


## Memo

**Date:** February 6, 2025

**To:** Alameda County Mental Health Plan (MHP) and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Providers, Community Stakeholders, and ACBHD Team Members

**From:** **Karyn Tribble, PsyD, LCSW** | Behavioral Health Director   
**Vanessa Baker, LMFT** | ACBHD Deputy Director, Plan Administration  
**Tom MacMillan** | AC Health, Deputy Director, Information Systems

**Subject:** **EPIC ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD (EHR) SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

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This memo is to inform our Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD) providers, Stakeholders, and Team Members that, on **February 4, 2025**, our [County Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#) granted approval to Alameda County Health (AC Health) to officially begin contract negotiation in pursuit of a Sole Source Standard Services Agreement with **Epic Systems Corporation (Epic)**. Once reached, this agreement will ultimately provide electronic health record and billing operations software for the Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD) and the Alameda County Sheriff Office (ACSO) at Santa Rita Jail (SRJ). We anticipate that it will eventually pave the way for other County entities to provide more coordinated, comprehensive care.

As many of you may already be aware, for nearly a decade ACBHD has been working diligently to systematically improve and replace its legacy systems in order to enhance our county's capacity to interface with a more advanced, integrated electronic health record. We have come a long way and are at a critical point requiring strategic action. We thank each of you for the role you have played and feedback you have provided throughout this process. We believe that this change will enable us, our community, and county providers to establish a sustainable system which will foster enhanced coordination and client-centered care. This critical and important first step will improve our ability to care for our justice involved clients, strengthen operations, and allow for the appropriate sharing of electronic medical records with our ASCO partners who will also be on the ACH *Epic* platform.

Over the past several years, Alameda County Health (ACH) has conducted research and evaluated several paths to implementing an electronic health record (EHR) system. We have determined that Epic Systems Corporation as leader in the EHR space, industry leading interoperability, and dominant presence in Alameda County, is the most timely and effective path forward. *Epic* will support both mental health and substance user services data entry and thus will be able to meet the needs of our complex behavioral health system. Additionally, *Epic* has expertise in *California Advance and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM)* initiatives like the Whole Person Care pilots, Justice-involved and Population Health initiatives, and is a well-established platform in neighboring Bay Area counties and across our Medical and Health Care systems.

### **NEXT STEPS**

With this approval by the Alameda County BOS, AC Health Information Systems will spearhead the implementation and have already engaged with Epic to develop the ACBHD Clinicians Gateway (CG) EMR, and Santa Rita Jail (SRJ) CorEMR replacement scope, requirements, timing, and contract. Our work with SmartCare to improve its performance, add necessary enhancements and functionality, will continue during this time to ensure it meets our community's needs.

The *Epic* project will be conducted in four (4) main phases:

- **Phase I:** Develop ACBHD and SRJ requirements and finalize the *Epic* contract for Board of Supervisor review and approval in the Fall of 2025.
- **Phase II:** On or around ~January 2026, project preparation will begin followed by *Epic* implementation.
- **Phase III:** We are targeting ~July 2027 for an official *Epic Go-Live*, followed by a six (6) month stabilization period.
- **Phase IV:** We will evaluate opportunities and timing to implement *Epic* in remaining ACH Departments.

*Epic* technical (e.g., computers and network) requirements, training requirements, and schedule will be shared at the start of **Phase II**. Once the design and contracting phase is completed, we will provide an update on the *Epic* project scope and estimated timing. For questions, please feel free to email AC Health Information Systems at [achsupport@acgov.org](mailto:achsupport@acgov.org).

At this time, no action is needed. However, we look forward to engaging with you during this process and thank you in advance for your partnership.

Please feel free to join our entire executive team and system in celebrating this exciting development!