

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative William J. Lippert Jr., Chair, House Committee Health Care

FROM: Melissa Bailey, Commissioner, Department of Mental Health

DATE: February 27th, 2018

SUBJECT: Department of Mental Health Fiscal Year 2019 Budget

Please find attached, responses from the Department of Mental Health, submitted in response to inquiries received from members of the House Committee on Health Care on February 22nd and 23rd, 2018 during testimony regarding the Department of Mental Health Fiscal Year 2019 budget.

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

FISCAL YEAR '19 BUDGET- Q & A

Q1: Request to provide an explanation of the budget adjustment reduction in crisis services spending and any relation to the request for additional mobile crisis funds for street outreach.

A1: This was not a reduction in funding to crisis services. Crisis services and street outreach are two separate line items in Vantage. For the crisis services change DMH identified that the initial allocation to Act 85 funding was incorrectly distributed to the crisis line item. This change moved the Act 85 funding into the appropriate categories.

Q2: How much money was approved in BAA for the Chittenden portion of the street outreach program?

A2: \$80,000 was approved for 4 positions. This is the value of 4 salaries at \$80k each divided in 1/2 for the share from towns (makes it \$160k) and then divide in 1/2 again (for 1/2 of the FY) gets us to \$80K

4 FTE at \$80K each, annually	\$320,000
50% is the share from the Towns	- \$160,000

= DMH's annualized share	\$160,000
1/2 of the fiscal year	\$80,000

Q3: Please provide an estimate as to the cost to have the warm line staffed 24/7.

A3: The additional funding needed to bring the warm line's operations to 24/7 is approximately. \$168,027.

Q4: If \$400K is put into the FY'19 budget for "Street Outreach" and there are is no match provided from towns outside of Chittenden County, what is DMH's plan for the unmatched funds?

A4: In the event that there is no financial matches from local communities, DMH would still recommend using the allotted monies to pay for 1/2 of the services that would have been created with the matching funds. If this is not acceptable to the committee, our recommendation would be to use the funds to help support people in housing. The idea of using the money for additional housing vouchers has a couple of issues: 1) This limits the money to only GF and does not allow for any federal matching dollars and 2) It is our interpretation of the data, that it is not just having housing available but "supported" housing options and if the money was earmarked for "Services and Supports" then the money could be used directly for housing (all GF) and also for support services to help people remain housed (qualifies for federal matching dollars). Lastly, DMH would suggest using the funds to increase the availability of the Warm Line to 24 hours a day.