

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:  
January 31, 2006

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: Approve The Appropriation Adjustment Request No. 26-044 In The Amount Of \$229,566 And Authorize the Employment Services and Risk Management Department To Prepare Salary Resolution Amendment Adding 1.0 Senior Office Assistant And 1.0 Public Health Microbiologist To Fund Campaigns To Educate The Public And Address Outbreaks Of Communicable Diseases

Contact: Glennah Trochet, M.D., Public Health Officer (875-5881)

**Overview**

In the past year the Public Health Division has responded to a variety of challenges. An outbreak of active tuberculosis disease among recently arrived refugees was discovered in January. Sacramento County became the epicenter of West Nile Virus this year with more dead birds and more human infections reported than any other county in California. The probability of Pandemic Influenza is greater now than it has been in the last twenty years. Preparation for such an eventuality requires a robust public health infrastructure; adequate planning for a response; and widespread education of the community, first responders, healthcare, business and elected officials.

**Recommendations**

1. Direct the Employment Services and Risk Management Department to prepare an administrative Salary Resolution Amendment adding a 1.0 Senior Office Assistant and a 1.0 Public Health Microbiologist to the Department of Health and Human Services.
2. Approve the attached Appropriation Adjustment Request reducing contingencies and adding \$229,566 in appropriations to the Department's Fiscal Year 2005-06 Final Adopted Budget.

**Measures/Evaluation**

The recommended actions address two of the Department's priorities; people in the community are healthy, and people in the community are safe.

**Fiscal Impact**

The public education campaign will cost \$200,000 per year. The cost of these positions in Fiscal Year 2005-06 is estimated to be \$29,566. The total combined cost for Fiscal Year 2005-06 is \$229,566. No revenues are expected this fiscal year; therefore, this additional cost will need to be funded by contingencies.

The two added positions cost \$118,264 annually. The Public Health Microbiologist will generate sufficient fees from tests performed for public and private entities to fully fund this position in future years. The Department's Fiscal Year 2006-07 Requested Budget will include \$70,032 in estimated revenues, reducing the total annual General Fund cost to \$248,232 for the public education campaign and the added positions.

Approve The Appropriation Adjustment Request No. 26-044 In The Amount Of \$229,566 And Authorize the Employment Services and Risk Management Department To Prepare Salary Resolution Amendment Adding 1.0 Senior Office Assistant And 1.0 Public Health Microbiologist To Fund Campaigns To Educate The Public And Address Outbreaks Of Communicable Diseases

Page 2

## **BACKGROUND**

In the past year, the Public Health Division has responded to a variety of challenges:

- An outbreak of active tuberculosis disease among recently arrived refugees was discovered in January. This resulted in emergency funding for additional positions in Tuberculosis control.
- The probability of Pandemic Influenza is greater now than it has been in the last 20 years. Preparation for such an eventuality requires a robust public health infrastructure; adequate planning for a response; and widespread education of the community, first responders, healthcare, business and elected officials.
- Sacramento County became the epicenter of West Nile Virus this year with more dead birds and more human infections reported than any other county in California. The Sacramento Yolo Mosquito Vector Control District implemented aerial spraying of limited amounts of a pesticide when the number of infected adult mosquitoes became epidemic. The Division supported this activity and engaged in intensive public education and response to concerns about the spraying. In addition to continuing with their other ongoing duties, staff investigated and reported 175 cases of the disease. The Public Health Laboratory added West Nile Virus testing by foregoing other tests and by reassigning staff from other duties.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Public Education Campaign**

The Department believes a public education campaign is necessary to educate the community, first responders, healthcare, business and elected officials on the symptoms and risks associated with various communicable diseases, especially West Nile and Avian Influenza viruses. An annual amount of \$200,000 could be used for Pandemic Influenza education, but there is a need for similar education for West Nile Virus, as well as for any other health threat that may emerge.

### **Senior Office Assistant**

A Senior Office Assistant position is needed to be the primary backup to the Disease Control Confidential Secretary. This year, the Division of Public Health initiated a Web-based reporting system for communicable diseases as a requirement for Bioterrorism Preparedness. The system will be used to track all communicable diseases, including West Nile Virus and Avian Influenza. This system will eventually streamline the current paper-based system, but the initial input requires additional staff resources. The Senior Office Assistant will be the primary data input technician for this Web-based reporting system. The position will also coordinate and lead other Office Assistants in the Disease Control Unit who serve as telephone backup during disease outbreaks or disease incidences that are highly visible to the public

### **Public Health Microbiologist**

The Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory has added new, innovative tests to its panel, which help with rapid response to emerging diseases. In the past year the Laboratory has

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Page 3

performed West Nile Virus testing, has added an influenza virus panel to improve surveillance for avian influenza and for early detection of cases of pandemic flu, should it emerge, and Quantiferon, a new blood test that determines exposure to the bacterium that causes tuberculosis. The need for additional staffing has become urgent. An added Public Health Microbiologist will assist in improving the schedule for testing and relieve current staff from working overtime to complete the routine work. In addition, this position will allow the Laboratory to report some tests more quickly.

### **Measures/Evaluation**

The recommended actions address two of the Department's priorities; people in the community are healthy, and people in the community are safe.

### **FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**

The public education campaign will cost \$200,000 per year. The cost of these positions in Fiscal Year 2005-06 is estimated to be \$29,566. The total combined cost for Fiscal Year 2005-06 is \$229,566. No revenues are expected this fiscal year, therefore, this additional cost will need to be funded by contingencies.

The two added positions cost \$118,264 annually. The Public Health Microbiologist will generate sufficient fees from tests performed for public and private entities to fully fund this position in future years. The Department's Fiscal Year 2006-07 Requested Budget will include \$70,032 in estimated revenues, reducing the total annual General Fund cost to \$248,232 for the public education campaign and the added positions.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED

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LYNN FRANK, Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

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TERRY SCHUTTEN  
County Executive

By:

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Penelope Clark, Administrator  
Countywide Services Agency

Attachment: AAR No. 26-044