



# **DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**

## **FY25 BUDGET: ALTERNATIVES TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS & DA/SSA PROVIDER INCREASES**

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## **ALTERNATIVES TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS (EDs)**

- Designed for people experiencing mental health and substance use crises.
- Set the goal of reducing police involvement and enhancing access to urgent community-based supports.
- Have been implemented in collaboration with Designated Agencies (DAs), the Burlington Police Department (BPD), and various other healthcare providers.
- Serve Vermonters in need of a crisis response regardless of age, diagnosis, or insurance coverage.

## **SUSTAINABILITY FUNDING PLAN FOR ALTERNATIVES TO EDs**

- Federal funding runs through March 31, 2025.
- The House's One-Time General Fund Appropriation of \$482,789 is intended to backfill the previously projected beginning in SFY25 Q4 (or April 1 – June 30).
- AHS believes that federal funding is likely to be extended and would be sufficient to cover all of FY 25.
- Grantees are required to have a sustainability plan, which may include transitioning to Medicaid-billable services or other sources if they intend on continuing beyond the initial pilot and the program operates successfully.

	Date Opened/Date Opening	Number Served
BPD CARES Program	June 2024	N/A
Washington County Mental Health Services Access Hub	Oct 2023	50 per month on average since opening, but 90+ per month since 1/1/24
Counseling Service of Addison County Interlude Program	Jan 2023 (soft launch) July 2023 (full launch)	12-15 people per month
Northeast Kingdom Human Services Front Porch Program	April 2024 (soft launch) Oct 2024 (full launch)	N/A
Howard Center Mental Health Urgent Care Program	Aug/Sept 2024	N/A
United Counseling Services Psychiatric Urgent Care for Kids (PUCK) Program	Aug 2023 – Dec 2023	17 children
Health Care and Rehabilitation Services Youth Stabilization Program	Aug 2023 – Jan 2024	15 youth and families
Lamoille County Mental Health Emergent Psychiatric Intervention for Children (EPIC) Program	July 2023 – Jan 2024	16 children

## DA/SSA HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS: \$1.1M FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT

- The House Passed Budget contained a Global Commitment investment of \$1.1M to DA/SSAs for “crisis management.”
- The General Assembly’s intent to use it for crisis management or the continuum of care is not immediately clear to DMH how this could be operationalized.
- It is also not clear that the intent would be eligible for Global Commitment funding.



# APPENDIX



## OVERVIEW OF ALTERNATIVES TO EDs

- 1. BPD CARES Program:** This initiative under BPD and DMH started in June 2023, focusing on Crisis, Assessment, Response, and Engagement Services. It faced initial recruitment challenges but is progressing towards service delivery with a clinical supervisor and the recruitment of clinicians and nurses for teamed services, anticipating full operation by June 2024.
- 2. Washington County Mental Health Services Access Hub:** A living-room model program operational since October 2023, offering a welcoming environment for urgent mental health support from Monday to Thursday. It shows success in diverting individuals from EDs and law enforcement to community-based services.
- 3. Counseling Service of Addison County Interlude Program:** Another living-room model, providing care since January 2023 and reaching full service in July. It operates weekdays, assisting individuals with acute mental health symptoms through short-term follow-up and wrapped service care.
- 4. Northeast Kingdom Human Services Front Porch Program:** Set to start in April 2024, this program will offer comprehensive crisis service delivery in a living-room model, aiming for full operational status by October 2024.
- 5. Howard Center Mental Health Urgent Care Program:** In final negotiation stages, this program aims to begin between May 1 and May 15, 2024, focusing on urgent mental health care through collaborative efforts in Burlington.

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## YOUTH-FOCUSED ALTERNATIVES TO EDs

- **United Counseling Services Psychiatric Urgent Care for Kids (PUCK) Program:** Offers intensive day-treatment for youth, involving clinical assessment and skill-building, operational Monday to Friday and serving youth aged 0-18.
- **Health Care and Rehabilitation Services Youth Stabilization Program (YSP):** A high-intensity outpatient program in Brattleboro providing intensive support to help youth stay in their natural environments, offering a range of therapeutic services.
- **Lamoille County Mental Health Emergent Psychiatric Intervention for Children (EPIC) Program:** Similar to PUCK, providing intensive day-treatment and support for youth aged 6-18, focusing on developing coping skills and comprehensive treatment plans.