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Cynthia D. Banks
Director

Otto Solórzano
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"Connecting communities and improving the lives of all generations"

October 9, 2018

TO: Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Cynthia D. Banks, Director

SUBJECT: **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE L.A. FOUND INITIATIVE (ITEM NO. 2,
AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 20, 2018)**

On February 20, 2018, your Board unanimously adopted a motion by Supervisors Hahn and Barger approving the Bringing Our Loved Ones Home (BOLOH) Initiative (now known as L.A. FOUND), which consists of (17) strategies to help prevent and respond to wandering among individuals with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's, Dementia and Autism. The L.A. FOUND strategies were developed over a one-year period by a Task Force comprised of County and City of Los Angeles departments, and external partners.

The Board instructed Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), in coordination with other impacted Departments, to implement and evaluate the L.A. FOUND strategies, and provide written updates to the Board every 180 days on the status of implementation. This Memo provides your Board an update on implementation efforts to date.

Project Lifesaver Pilot

As part of L.A. FOUND, Los Angeles County (County) has established a voluntary system of traceable bracelets provided by the nonprofit organization Project Lifesaver International. While the bracelet is not under constant monitoring, when an individual wearing a bracelet is reported missing, the Sheriff's Department is able to locate the missing person using handheld and/or helicopter-mounted receivers to tune into the radio frequency of the missing person's bracelet. The Sheriff's Department Mental Evaluation team is responsible for the search and rescue function of the pilot and received "train the

trainer" sessions from Project Lifesaver International on how to use the Project Lifesaver equipment.

Project Lifesaver devices are issued by WDACS to County residents who suffer from cognitive impairments (such as Alzheimer's, Dementia and Autism), and who are mobile and at-risk of wandering. Individuals can apply by calling a toll-free number (1-833-569-7651) or by visiting lafound.com. The authorized representative or conservator (or parent of a minor child) is required to complete an application and sign a waiver/release of liability to participate in the program. Once approved, the bracelets can be purchased for \$325 (plus tax, shipping and handling), or individuals can join a waiting list to be considered for a free bracelet. Devices are distributed centrally at WDACS offices, at local County libraries and Senior Centers or directly to participants at their homes.

As of October 4, 2018, we have issued 128 bracelets countywide, all of which have been provided at no cost to clients. There are 163 individuals on the waitlist for a free bracelet. These bracelets were purchased using the following funds:

- The Sheriff's Department purchased 29 bracelets using a portion of the \$30,000 provided pursuant to the February 20, 2018 Board Motion.
- WDACS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Mental Health to use Prevention and Early Intervention Funding to purchase an additional 100 devices.

We appreciate the various Departments and partners working with us to identify funding to purchase additional bracelets that can be issued to County residents at no cost, including the following efforts:

- We are grateful that the Community Development Commission is working with us and Board Offices to pursue the use of Community Development Block Grant funding to purchase devices.
- We are thankful that the City of Los Angeles Department of Aging is partnering with us to identify funds to purchase additional bracelets for older adults (ages 60 and older) in the City of Los Angeles who have Dementia or Alzheimer's.
- We would like to acknowledge a partnership with the Community Services Resource Corporation (CSRC) and Amazon to raise private sector funds. CSRC is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) established by WDACS to raise funds for aging programs in the County. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible items to CSRC when shoppers make purchases through AmazonSmile and select CSRC as the charity of choice.

Communications Strategy

WDACS partnered with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and one of their contractors (Entercom), to develop a Communications Strategy for the L.A. FOUND Initiative, including branding, a public launch event, an interactive website, and advertising. The Department of Public Health (DPH) and Entercom entered into a Master Agreement Work Order on June 1, 2018, to amend an existing contract to add \$350,000 for development of the Communications Strategy.

Branding

The County rebranded the BOLOH initiative as L.A. FOUND and adopted the “We Got You” slogan, which highlights that when individuals with Autism, Alzheimer’s and Dementia wander, the County is here to help families and caregivers.

L.A. Found Launch Event and Media Coverage

On September 5, 2018, Supervisor Janice Hahn, Sheriff Jim McDonnell and WDACS Director Cynthia D. Banks, convened a press conference at the Sheriff’s Department Headquarters to launch L.A. FOUND. The press conference resulted in significant media coverage (L.A. Times, L.A. Daily News, SCV News, The West Ranch Beacon, Park La Brea News, L.A. West Media, KHTS Radio, CBS, KABC, KCRW, KTLA, KNX, KPPC, KNBC, KMEX, La Opinion, Univision and Telemundo). In July 2018, U.S. World and News Report published a story on L.A. FOUND, and on September 21, 2018, Noticias Telemundo aired a national news story on L.A. FOUND on World Alzheimer’s Day.

Prior to launching L.A. FOUND, WDACS reconvened the BOLOH Task Force to provide feedback on the Communications Strategy, proposed logo and slogan, as well as solicit input regarding resources their agencies offer that could be highlighted on the L.A. FOUND website.

L.A. FOUND Website

The County partnered with Entercom to develop and launch LAFOUND.com (Encuéntrame LA in Spanish). The LAFOUND.com and EncuentrameLA.com website is a one-stop portal for families and caregivers that enables them to quickly apply for a Project Lifesaver bracelet, and access important information on steps to take when an individual with Alzheimer’s, Dementia or Autism goes missing. This website also includes information on various voluntary tracking technologies that might be a good fit for vulnerable individuals and their caregivers, as well as resources available for families and caregivers through County Departments and community agencies.

L.A. FOUND Advertising and Outreach

During September, advertisements in English were launched on the following radio stations: The Wave, K-EARTH 101, AMP FM, KNX 1070, Jack FM and KROQ. Radio spots also aired in Spanish on K-LOVE. Outdoor ads were placed on 135 Bustails throughout the County. A full-fledged, multi-lingual digital media campaign ran throughout the month, targeting caregivers or those interested in Autism, Dementia, or Alzheimer's. Digital advertising elements included: Facebook, Instagram, Moment Scoring ad optimization on a vast network of websites, and both audio and digital ads placed on Radio.com and other L.A. radio station websites. In addition, we printed 200 double-sided posters and 2,500 trifold brochures for strategic dissemination over the coming months. We are also conducting outreach to community partners and agencies, including Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles, Weingarten Senior Center, Long Beach and other cities, Bonnie Brae Village and Beach Cities Walk to End Alzheimer's.

L.A. FOUND Unit

There is now an L.A. FOUND team (comprised of four staff) housed within WDACS to administer the Project Lifesaver Pilot program, coordinate the countywide response when a vulnerable individual goes missing and provide education, outreach and support to families caring for individuals with Alzheimer's, Dementia and Autism.

Collaborating with County Departments

County Departments play a critical role in the success of L.A. FOUND. All County departments have been asked to designate an L.A. FOUND liaison, add the link to LAFOUND.com on their departmental website, and take other actions outlined in a Memo from me to County Department Heads, sent on September 4, 2018.

Early Successes

Since launching L.A. FOUND, two individuals who wandered were successfully reunited with their families. The first individual was a 65-year-old man with Alzheimer's, who went missing from his home in Los Angeles and was found by a hiker in the Altadena area. He did not know his name, but law enforcement officials were able to identify him and reunite him with his family using the radio frequency number written inside of the Project Lifesaver bracelet. A second individual, a 76-year-old woman with Alzheimer's who went missing in Huntington Park, was also reunited with her family when the Sheriff's Department was deployed to locate the individual using the Project Lifesaver tracking equipment. The Sheriff's Department is assessing operational needs based on lessons learned during the recovery of these individuals to determine if additional equipment, ground units and air units are needed to ensure we can quickly deploy search and rescue efforts when someone goes missing throughout the County's large geographic area.

Each Supervisor
October 9, 2018
Page 5

Conclusion

The next report to your Board on the status of L.A. FOUND implementation is targeted for submission on February 20, 2019. Should you have questions, please contact me directly, or your staff may contact Kevin Anderson, Special Assistant, at kanderson@wdacs.lacounty.gov

CDB:OS:LS:vs

c: Chief Executive Office
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Department of Public Health
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