

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Week of February 28, 2022

State Issues

<p>Governor Proposes New Program to Help Those Struggling with Mental Health Challenges, Homelessness</p>	<p>Today, Governor Newsom unveiled a new proposal called CARE Court in an effort to address the behavioral health crisis in California. The new proposal offers court-ordered individualized interventions and services, stabilization medication, advanced mental health directives, and housing assistance, and is community-based. Plans can be up to 12-24 months. In addition to their full clinical team, the client-centered approach also includes a public defender and a supporter to help individuals make self-directed care decisions. The proposal, which must be approved by the Legislature, would require counties to provide comprehensive treatment to the most severely impaired and untreated Californians and hold patients accountable to their treatment plan.</p> <p>According to the Governor, the plan is to have CARE Court not wait until someone is hospitalized or arrested before providing treatment. CARE Court will provide an opportunity for a range of people, including family members, first responders, intervention teams, and mental health service providers, among others, to refer individuals suffering from a list of specific ailments, many of them unhoused, and get them into community-based services.</p> <p>“Governor Newsom’s groundbreaking CARE Court proposal breaks through on a key missing piece of the homeless challenge,” said Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg. “For people who are the sickest and most vulnerable on our streets, the governments responsible for helping them must be legally obligated to act.”</p> <p>“It’s time we face the painful, but obvious truth: our behavioral health system in California is broken. All of us see it every day on our streets – and it’s long past time we fix it,” said San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria. “Governor Newsom’s CARE Court proposal is a major step forward. It will provide individuals who are struggling with behavioral health issues a pathway to the housing and health services they need and give those who encounter these individuals a real way to get them the help they need. I look forward to working with the Governor and my municipal colleagues to implement a working program at the local level.”</p> <p>You can access the press release here https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/03/03/governor-newsom-launches-new-plan-to-help-californians-struggling-with-mental-health-challenges-homelessness/; and the proposed memo here: https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Fact-Sheet_-CARE-Court-1.pdf.</p>
<p>LAO Report on Behavioral Health</p>	<p>The Legislative Analyst Office published a report this week covering Governor Newsom’s major proposals on Behavioral Health. Their detailed brief provides an analysis of the Governor’s three major proposals:</p> <p>1) \$1 billion General Fund in 2022-23 and \$500 million General Fund in 2023-24 to the Department of Health Care</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(more)</i></p>

<p>LAO Report on Behavioral Health</p>	<p>Services (DHCS) to provide short-term behavioral health bridge housing options—through the existing Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BH-CIP)—for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness with behavioral health needs;</p> <p>2) an additional \$317 million General Fund one time and \$33.6 million General Fund ongoing (for a total of \$93 million General Fund in 2021-22 and \$571.6 million General Fund in 2022-23) to the Department of State Hospitals (DSH) to implement certain solutions developed by the Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) workgroup that convened last fall in response to the substantial backlog of individuals found IST awaiting treatment in a DSH program; and</p> <p>3) \$16 million General Fund (\$108 million total funds) to add mobile crisis intervention services as a new mandatory covered benefit in the Medi-Cal program.</p> <p>You can access the full report here: https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4569.</p>
<p>Health Information Exchange</p>	<p>This week, two stakeholder budget proposals related to health information exchange were unveiled.</p> <p>One is from the Californian Medical Association, which is for \$80 million in grants for small providers for technical assistance for HIE. The other is from Manifest Medex, local health plans, clinics, and also the California Medical Association. In addition to giving grants to small providers, it would direct the state to identify Health Information Organizations who can build the Health Information Exchange needed for CalAIM, the state’s Medi-Cal reform plan.</p> <p>According to the Fact Sheet, if the proposal is adopted “qualified HIOs will connect to Medi-Cal providers’ electronic health records and aggregate and clean clinical data to support CalAIM and other Medi-Cal activities including enhanced care management, community supports, behavioral health system modernization, quality improvement and population health management.”</p> <p>Both Blue Shield and Manifest Medex testified in support of the proposal in Senate Budget Subcommittee on Thursday. The Administration rejected a version of this proposal last year, but more work will need to be done on this version as the budget process continues.</p>

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