

Access to Mental Health Services Study Committee 2018 Final Report



Study Assignment

The Access to Mental Health Services Study Committee was charged with the task of reviewing mental health services available in the state and the capacity of the available services:

- (1) how persons with mental illness are treated and the continuum of care available;
- (2) the facilities, locations, resources, treatment options, and services available for treatment of persons with mental illness; and
- (3) the financial costs to the state and its political subdivisions.

Summary of Interim

The committee examined mental health service availability throughout the state. At the first meeting on June 28, Dr. Matthew Stanley, Avera Medical Group University Psychiatry Associates, Sioux Falls, provided an overview of the concepts of mental health and mental illness and the role of primary care in accessing services and treatment. Gina Brimner and April Hendrickson, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), described the projects their organization is working on in the area of mental health, for the Department of Social Services, and what type of technical assistance WICHE could provide to the committee. Other presentations included the role of public mental health services, an overview of South Dakota's community based mental health system, and a report on the progress on recommendations following the 2011 Governor's Behavioral Health Services Work Group. The Department of Social Services provided information on responses to criminal justice reforms and the efforts to improve criminal justice system responses to persons with mental illness. Presenters included Lynne Valenti, Secretary, Department of Social Services; Amy Iversen-Pollreisz, Deputy Secretary, Department of Social Services; Terry Dosch, Executive Director, South Dakota Council of Mental Health Centers; and Senator Alan Solano, CEO, Behavior Management Systems, Inc.

On August 6, members toured Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services, Inc. (LCBHS), a community based mental health center, and the Human Services Center in Yankton. Dr. Tom Stanage, CEO of LCBHS, Ken Cole, Human Services Center Administrator, and Amy Iversen-Pollreisz gave presentations in conjunction with the tours. On August 7, the committee toured the Avera Behavioral Health Center in Sioux Falls, including a mock demonstration of a virtual telehealth provider visit. During the public meeting on August 7, April Hendrickson of WICHE spoke on national mental health trends. Speakers provided a perspective on the law enforcement and judicial continuum of mental health services. Presenters included Aaron McGowan, Minnehaha County State's Attorney; Warden Jeff Gromer, Minnehaha County Jail; Sergeant Tarah Walton, Sioux Falls Police Department; Kim Hansen, Southeastern Behavioral Healthcare; Jim Iosty, Chair, Minnehaha County Board of Mental Illness; and Brenda Ask, Chair, Lincoln County Board of Mental Illness. Other speakers represented the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) South Dakota, the Helpline Center, Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Family Services, and the Avera Behavioral Health Center.

At the September 11 meeting in Pierre, Dr. Mikel Holland, President, Avera-St. Mary's Hospital, described the work and issues facing the Pierre/Ft. Pierre Area Mental Health Task Force, and Jim Kinyon, Executive Director, shared the perspective of Catholic Social Services of the Black Hills. Department of Health Secretary Kim Malsam-Rysdon and State Epidemiologist Dr. Joshua Clayton presented information on suicide statistics and prevention efforts in South Dakota along with comments from Amy Iversen-Pollreisz. April Hendrickson of WICHE shared national information on suicide and population health. Aaron Pollard, Deputy Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, described statewide efforts and services for veterans. A group of speakers presented on challenges facing West River law enforcement, crisis services, and health care systems in the Rapid City area, including Pennington County

Sheriff Kevin Thom, Rapid City Chief of Police Karl Jegeris, Rapid City Crisis Care Center Clinical Director Randy Allen, and John Pierce, President of the Rapid City Hospital and Market at Regional Health. The committee discussed the mental health services continuum of care and state funding. Public testimony included representatives from the Brookings Empowerment Project.

In October, the committee heard a presentation on the commitment process in South Dakota and the nation, and members turned their focus to discussing potential funding and policy recommendations for mental health services in South Dakota and the committee's next steps in these areas.

In December, the committee reviewed follow up data from the Department of Social Services and from April Hendrickson of WICHE. The committee considered draft legislation on funding a statewide resource information system, task forces for future study, and on emergency involuntary commitments. The committee voted to sponsor the drafts on the resource information system and the concurrent resolution on task forces for further study.

Listing of Legislation Adopted by the Committee

1. To provide for a statewide resource information system.
2. To provide for legislative task forces to study, report, and develop and consider recommendations and proposed legislation regarding sustainable improvements to the continuum of mental health services available in the state.

Summary of Meeting Dates and Places

The committee met in Pierre on June 28. Members toured facilities in Yankton on August 6, and the committee met in Sioux Falls on August 7. The committee met in Pierre on October 17 and December 3.

Listing of Committee Members

Members of the committee are Senator Deb Soholt, Chair; Representative Herman Otten, Vice Chair; Senators Bob Ewing, Craig Kennedy, Kris Langer, Alan Solano, and Jim Stalzer; and Representatives Michael Diedrich, Steven Haugaard, Taffy Howard, Jean Hunhoff, Kevin Jensen, Timothy Johns, Tim Reed, and Susan Wismer.

Listing of Staff Members

Staff members for the committee are Emily Kerr, Legislative Attorney; Wenzel Cummings, Senior Legislative Attorney; Jason Simmons, Principal Fiscal & Program Analyst; and Kelly Thompson, Senior Legislative Secretary, with assistance from Rachael Person, Senior Legislative Secretary.

