

INFORMATION SYSTEMS DEPARTMENT

Response to Mental Health Billing Irregularities in Ventura County Behavioral Health Department Grand Jury Report – FY 1999-2000

Responses according to the matrix supplied:

- R1. That Ventura County Health Care Agency, in coordination with ISD, institute a configuration control procedure to ensure that all software changes for mental health billing are fully documented.

**** PARTIAL CONCURRENCE ****

Configuration Control of the mental health system 'POR' has been in place since 1990. In 1990 ISD implemented an internal developed system 'Information System Request – ISR' system to maintain and document all changes to a system developed and maintained by ISD. In addition changes always followed the established life cycle of change request, ISR and task creation, requirements gathering and analysis, design, specification creation, specification user approval, programming, testing, user acceptance, and planned installation. The 'POR' system following this lifecycle procedure demonstrated through its existence reliability and Mental Health department customer satisfaction with virtually no unplanned downtime or problems for many years. Prior to the ISR system, our process was not that formal. Changes were primarily recorded in the program effected by the change indicating reason and person providing the change.

- R2. That any request for change to the mental health billing programs be submitted in writing and that no verbal change order be implemented.

**** CONCUR ****

We have instituted a program, which is controlled by the IT organization in HCA. All requests will be funneled through this organization, which in turn assures proper authorization by the Mental Health organization.

- R3. That procedures be implemented for the Star software.

**** CONCUR ****

At this point, it does not look promising for the Star system to be implemented. Nevertheless, regardless of the system to be implemented, we have the proper procedures in place to fulfill the proper checks and balances required.