



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 6, 2003
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE BUSINESS HEALTHCARE CONNECTION (BHC)
(District: All)

SUMMARY:

Overview

As a result of the Improving Access to Healthcare Project (IAH), the concept of the Business Healthcare Connection (BHC) was developed. The purpose of the BHC is to assist small businesses, the working uninsured and their families with information, education, referral, screening, assistance and coordinated enrollment for both private and public healthcare options. County sponsored legislation was proposed in Sacramento to fund this project on a pilot basis in San Diego, but was denied because of the State's fiscal crisis.

In April of 2002, the California Endowment stepped forward to fund an 18-month pilot project of the BHC in San Diego. In the last year, the BHC has made progress in outreach and enrollment of individuals working for small businesses and/or their family members. Although it is not required that the BHC staff prepare a report for the Board of Supervisors, we believe that the work done so far is worthwhile and of value to the community.

Recommendation(s)

SUPERVISOR ROBERTS AND SUPERVISOR JACOB:

1. Receive the report from the Business Healthcare Connection (BHC).
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to send a letter of appreciation and support to the Project Management Committee of the Improving Access to Healthcare Project (IAH) project for their role in developing the Business Healthcare Connection and for the work they have done on behalf of the uninsured in San Diego County.

Fiscal Impact

None by this action.

BACKGROUND:

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE BUSINESS HEALTHCARE CONNECTION (BHC)
(District: All)**

According to the latest statistics from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, San Diego County has roughly 282,000 people between the ages of 18-64 and 83,000 children who are without health insurance. Although the total of 365,000 uninsured is high and needs to be reduced, it is a far cry from when we started the Improving Access to Healthcare Project (IAH) in 1999 where it numbered closer to 600,000. Much of this success is due to the hard work of our County staff that are on the front lines of enrolling eligible individuals as well as the strategies developed by the members of the Project Management Committee (PMC), which is the result of the IAH.

San Diego County's economic engine is fueled by small business. They employ thousands of people in the region, yet many of these small businesses do not offer health coverage for their employees. Many do not have the information on the current programs that exist. Thus, one of the strategies that came from the PMC was the concept of a one-stop clearinghouse for small business to utilize that has information on current public and private programs for their employees and/or their families. Thus, the Business Healthcare Connection (BHC) was developed.

In early 2001, the County sponsored legislation in Sacramento, AB 1547 that would fund the BHC on a pilot basis. Unfortunately, due to the State's fiscal crisis, which to this date is not improving, the pilot was not funded. However, in April of 2002, the California Endowment saw the promise of this strategy and funded an 18-month pilot project here in San Diego. Over the last year, the BHC has made significant contacts in the small business community and outreached to many employers and employees on the benefits of healthcare coverage for them and/or their families. Much of this outreach has come at a time when the last thing employers want to hear about is another cost to go against their bottom line. Nevertheless, employers seem responsive to the information, even grateful, and some, not many, have signed up for health coverage.

The report before this Board today is not meant to be the end-all, be-all of the BHC, but it is meant to show that the results achieved at this point are promising and are something that this Board can take pride in having sponsored. Even with the current economic uncertainty out there, there are still employers willing to step forward and cover their employees and the information provided by the BHC is a large part of that success.

Although the work done by the BHC is important, the 18-month pilot project will be coming to an end and continued funding is certainly an issue. We are optimistic that the results of the project will demonstrate its value to the State or other outside organizations for revenue, independent of county financing. Even though we may feel this project has value, the pending fiscal crisis at the state will leave this county vulnerable and thus not in a financial position to support the project. However, we will continue to support it in other ways.

Respectfully Submitted,

RON ROBERTS
Supervisor, Forth District

DIANNE JACOB
Supervisor, Second District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): [Click here and type, or type N/A if not applicable]

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Ron Roberts

Dianne Jacob

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Anthony Orlando

Name

Alan Pentico

Name

Phone

Phone

Fax

Fax

Mail Station

Mail Station

E-mail

E-mail

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE BUSINESS HEALTHCARE CONNECTION (BHC)
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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET
(continued)

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

CONTRACT NUMBER(S):

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE BUSINESS HEALTHCARE CONNECTION (BHC)
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT:
PROGRAM:
PROPOSAL:

	(a)	(b)	(c)	FUTURE YEARS ESTIMATED BUDGET OF PROPOSAL IF ADOPTED	
	Budgeted Amount For Proposal	Proposed Change in Budgeted Amount	Proposed Revised Current Year Budget (a+b)	(d) 1st Subsequent Year	(e) 2nd Subsequent Year
Direct Cost					
Revenue/Other Offset					
NET GENERAL FUND COST					
Staff Years					

Sources of Revenue/Other Offset for Proposed Change and Subsequent Years:

Space-Related Impacts: Will this proposal result in any additional space requirements? Yes N/A

Support/Other Departmental Impacts: Yes N/A

Remarks: Yes N/A