

Mental health team seeking more input from Oakland boards

The plan to establish a mental health authority to oversee Oakland's mental health budget — \$149 million in fiscal 1998 — has been in the works for almost two years.

Thus, it's not particularly surprising that Community Mental Health Transition Team Wednesday decided to refer the plan to several other committees for review.

"But we're still on target," said the chair of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners. "We held three public hearings last week to get input," said John P. McCulloch, R-Royal Oak, "and we expect to get other input at these meetings."

But the county board has been looking at establishing an authority for two years for two main reasons. An authority would have more flexibility, and the autonomous agency would reduce or eliminate the county's financial liability if the Michigan Department of Public Health reduces its subsidy.

The state currently provides 90 percent of the mental health budget. But county officials worry Oakland would have to do reviewed by several or all six subcommittees of the County Board as well as the Oakland County Mental Health Board, which currently oversees the delivery of mental health services to about 12,000 people.

But Hope Cummins, president of the Michigan Chapter of the Alliance for the Mentally Ill (AIM), said the plan for the authority is a long way from being acceptable. "It's in limbo right now," she said. "And there's a lot to be done."

"Wednesday was supposed to be our last meeting," said Cummins, also a member of the transition team. "But because of the concerns, we're going to get input from commissioners as well as the Community Mental Health board."

Another advocate for recipients of mental health services said the meeting was constructive.

"I think Mr. McCulloch realizes there are some things that need to be addressed, and he's willing to do it," said Samuel L. Davis, executive director of the Michigan Association for Children With Emotional Disorders.

"At stake is control of the men-



Road improvements could cause delays on the following Oakland County Roads this week. Roads are open unless noted. Alternative routes are advised in all instances.

175
At: Rochester Road
Community: Troy
The north bound exit ramp will be closed through June 17. Detours are posted.

1496
From: Franklin west bound to Inkster
Community: Southfield
Shoulders will be closed through May 31.

BALDWIN ROAD
From: I-75 to Delevan
Communities: Auburn Hills and Lake Angelus
The road is being widened from two lanes to a six lane boulevard, the project is expected to be completed by Oct. 31.

DEQUINDRE ROAD
From: Big Beaver to Wattles
Community: Troy
Dequindre is being widened from two to five lanes. The project is expected to be completed by Oct. 31.

ELIZABETH LAKE
From: M-59 to Cass Lake Road
Community: Waterford
This section of road will be closed through mid-June to repair a damaged sewer line.

From: Telegraph to M-59
Community: Waterford

Concrete is being repaired. One lane will be closed at all times through July 3.

FRANKLIN ROAD
At: I-696 bridge
Community: Southfield
The bridge over I-696 will be closed through June 1.

GRAND RIVER
At: Farmington Road
Community: Farmington
Grand River (M-5) will be reduced to one lane in each direction through Sept. 15.

At: Orchard Lake Road
Community: Farmington Hills
There will be alternating lane closures through Aug. 13.

ROCHESTER ROAD
From: M-59 to Avon Road
Community: Rochester Hills
One lane will be closed in each direction through July 1.

NORTHWESTERN HIGHWAY
At: Telegraph Road
Community: Southfield
The ramp from northbound Northwestern to southbound Telegraph will be closed intermittently during non-rush hours. The ramp from northbound Telegraph to I-696 and northbound Northwestern Highway will be closed until Oct. 30.

At: Service drive and Evergreen
Community: Southfield
The left service drive lane will be closed at Evergreen and the right lane of the Evergreen bridge will be closed through June 5.

WALTON BOULEVARD
From: West of Saabhaw to Clintonville
Community: Waterford
Walton is being widened from three to five lanes. It is limited to one lane each way during construction. It is expected to be completed by July 31.

El Centro seeks volunteers

El Centro, a bilingual, bicultural, ethnic-sensitive mental health program serving Oakland County's Hispanic community, seeks volunteers who would like to either teach English, be a mentor/tutor, or help with daily activities.

El Centro offers a variety of services, including assessment

and referral; outpatient treatment for children, adults and families; crisis intervention; case management; and prevention and community involvement programs.

For more information on programs or volunteering, contact El Centro at (248) 858-5320.

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