

2017 - 2018 Grand Jury Report

Riverside University Health System – Behavioral Health Mental Health Needs

Background

The Riverside University Health System's Behavioral Health (RUHS-BH) program is a Riverside County (County) mental health program that provides both Emergency Treatment Service (ETS) and an Inpatient Treatment Facility (ITF) which provides psychiatric hospitalization services for individuals experiencing psychological distress. The only long-term inpatient mental health treatment County facility is located at 9990 County Farm Road in Riverside (referred to as the Arlington campus). This 77-bed inpatient treatment unit is a locked acute care facility and is located next to the ETS, and the Crisis Stabilization Services (CSS) facility.

All County facilities provide emergency psychiatric assessments and crisis stabilization services for all ages on an around-the-clock basis. These services include evaluations, crisis intervention, and referrals for psychiatric hospitalization.

The Arlington Campus is staffed with psychiatrists, both County-employed and private contractors. Clinical therapists, psychiatric technicians, social workers, case managers and nurses are also utilized at this location. Private psychiatrists are contracted to meet the staffing needs. It is difficult to hire permanent County psychiatrists at the County's scheduled compensation rate.

Some patients arrive at County facilities for care on their own volition; others are brought in by law enforcement, families, or emergency medical technicians. Typically, patients who come for emergency services receive on-site treatment and are discharged with medication and referrals for outpatient treatment in the community. However, some patients are transferred or referred to other mental health facilities, while others are admitted for further treatment. Involuntary psychiatric holds, known as §5150 in the California Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), are also processed in these facilities.

The Arlington Campus is designed to treat approximately 24 clients/patients per day, but in reality the actual workload is often more than doubled. Some outpatients are transferred to the ITF.

The Arlington Campus is divided into several treatment units. These include aggressive and/or suicidal adults who are housed together and are under continuous observation and patients who benefit from multi-disciplinary treatment not requiring constant monitoring and are housed separately. Adolescents between 16–18 years of age are housed in a separate facility.

In the event that demand for care exceeds capacity for inpatient hospitalization, County mental health officials utilize private mental health facilities outside of the County. These mental health facilities are located in San Bernardino, Orange, and Los Angeles Counties and as far away as counties located in northern California.

Methodology

INTERVIEWS:

- Riverside County Supervisor, 4th District
- RUHS-BH, Director
- RUHS-BH, Chief Medical Officer
- RUHS-BH, Deputy Director (Forensics), Manager, Government and Public Affairs Advancement
- RUHS-BH County offices
 - Banning (Clinic Supervisor)
 - Indio (Supervisor-Youth Intervention Officer)
 - Palm Springs (Clinic Supervisor)
 - Perris (Administrator)
- Former Administrative Director, San Geronio Memorial Hospital, Banning
- Chief Executive Officer, Palo Verde Hospital, Blythe
- University of California, Riverside, School of Medicine
 - Assistant Dean, Strategic Initiatives
 - Chief of Staff to the Dean, Director – Standardized Patient Program
- Public Member – Desert Regional Board, Behavioral Health Commission, Riverside

TOURS/VISITS:

- RUHS, Arlington Campus, Emergency Treatment Services (ETS) and Inpatient Treatment Facility (ITF)
- Riverside County Telecare Psychiatric Facility – Indio
- Riverside University Health Systems Hospital – Moreno Valley
- RUHS-BH – Perris, Banning, Blythe, Palm Springs
- San Geronio Memorial Hospital – Banning
- Palo Verde Hospital – Blythe
- University of California, Riverside, School of Medicine

INTERNET RESOURCES/DOCUMENTS:

- Riverside County Mental Health Services Act – 3-Year Program and Expenditure Plan, Fiscal Year 2017-2018 through Fiscal Year 2019-2020 www.rcdmh.org/
- RUHS-BH: Consumer Population Profile Fiscal Year 2016–2017 https://www.rcdmh.org/Portals/0/PDF/Research/WWS_Final_16_17.pdf?ver=2018-01-26-083206-120
- Riverside County Department of Mental Health Director Reports, (numerous citations 1991 through 2016)
- County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA) <https://www.mentalhealthworkforce.org/partner/california-behavioral-health-directors-association-cbhda>
- WIC, §5150 and §5200
- Mental Health Planning Councils Reports (including Health Assessment Resource Center) – Coachella Valley Community Health Monitor 2015 http://www.rivcoph.org/Portals/0/CHA_Final_RivCo.pdf?ver=2016-03-14-140825-950
- Behavioral Health Inland Empire Psych Partners <http://bhintegration.com/sites/>
- Regional Emergency Assessment at Community Hospital <https://www.dhcd.org/getdoc.cfm?id=796>
- California Hospital Association – Center for Behavioral Health *Providing Leadership in Health Policy and Advocacy*
- <https://www.calhospital.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/psychbeddata.pdf>

Findings

Lack of Acute Care Mental Health Beds

1. The number of mental illness cases has increased in Riverside County while treatment care facilities and funding have not kept up with the demand. Mental health care providers and experts recommend that there be one acute care mental health bed per 2,000 people.

According to California Hospital Association Center for Behavioral Health, California has 6,610 acute care mental health beds. With a population of 39,144,818, California has one acute care mental health bed per 5,922 people.

Riverside County, by contrast, has a population of 2,423,266 people as of 2017 (U.S. Census Bureau) with a total of 365 acute care mental health beds (California Hospital Association Center for

Behavioral Health). This puts Riverside County at one acute care bed per 6,567 people – which is a larger disparity than the State.

At the recommended rate of one bed per 2,000 people, Riverside County should have available 1,211 acute care mental health beds. Considering Riverside County has a total of 365 such beds, including the 77 County beds at Arlington Campus and 288 privately-contracted beds, which makes the County needing approximately 846 beds.

Insufficient Staffing

2. The RUHS-BH utilizes *locum tenens* contracts to hire private psychiatrists to fill vacant authorized, and budgeted staff psychiatrist positions (currently 60 of the 140 positions remain unfilled). It was determined that Riverside County salaries and benefits are not competitive to neighboring counties and the private sector. A major concern centers on trying to keep clinicians from departing the County for employment in other counties or private industry.

Recommendations

**Riverside County Board of Supervisors
Riverside University Health System – Behavioral Health**

Lack of Acute Care Mental Health Beds

1. The Board of Supervisors, in conjunction with Riverside County Behavioral Health, work with appropriate sources to obtain adequate and continuous funding in order to bring Riverside County up to the bed capacity needed for the acute care mental health population.

Insufficient Staffing

2. It is recommended that Riverside County seek ways to ensure competitive salaries and benefits exist for filling its vacant psychiatrist positions.

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