

Agency of Human Services – Request for Coronavirus Relief Funds: Brattleboro Retreat

House Health Care and Senate Health and Welfare

June 11, 2020

Agenda

- Orientation to Materials
- Recent History
- System of Care
- Brattleboro Retreat Action Plan for Sustainability
 - AHS/BR Team Process
 - Sustainability Plan
- Interim Funding Proposal & Conditions
- Questions

Brattleboro Retreat – Recent History

- Due to the impact of COVID-19 healthcare providers across Vermont are struggling due to changes in utilization and increased costs to respond to the COVID19 crisis. The State has been working with all providers to identify ways to support them throughout this crisis.
- The impact of COVID-19 has significantly threatened the Retreat’s ability to provide mental health care to Vermonters, and Retreat’s financial situation is tenuous due to client census running low
- AHS and the Retreat agreed to a financial support package in mid-April that included a \$3.5M grant and \$3.8M advance on Medicaid payments (offset by subsequent receipt of roughly \$1.5M in federal funds, total payments from this package are \$5.9M). This package is in addition to a financial relief payment of \$750,000 made on March 27. These payments were approved by the JFC to be funded from the Coronavirus Relief Fund.
- The agreement (MOU) included a commitment to a collaborative process by teams for AHS and the Retreat to develop an Action Plan for Retreat’s continued viability and stability, and to consider contingencies to ensure the continuity of care for Vermonters in need
- The State has been working with the Brattleboro Retreat to ensure it continues to provide essential services and patient care during the COVID-19 crisis, and to put a framework in place to work together on sustainable operations for the Retreat.

Brattleboro Retreat – System of Care

- The Brattleboro Retreat provides essential capacity and Medicaid services in Vermont’s mental health system of care – serving annually over 5,000 children, adolescents and adults in need of treatment.
- 100% of Vermont’s children mental health inpatient capacity
- Over 50% of adult mental health inpatient capacity
- 12 new Level 1 beds online by late fall 2020
- Mental health system is even more fragile due to COVID19
- If the most vulnerable cannot access care, we will see an increase in individuals waiting for care in Emergency Departments and lack of access to timely care

Brattleboro Retreat – Sustainability Plan

- The State, Retreat Leadership, and the Retreat Board have been working in good faith for over 5 weeks to develop a Sustainability Plan for the Retreat that will preserve the Retreat’s continued viability and stability and preserve our inpatient psychiatric capacity in the State of Vermont
- The rate increases and additional funding provided to the Retreat in January 2020 required the Retreat to engage with a 3rd party consultant on sustainability recommendations.
- The 3rd party consultant’s report (“the Osner report”) recommendations are the basis for the Sustainability Plan; which outlines a path to sustainability for the Retreat
- The 9-point Plan that has been agreed to on behalf of AHS and BR Board outlines a “Three-Legged Stool” of sustainability focused on transformative changes for BR including:
 - Service Delivery Reconfiguration
 - Improvement to Business and Revenue Operations
 - Achievement of Organizational Efficiency
- Clear implementation steps and measurable performance metrics to monitor implementation progress
- Contingency planning is represented in the Action Plan for Sustainability

Interim Funding Proposal and Conditions

Interim Funding Plan

- Weekly payment of \$600,000 for 17 weeks until 9/30, total financial relief request of \$10.2M
 - The funds are part of the Governor's Overall Health Care Stabilization plan of \$375M
 - This request to the JFC is within the amount allocated under item #2 of the overall CRF grant acceptance conditions amended and adopted on May 4, 2020 by the JFC. <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-05-05/2f6839f74f/Conditions-for-the-Acceptance-of-the-CRF-grant-to-Vermont.pdf>
- Weekly payments are to sustain them during continued lower census arising out of pandemic and are less than the weekly amount the state has been paying to date from the mid-April COVID relief package. It will take time for their census to recover.
- No upfront lump sum payment

Conditions

- Payment structure is aligned with previously implemented financial relief processes with healthcare providers with 10% recoupment of weekly payments if established quality metrics are not met
- Payments to the Retreat will be offset by any additional federal awards.
- Funding is tied to Action Plan for Sustainability and Performance Metrics, failure to demonstrate material progress on Action Plan will result in termination of MOU
- Contingency planning is part of the current action plan, for example 3rd party entity options

Questions