

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: September 25, 2001

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Diana F. Hutchens, Director of Social Services

SUBJECT: New Position - Full-Time Permanent Social Worker with Adult Services

The Adult Services Unit, within the Division of Social Services, has experienced increases in demand for its programs over the past several years. This unit serves citizens over the age of 60 and those who are disabled over the age of 18. The services provided include investigation of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation, including reports made on behalf of residents in private adult living facilities and public institutions such as Eastern State Hospital. The number of investigations has risen by 66 percent since 1998. Staff attributes the rise to the increase in population, more complaints being made from members in the community, an increase in the number of adult living facilities, and new state procedures for investigations at state institutions.

This group of social workers also provides the required screenings for those living in the community who need personal care or a nursing home placement. They must also assess the need for placement and public assistance for certain citizens seeking to reside in adult living facilities. These screenings have increased by 45 percent in the past year alone.

The Adult Services Unit also arranges for Companion Services, Social and Recreational programs, and screens for the AIDS waiver for Medicaid recipients. Additionally, Social Services has the responsibility for arranging guardians through the Circuit Court when citizens can no longer make decisions in their own best interest. They are also required to review all guardianship reports that are submitted to the Circuit Court and, when needed, investigate any improprieties or allegations of wrongdoing on the part of the appointed guardian.

Social Services works closely with the Peninsula Agency on Aging, the Historic Triangle Senior Center, Olde Towne Medical Center, and other organizations serving the elderly. The Division's goal is to collaborate and work in partnership to ensure that all needs of these vulnerable citizens are met. Many elderly and disabled residents require assistance with such things as obtaining medication, working with the Social Security system, transportation to critical appointments, locating safe housing, and arranging for home health care. Sometimes assistance is needed to ensure that the elderly or disabled individual has food, clothing, and shelter. They are frequently in need of counseling and support services and many rely on Social Services as they have no relatives available to help them.

In March of 2001, an employee working in Mediation and Child Day Care was moved to the Adult Services Unit to assist with the increase in workload. Her position was Part-Time Temporary and Part-Time Permanent. This position transfer was necessary to meet the increase in demand for Adult Services in our community. A decision was made to track the increase in workload for a period of six months to determine whether or not the trend over recent years was going to continue, and whether or not the position needed to be made permanent. A comprehensive review for this position, including statistical information, indicates that the establishment of a Full-Time Permanent Position is necessary.

Staff recommends the approval of the attached resolution to establish a new Full-Time Permanent Position within Adult Services and eliminate two part-time positions.

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Diana F. Hutchens

CONCUR:

Anthony Conyers, Jr.

DFH/adw
socialserv2.mem

Attachment