September 21, 2004

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA   94903

SUBJECT:  Marin County Department of Health and Human Services,
Administration Division, Contract Licensing Agreement with GE
Medical Systems for a Practice Management System ($ 123,500)

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATION:  Authorize the President to approve the proposed contract
for purchase of software and related technical support services with GE Medical
Systems for a Practice Management System that provides scheduling, billing, and
other processing services.  The system will initially be implemented in the Public
Health Division clinics and over time will be extended to additional HHS programs.

SUMMARY:  HHS clinics, including the Women’s Clinic, Immunization, Specialty and
others, have relied on an outdated system in order to maintain their patient
schedules, submit billing to the State and other payers, and to track case
management and other activities.  In December 2003 the vendor for this outdated
system abruptly stopped supporting the system, requiring that HHS continue to
operate using a labor-intensive process that will not meet HIPAA requirements.

A Request-for-Proposals was issued in March 2004.  Of the eleven responses received
as a result of the RFP, the GE Medical Systems product was the only one that met the
County’s specifications.  Among other features, it was the only system that is
currently compliant with HIPAA regulations regarding Medi-Cal and other billing
processes.  Further, it was the lowest-cost proposal.  On August 4, 2004 the selection
of the GE system was reviewed and approved by the County’s Peace Commission.

Implementation of the GE Medical Systems practice management system will allow
the County to bill more efficiently; to ensure accurate scheduling processes; to track
case management information; to produce regulatory and analytical reports; and to
address other needs.  The system includes features that will allow the County to
address current and pending changes in federal and state regulations, including HIPAA
and the institution of Electronic Medical Records.  In addition, HHS is conducting an
analysis of current processes and functions in order to implement the new system in
the most effective manner.
The proposed agreement provides for on-site training and technical support to HHS staff; ongoing support for the system implementation; and other features. Note that the agreement does not include any purchases of hardware, nor does it address enhancements that the County may need in order to tailor and extend the system to a broad range of HHS needs. To the extent hardware is necessary to support the system; it will be purchased with existing HHS resources and maintained by County IST in an arrangement that does not involve GE. The County is working to identify the enhancements and customization that may be needed to broaden the applicability of the system and will address those through a separate arrangement. Among potential applications not currently handled by the current system but being considered for the proposed system are the administration of the County’s funds for reimbursement of uncompensated care provided by physicians and by hospitals (“Maddy” funds) and the processing of billings for community providers.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS: Implementation of the proposed practice management system will allow HHS to improve the efficiency of its billing and other operations, to meet state and federal regulations and guidelines, and to better track and analyze patient data.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funds for this contract are provided for in Budget Center 530-2121. No additional county funds are needed for this proposed contract.

REVIEWED BY: [ X] Auditor Controller
[ X] County Counsel
[ ] Human Resources [X] NA

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Meredith, Ph.D.
Director
Marin County Board of Supervisors Agenda Request

This form is to be submitted to the BOS office (Room 329) by NOON on Thursday, 12 days prior to proposed agenda date.

- Attach to an email message, addressed to BOS Agenda via cc:Mail on the LAN
- fax to 499-3645, or deliver to Board of Supervisor’s Office, Room 329.

Deadline for submission of FULL BOS PACKET is NOON a.m. on Wednesday, six days prior to BOS meeting.

Submitting Department: Health and Human Services

Staff/Author: Margaret Kisliuk Phone: 499-4296

Proposed Agenda Date: September 21, 2004 [ y/n ] Dept. Head Approval Obtained

Item Submitted for: [ X ] Consent Agenda [ ] Policy Agenda [ y/n ] 4/5 Vote Required

Minimum number of copies required: Consent: original + 10 copies Policy: original + 22 copies

(If your department needs any executed or stamped "approved" copies returned to your department, you must submit those copies in addition to the Board’s minimum number.)

[ ] Ordinance [ ] Fee Inc./Levy [ y/n ] Item Noticed Noticed Hearing Time: _________

[ ] 1st Reading Date for Merit Hearing: ___/___/___

Approvals Obtained: [ ] Auditor-Controller [ ] County Counsel [ ] Human Resources

Description of Item (proposed agenda language):
Approval of contract for practice management system software and support.

Requested Board Action(s) (numbered list):
1. Approve proposed contract with GE Medical Systems for purchase and support of practice management system software.

Special Instructions to BOS Clerk:

County Administrator Staff: __________________

Comment:

[ ] Policy [ ] Consent

Review by CAO (Required if agenda request is submitted after 4 p.m. on Tuesday preceding Board meeting)

REVIEWED/APPROVED by [ ] CAO

Agenda Date Scheduled: ___/___/___ Time Scheduled: _________ Continued to: ___/___/___