



TECHNOLOGY PROJECT PROPOSAL

The County of Orange Behavioral Health Services (BHS) is proposing to implement a fully integrated electronic health record (EHR) system that supports the goals of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) to promote wellness, recovery and resiliency. To help counties accomplish this goal, the California State Department of Mental Health (DMH) has made available MHSA funds to allow the counties to build the necessary technology infrastructure, as well as support the development and implementation of the EHR system. We currently have an application that already provides Registration, Scheduling, Billing and Laboratory (for Public Health Services only) functionalities. These are all individual elements of an integrated EHR system, however what is missing are the clinical documentation and medication management components.

Our approach in executing this project includes a two-phased scenario – the first phase is the build-out of the technology infrastructure to provide us with the necessary platform on which to develop the functionality we need. Upon the completion of this first phase, we will proceed with the second phase which will be to further enhance the existing EHR system to include the clinical documentation and medication management components resulting in a fully integrated and functional EHR which is able to interface and/or interoperate with non-County clinics. The benefits of our resulting EHR include:

- The ability to electronically document each encounter between a client and a service provider. This information may include patient demographics, symptoms, impairments, diagnoses, treatment plans with goals, progress notes, medication and treatment history, etc.
- The ability to provide a secure and real-time information resource for service providers
- The ability to share (with client's consent) and manage information resulting in improved care coordination across service providers
- Reduced redundancy in gathering of patient information thus increasing efficiency
- Compliance with changing state and federal requirements for billing, reporting, interfaces, and privacy
- Providing the foundation to address developing Federal and State requirements for implementation and meaningful use of an EHR

The proposed EHR project will include two phases:

Phase I: Build-out of the technology infrastructure to provide us with the necessary platform on which to develop the functionality we need. The existing hardware and software are technologically outdated and are not able to support any new development thus preventing us from realizing the benefits gained in client care from a full EHR and exposing us to potential failure to comply with future State and Federal regulations. Vendor selection, standardization of clinical program processes, and clinical requirements documentation will also take place during this phase (proposed timeline 2009 – 2010).

Phase II: Further enhance the existing EHR system to include the clinical documentation, medication management, and other components resulting in a fully integrated EHR which is able to interface and/or interoperate with non-County clinics (proposed timeline 2011-2014).

Continued future MHSA funding will be set aside for routine system maintenance and essential system upgrades.