

2014 Recommendations of the Mental Health Oversight Committee

A. Rulemaking on Emergency Involuntary Procedures

The committees of jurisdiction should reexamine legislative intent on emergency involuntary procedures with regard to who the rules on this topic should apply to, who can prescribe chemical restraint, and whether the person prescribing chemical restraint must personally observe the patient.

B. Children's Mental Health Care

The committees of jurisdiction should make children's mental health issues a priority in the next session.

C. Nursing at Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital

Funds currently designated for traveling nurse salaries should instead be used to train experienced Vermont nurses in psychiatric care. The Committee also recommends that the committees of jurisdiction review the Agency of Human Services' market analysis for nurses with psychiatric expertise.

D. Services for Elders with Mental Health Needs

The committees of jurisdiction should monitor the status of elders in the mental health system, including the need for a new step-down facility specifically for elders and the basis on which elders with mental health needs are eligible for Choices for Care.

E. Quality Oversight

The General Assembly should support the Agency of Human Services' coordinated efforts to transition from data collection to meaningful improvements within the mental health system. Additionally, DAIL should retain a surveyor with substantial expertise in psychiatric care, as well as refocus staff resources on visiting those facilities where the need for review is greatest.

F. Reporting of Adverse Events

The committees of jurisdiction should seek clarification as to which information regarding adverse events is confidential by law.

G. Integration of Mental Health in Health Care Reform

The committees of jurisdiction should continue to focus their attention on ensuring mental health care remains in the forefront of discussions on health care reform and integration.

H. State Auditor's Report on Designated Agencies

The committees of jurisdiction should review the State Auditor's report on designated agencies and monitor payment for services in the community mental health system.

I. Future of the Mental Health Oversight Committee

The Committee recommends that the General Assembly pass legislation reestablishing a time-limited and focused joint oversight committee whose sole charge is to monitor the ongoing development and implementation of Act 79 during adjournment and that the membership of the reestablished committee include diverse representation with more flexibility than its current charge allows.