City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-6943

Agenda Item Number: 27.

Agenda Date: 12/17/2020

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Sandra Guerra, MD, MPH

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Authorizing an Agreement with Cure Violence Global

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with Cure Violence Global for the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District's (Metro Health) Violence Prevention Program, in an amount not to exceed $125,000.00. Cure Violence Global will provide services relating to the training of Violence Interrupters and Outreach Workers to implement their gun violence reduction model for a one-year term beginning October 1, 2020, and ending September 30, 2021, and funded by the General Fund.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As the local health district for the City of San Antonio and Bexar County, Metro Health addresses the epidemic of gun violence from a holistic, community-based perspective. The disproportionate burden of violence falls on youth and communities of color. Violent deaths from suicide and homicide are one of the leading causes of premature death for people ages 10 - 24. Homicide and Suicide are only behind accidental injury in causes of death ages 15 - 24 in Bexar County.

In 2015, Metro Health examined alternatives to help curtail bloodshed and the revolving door of incarceration identified by Dr. Slutkin's 'Cure Violence Global', an evidence-based model, as a solution that treats violence as a communicable disease. Cure Violence Global targets three critical factors that are believed to be the major determinants of violence: community norms, limited knowledge about the available alternatives to violence,

and underestimating the severe consequences of violence for the community. Locally implemented as 'Stand Up SA', the initiative hires violence interrupters and outreach workers as credible messengers, who may be formerly incarcerated persons, to interrupt and prevent violence. Cure Violence is a behavioral health approach to violence prevention, rather than a law enforcement-based approach. Approaches can and do coexist to reach all members of the community who may be at risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence.

In 2018, Metro Health severed ties with Cure Violence Global due to budget reductions but now seeks to reestablish a relationship to improve processes, procedures and data gathering. Cure Violence provides access, not only to direct technical assistance, but also to an international network of sister organizations addressing violence from a public health perspective. Therefore, through this agreement, Metro Health seeks to secure expert gun violence reduction training with Cure Violence Global to provide quality training and technical assistance services to assist in ending the violence epidemic.

ISSUE:

Metro Health requests City Council authorize an agreement with Cure Violence Global to implement the evidence-based violence prevention program, Cure Violence in San Antonio. Cure Violence addresses violence through violence interrupters, stopping the cycle of retaliatory violence, and reducing the impact of trauma in neighborhoods. Violence disproportionately impacts communities of color, compounding the effects of economic deprivation.

ALTERNATIVES:

If this agreement is not authorized, Metro Health will need to identify alternative mechanisms to provide violence reduction strategies inspired by a public health approach.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with Cure Violence Global for Metro Health's Violence Prevention Program. The agreement is for a total amount up to $125,000.00 for the term proposed. The term of this agreement is October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. Funding for this agreement is budgeted and approved in the FY21 General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Ordinance authorizing an agreement with Cure Violence Global. Cure Violence Global has made a substantial and long-lasting positive impact on the neighborhoods in which it operates.