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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

http://dmh.lacounty.gov

January 8, 2008

Dear Contract Providers:

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES ON CLINICAL DOCUMENTATION

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) has had a number of requests to provide a letter to contract providers facing State audits to the effect that DMH accepts electronic signatures on clinical documentation.

Based on the Draft State of California Department of Mental Health (SDMH) Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Information Technology Plan Guidelines we have reviewed, we believe the transition to an electronic health record system, including electronic signature, for all publicly funded providers of mental health services is inevitable. As you know, we are in the process of obtaining an electronic health record (EHR) system for DMH.

DMH will accept electronically signed documentation as evidence of services provided. Auditors may ask to see the edit history of a document or documents in order to establish its authenticity and accuracy.

DMH does not support, endorse, certify or in any other way take a position on specific information systems products used by our contract providers. It remains your responsibility as a provider to satisfy yourself that the system you have selected will meet your business requirements, allow you to meet your contractual obligations, and provide the necessary documentation to support your position in the event of a State or County audit.

If you have any questions, please call Robert Greenless, Ph.D., our Chief Information Officer, at (213) 251-6481.

Sincerely,

Marvin J. Southard (RK)

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
Director of Mental Health

MJS:RK:RG