP process; fair practice and legal requirements; contractual stipulations; and budgetary needs.*

6. The Mental Health Branch, the Mental Health Board and the Mental Health Services Act committee, begin work on the Fiscal Year 2009/10 programs. (Findings 18-20)

**Response: (Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch)**

*The Department agrees with this recommendation. Mental Health has begun the process for reconvening the work groups for the 4 Work Plans; Adults, Older Adults, Children & Families and Transition-Aged Young Adults (TAY). The Adult and Older Adult System of Care is currently meeting to review programs and make recommendations for continuation, expansion and/or new programs to be included in the next 3-year plan. The Children and Family and TAY will be scheduled in September. The recommendation has been made by the Prevention and Early Intervention work group, which is in early stages of plan development, to expand the strengths and needs assessment to include an update on needs and strengths for Mendocino's MHSA plan. Because the State is predicting that the PEI funding will equal approximately 20% of the Community Services and Supports, it will essential*



*to that needs and strengths analysis for both these efforts are coordinated to make the best decisions for growth and sustainability.*

**Response: (Director, Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency)**

*This recommendation will require further analysis, work has begun on many of the programs as part of the 3 year plan, and careful consideration must be made to staffing and/or funding necessary to service and maintain those programs currently underway, and the delegating of resources to initiate work on fiscal year 2009/2010 programs prior to obtaining comprehensive state, federal and county budgetary requirements and reporting/program specifications for that fiscal year.*

**Comments**

Some forms of treatment cost more than others in the short term. However, if they are effective in the long term, they will save money over the long haul. Only experimenting with treatment protocols will demonstrate this. But, a change in protocols may threaten some jobs or types of work.

The branch's regular budget largely depends on "billable minutes" to Medi-Cal and others. If clinical staff can bill for 70% of their time, the reimbursement will support the entire branch budget. If Prop. 63 treatment modes work, there is a threat to the branch's funding.

The public wants to help the mentally ill. But it doesn't want to see them. Any Recovery Model assumes the mentally ill will be among us. That's part of the treatment.

Funds available for treating those with mental disorders have always been insufficient, and the mental health workers are underpaid relative to the technical skills required of them. People enter this field in spite of these obstacles because the deposit they make into their emotional bank is great.

**Required Responses**

Mendocino County Director of Mental Health Branch (All Findings; All Recommendations)

Director of Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency (All Findings; All Recommendations)

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (Findings 10, 11, 13, 14; Recommendations 1, 2)

**Requested Responses**

Local representative of National Association for Mental Illness (All Findings; All Recommendations)