

Budget Proposals of the House Health Care Committee's Mental Health Subcommittee

Sec. A. APPROPRIATION; CRISIS SERVICES AND BEDS

The sum of \$2,500,000.00 is appropriated to the Department of Mental Health from the General Fund to be allocated for the following purposes:

(1) to increase the salaries of crisis service clinicians to an amount that enables the recruitment and retention of qualified staff;

(2) to increase crisis service clinician positions across the designated agency system based on population and demand in each region; and

(3) to the extent that crisis beds are offline due to lack of staffing, to increase crisis bed staffing salaries.

Sec. B. FUNDING STRUCTURE; CRISIS SERVICES

In preparing their fiscal year 2019 budget presentation, the Departments of Mental Health and of Vermont Health Access shall revise the structure of appropriations, or reimbursements, or both to designated agencies' mental health crisis response services in a manner that:

(1) does not rely on CRT or CRT and outpatient reimbursements as a primary funding mechanism;

(2) addresses capacity funding so as to support comprehensive public, mobile mental health crisis response services;

(3) ensures equitable service resources and expectations across all catchment areas;
and

(4) includes recommendations for legislative action to integrate contributions for mental health crisis response services from other payers.

Sec. C. APPROPRIATION; CASE RATES; PSYCHIATRIC GERIATRIC BEDS

(a) The sum of \$500,000.00 is appropriated to the Agency of Human Services from the General Fund to adjust case rates to nursing homes and residential care homes for the provision of supplementary resources for patients in need of psychiatric supports.

(b) All nursing homes and residential care homes within the State that receive more than 50 percent of their funding through Medicaid shall allocate a minimum of ten percent of any newly opened beds in fiscal year 2018 to individuals with a psychiatric disability.

Sec. D. APPROPRIATION; HOUSING FIRST

The sum of \$400,000.00 is appropriated to the Department of Mental Health for ten additional Pathways for Housing-funded slots for patients recently discharged from an inpatient psychiatric hospital unit.

Sec. E. PROPOSAL; DESIGNATED AGENCY EMPLOYEE SALARIES

As part of his or her fiscal year 2019 budget presentation, the Secretary of Human Services shall propose a plan to increase the salaries of designated agency employees to a level that enables the designated agencies to recruit and retain qualified staff.