RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:
It is respectfully recommended that your Board:

1. Enter into a Contract for Services with The SPHERE Institute on behalf of the department for consulting services to assist Child Welfare Services in implementing the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) Safety and Risk Assessment System.

2. Authorize the department to enter into the accompanying data use agreement to ensure confidentiality and security of client information.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
Please see attachment.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Financial Impact? □ Yes □ No □ Partially Funded

Budgeted In Current FY? □ Yes ( ) No ( ) Partially Funded

Amount in Budget: $15,000.00

Additional Funding Needed: $0.00

Source:

Internal Transfer
Unanticipated Revenue
Transfer Between Funds
Contingency

( ) General ( ) Other

4/5’s vote
4/5’s vote
4/5’s vote

List Attachments, number pages consecutively

Board Memo, Pages 1-2
Contract for Services, Pages 3-13
Data Use Agreement, Pages 14-19

CLERK'S USE ONLY:
Res. No.: 37-25

Vote – Ayes: 5
Noes: 0
Absent: ______

Approved

( ) Minute Order Attached ( ) No Action Necessary

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date: ______

Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board
County of Mariposa, State of California

By: ______
Deputy

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:

Requested Action Recommended

No Opinion

Comments:

CAO:

Revised Dec. 2002
February 20, 2007

TO: Members, Board of Supervisors  
  Rick Benson, CAO  
FROM: Cheryle Rutherford-Kelly  
RE: Child Welfare Services / Authorization to Enter into an Agreement for Consulting Services Including a Corresponding Data Use Confidentiality Agreement

Recommendation:

It is respectfully recommended that your Board:

1. Enter into a Contract for Services with The SPHERE Institute on behalf of the department for consulting services to assist Child Welfare Services in implementing the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) Safety and Risk Assessment System.
2. Authorize the department to enter into the accompanying data use agreement to ensure confidentiality and security of client information.

Background:

Mariposa County Child Welfare Services (CWS) currently utilizes a singular generalized risk assessment tool to assess risk to a child at each critical decision making point throughout the case. California has mandated that every county utilize risk assessment. The designer of the consensus model risk assessment tool we are currently using is deceased and cannot update the tool to meet new regulations. Therefore, every County must enter into a model that includes new federal and state risk assessment goals. We have chosen Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) developed by The SPHERE Institute (SPHERE) for this purpose. The CAT model includes five distinct assessment tools for use in various stages of each child welfare case. The only alternative is an actuarial model called Structured Decision Making. That model, while good at assessing risk at the front end of a case, imposes time limits with parents that are sometimes not realistic in terms of the depth of their problems. Risk can and does occur throughout the case. A decision to return a child to a home, or to close a case before the situation is resolved based on time limits, can place children at risk. A consensus model, which CAT follows, encourages more analytical thinking on the part of the social workers. They need to be assessing risk and family role dynamics on a constant basis to protect children and in terms of their own professional development.

Current Situation:

The introduction of this new model for safety and risk management in our child welfare program requires training for new and existing staff. SPHERE offers consultation, including training, to assist in implementation of the CAT model of safety and risk assessment.

In order to assist CWS in implementing and executing CAT, representatives from SPHERE have developed a data use agreement to ensure the confidentiality and security of client data.
used in conjunction with CAT. The agreement allows representatives from SPHERE access to Mariposa County Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) data as well as CWS Social Worker data, to be used in the formation of three types of data reports. The content of the first set of reports is decided upon by the CAT policy committee which is made up of CWS Directors from the various counties using CAT and representatives from the state. The second set of reports is designed to assist SPHERE in implementing CAT by detailing the number and accuracy of forms completed by Mariposa County. The third set of reports is developed with the direction of the user group in each county, tailored to the unique issues facing the county.

Financial:

There will be no impact on the general fund. This effort, important to child safety, will be paid for via federal and state dollars. The cost is $15,000 and will be allocated via an augmentation to the Child Welfare Services Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) funding. This funding will consist of $6,330 in Federal dollars and $8,670 in State General Fund dollars. There is no local match requirement. Mid-year adjustments include the necessary increase to revenues and appropriate expenditure line.