

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Departmental Correspondence

DATE: JUL 10 2001
HEARING DATE: JUL 24 2001

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Margaret Taylor, Director, Health Services MT
SUBJECT: Per Diem Salary Rates for Staff Psychiatrists

RECOMMENDATION

Resolution authorizing the hiring of extra-help psychiatrists and approving a salary rate of \$90 per hour

Background

Health Services is currently paying \$60 per hour for per diem (extra-help) physicians. In the past, psychiatrists have been included in this generic class. A survey for psychiatric per diem rates completed in June 2001 however, indicates that the department's rates are up to 36% less than other Bay Area facilities. The physician per diem hourly rate has not been increased since 1999.

Discussion

Health Services is experiencing extreme difficulty hiring and retaining qualified psychiatrists willing to work on a per diem basis because of the lower-than-average rate. The division heavily affected is the Hospital and Clinics Division's Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) where a physician (psychiatrist) is required to be on site 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

Establishing a new per diem rate for Psychiatrists will allow the department to offer a rate competitive to other Bay Area institutions in order to hire and retain qualified physicians.

Staff Physician Per Diem Salary Rates

HOSPITAL	PAY FOR PER DIEM
Alameda County	\$96 per hour
San Francisco General Hospital	\$85 per hour/average per diem rate
Santa Clara County	\$75-\$125 per hour
SMCGH-Mental Health Services	\$60 per hour/average contract physician

County Counsel and Employee and Public Services have approved the hospital's ability to hire additional extra-help psychiatrists for PES and to increase the hourly rate to \$90.

The Hospital is also working with Employee and Public Service to determine a more permanent and cost effective way to fill these difficult to cover shifts in Psychiatric Emergency Services.

Fiscal Impact

The impact of raising the rate will be approximately \$164,000 for FY2001-02. The added salary cost will be offset by paying less overtime to staff physicians and by purchasing fewer locum tenens services at rates from \$115 to \$135 per hour. During FY2000-01, a total of \$228,000 in overtime wages was paid to the three hospital psychiatrists who cover psychiatric services. Part of these costs will now be paid to per diem doctors thus reducing the consistent need for the civil service psychiatrists to work such long hours. Funds have been included in Hospital and Clinics Division and Mental Health Division FY2001-02 budgets. There is no additional net county cost.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF EXTRA-HELP PSYCHIATRISTS AND
APPROVING A SALARY RATE OF \$90 PER HOUR

RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo, State of
California, that;

WHEREAS, there is need for extra-help psychiatrists at the San Mateo General
Hospital; and

WHEREAS, the hospital has not been able to hire sufficient psychiatrists at the
current per-diem rate of \$60 per hour and it is necessary to provide a special rate for extra-help
psychiatrists of \$90 per hour; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to meet the need for extra-help psychiatrists and wishes
and desires to approve such hiring and the rate of pay;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED AND ORDERED that
the Board hereby authorizes the hiring of extra-help psychiatrists at the hospital and the
establishment of the salary rate for the such extra-help psychiatrists at \$90 per hour.