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MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable John P. Daley, Chairman – Cook County Board Committee on Finance

From: Dr. John Jay Shannon, CEO – Cook County Health

**Cc: Cook County Board of Commissioners
Lanetta Haynes Turner, Chief of Staff – President's Office
John Roberson, Director of Government Affairs – President's Office**

Date: November 18, 2019

Re: FY2020 Budget Follow-up Questions – Cook County Health Responses

Below please find CHC's responses to Commissioner Anaya's questions of November 7, 2019.

1. For Interpreter Services, the requested appropriation for FY2020 is \$2,256,665, which is a \$142,468 decrease from FY2019. Please explain this decrease and what it will affect.

- a. Please provide a breakdown of the services provided by language of your in-person interpreters.

CCH has 20 in-person interpreters; 16 Spanish and 4 Polish providing approximately 7,500 unique encounters per month.

<i>Spanish</i>	<i>6,000 unique encounters per month</i>
<i>Polish</i>	<i>1,500 unique encounters per month</i>

- b. The budget shows a decrease of 1 FTE. Which position will be impacted?

Given current volumes, CCH believes the staffing level proposed in the FY2020 budget is appropriate to meet the needs of CCH patients and their visitors. One interpreter position has been eliminated concurrent with the resignation of one Spanish interpreter.

- c. How many patients are served by interpreter services on a monthly basis?

CCH provides approximately 14,000 unique interpretation encounters per month. CCH's Interpretation services includes in-person interpreters, video remote interpretation and audio remote interpretation services. Remote service vendors provide CCH with access to more than 135 languages.

- d. How does CCH gather statistics that track the need for interpreter services?

CCH interpreters maintain daily activity logs that are reviewed weekly. In addition, CCH vendors provide weekly reports. CCH logs and vendor reports identify the specific services provided as well time spent providing the service. Utilization trends determine the locations that interpreters and equipment are assigned. These reports also inform CCH decision making regarding budgetary needs.

- e. I am aware that the CCH Governance Board approved a contract with Voyce in 2018 for \$2,250,00.00 for virtual interpreters.

- i. How is the use of this service monitored?

Voyce provides a management module that is used to monitor the remote interpretation services that they provide. The management module provides a real time view into daily activity, and a reporting feature for monitoring activity over any given period of time. Tracking and monitoring data for each interpretation session includes department or area of device used, date and time, time to answer, language serviced, length of service, video or audio only service, interpreter ID number, and any feedback provided. Voyce also provides weekly reports.

- ii. What type(s) of training do these interpreters have?

Voyce interpreters hold an average of over 4 years of interpreting experience prior to joining the Voyce team. 90% of Voyce interpreters are native speakers of the target language. The minimum requirement is 2 years of confirmed professional interpretation experience and 40 hours of previous professional interpretation training.

After interpreters have met the minimum qualifications, all Voyce interpreter candidates must complete an interpreter testing and training process that ensures they are skilled in core competencies of professional interpretation, including medical terminology.

Voyce University provides a 40 hour online course covering the basics of professional interpretation, Voyce standards and practices, HIPAA and CMS Fraud, Waste and Abuse, ethics, language fluency, and medical terminology. There are tests and quizzes throughout the coursework, and interpreters must complete a final exam with a score of 90% or higher to proceed to service Voyce clients.

2. In September 2019, the Cook County Board voted on a \$900,000 settlement for a patient that was left blind after a surgery due to malpractice in 2015.

a. How has CCH changed its internal policies and practices to avoid these situations?

CCH has devoted significant time and attention to training its staff to accurately and timely document all relevant information into the medical record. Physician leadership, nursing leadership, risk management, and the General Counsel routinely conduct trainings at which the need to keep an accurate record is the focus of training.