

HJR 16: State-Operated Institutions ***Community Mental Health Facilities in Montana***

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Background

Community-based mental health services in Montana are operated by private providers and range from day treatment programs to locked, secure units for individuals in crisis. Montana has 25 licensed mental health centers that offer services to adults, children, or both. The centers must offer five core services:

- crisis telephone services;
- medication management;
- outpatient therapy;
- community-based psychiatric rehabilitation and support; and
- chemical dependency services.

The centers also may receive endorsements for additional services, such as case management or crisis services.

The House Joint Resolution 16 study seeks a discussion of alternatives to providing mental health services in an institutional setting. This briefing paper provides information on the types of crisis and supported services available to adults who need a higher level of services than outpatient treatment. Requirements for the different types of facilities are established in rules adopted by the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

Secured Crisis Stabilization Facilities

Secured crisis stabilization facilities represent the most intensive and restrictive level of community-based services. The facilities provide short-term court-ordered or emergency detention as an alternative to placement in a county jail or the Montana State Hospital. Individuals must be in need of crisis intervention services before a petition for involuntary commitment is filed or in need of an emergency or court-ordered detention while an involuntary commitment proceeding is pending. A person usually stays in the facility for no more than five days.

The facilities must be locked so that patients are prevented from leaving and must meet most of the requirements for an inpatient crisis stabilization facility. In addition, the facilities must:

- employ or contract with licensed mental health professionals to conduct clinical intake assessments; and

- make referrals for additional physical, psychological, emotional, or chemical dependency evaluations as appropriate.

Western Montana Mental Health Center currently operates three secured crisis stabilization facilities, in Bozeman, Butte, and Hamilton. Additional facilities are under construction in Helena and Polson. Each of the existing facilities has two beds that may be used for secure detention and a seclusion room where an individual may be held for safety reasons.

Inpatient Crisis Stabilization Facilities

Individuals experiencing a mental health crisis but not in need of commitment may voluntarily seek admission to a crisis stabilization facility. These facilities accept individuals who are medically stable and willing to follow program rules and treatment recommendations. Although the clients may be in need of frequent observation on a 24-hour basis, their conditions cannot require the use of physical or mechanical restraints. Individuals usually stay five to seven days.

An inpatient crisis stabilization facility provides 24-hour supervised treatment for the purpose of stabilizing an individual's symptoms. The facility must, among other things:

- employ or contract with a program supervisor who is based on site and knowledgeable about the services needed by mentally ill individuals experiencing a crisis;
- train staff on treatment approaches for different types of mental illness and on suicide risk assessment and prevention procedures;
- have awake staff on duty 24 hours a day; and
- ensure that hospital care is available through a transfer agreement.

Currently, Rimrock Foundation operates one crisis stabilization facility in Billings, and Western Montana Mental Health Center operates five facilities — two in Missoula and one each in Bozeman, Hamilton, and Kalispell.

Montana's Other Crisis Stabilization Option

DPHHS also licenses outpatient crisis response facilities. These facilities provide evaluation, intervention, and referral services to individuals who are experiencing a crisis because of a serious mental illness or a serious mental illness with a co-occurring substance abuse disorder.

This type of facility is targeted at individuals who may otherwise be taken to jail or treated in a hospital emergency room. The facility is staffed by licensed mental health professionals 24 hours a day, but individuals are not admitted to the facility for an overnight stay. In fact, a facility with this type of license may not provide services to an individual for more than 23 hours and 59 minutes.

The Billings Community Crisis Center is the only facility in Montana licensed as an outpatient crisis response facility.

Adult Mental Health Group Homes

Mental health group homes are designed to provide a supported living situation for adults with mental illness who are medically stable and who do not pose an immediate danger to self or others, but who require a transitional residential level of care or ongoing residential structure or supervision.

Montana has 20 licensed mental health group homes located as far northwest as Kalispell and as far east as Glendive. A group home must:

- employ or contract with a program supervisor who is knowledgeable about the services and support needed by the home's residents;
- be staffed at least eight hours a day;
- ensure that emergency mental health care is available 24 hours a day through a licensed mental health center or other contracted entity; and
- offer treatment activities that promote increasing independence in the functioning of its residents.

The table below provides information on the currently licensed mental health group homes.

Provider	Number	Location
A.W.A.R.E. Inc.	3	Butte, Glendive, Great Falls
Center for Mental Health	4	All in Great Falls
Eastern Montana Community Mental Health Center	1	Miles City
Winds of Change	3	Missoula
Montana Community Services	2	Billings
South Central Montana Regional Mental Health Center	1	Billings
Western Montana Mental Health Center	6	Butte, Hamilton, Kalispell, Missoula (2), Stevensville

Where Do BHIFs Fit in the Continuum of Care?

Montana law allows community-based inpatient mental health treatment in "behavioral health inpatient facilities," or BHIFs. These facilities may have a maximum of 16 beds and are designed to be located in communities. However, they also are designed to provide the same level of secure care and treatment that would be available to individuals committed to the Montana State Hospital. Thus they essentially would provide the most intensive level of care in the most restrictive setting, but would be located in a community other than Warm Springs.

Individuals may be committed to a BHIF for the same length of time as they may be committed to the Montana State Hospital — 90 days.

BHIFs are not hospitals because they would not meet the requirements of the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act. However, they must meet many of the same standards as hospitals. They also must:

- employ or contract with a medical director who would coordinate clinical matters and act as a liaison with community health care providers regarding psychiatric services;
- employ an administrator;
- be staffed by a registered nurse 24 hours a day;
- initiate a clinical intake assessment by a licensed mental health or health care professional within 12 hours for each patient admitted to the facility and develop an individualized treatment plan within 24 hours of admission;
- have a sufficient number of qualified staff on duty 24 hours a day to meet the needs of patients, provide active treatment, and respond to emergencies;
- ensure that medical services such as lab tests or radiology are available to patients;
- ensure that hospital care for medical conditions is available through a transfer agreement; and
- be capable of providing restraint or seclusion in compliance with state law,

The Legislature appropriated one-time-only funds in 2003 and 2007 to contract for services at BHIFs, but no provider built or licensed a BHIF in response to the appropriations.

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Sources:

- Interviews with Roy Kemp, interim administrator of the Quality Assurance Division, Department of Public Health and Human Services, February 2014
- Title 53, Chapter 21, Montana Code Annotated
- Title 37, Chapter 106, Subchapter 17, Administrative Rules of Montana: Behavioral Health Inpatient Facilities
- Title 37, Chapter 106, Subchapter 19, Administrative Rules of Montana: Minimum Standards for Mental Health Centers
- Title 37, Chapter 106, Subchapter 20, Administrative Rules of Montana: Foster Care for Adults with Mental Illnesses
- Listing of Licensed Mental Health Centers, DPHHS, available online at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/qad/healthcarefacilitieslist/mentalhealthcenters.pdf>
- Listing of Endorsements for Mental Health Facilities, DPHHS, available online at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/qad/healthcarefacilitieslist/mhcendorsements.pdf>