



Joint Subcommittee to Study Mental Health Services in the Commonwealth in the 21st Century

January 7, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.

Pocahontas Building, Senate Committee Room A

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The Joint Subcommittee to Study Mental Health Services in the Commonwealth in the 21st Century (the Joint Subcommittee) met in Richmond, with Senator R. Creigh Deeds, chair, presiding.¹ The meeting began with introductions and opening remarks, followed by presentations and discussion. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [Joint Subcommittee's website](#).

Presentation: Governor's Budget Proposals for Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

Alison Land, FACHE, Commissioner, Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

Commissioner Land gave an overview of the Governor's budget proposal for the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS). She talked to the members about the budget priorities of DBHDS, which include addressing the high census at state hospitals, continuing implementation of STEP-VA, investing in children's mental health initiatives, providing resources needed to exit the Department of Justice settlement agreement, and providing for the treatment needs of the sexually violent predator population. She gave an overview of the budget items broken down into fiscal years 2021 and 2022. Commissioner Land also discussed the plans and associated budget items for community actions to increase discharges from hospitals, which include expanding forensic discharge planning programs in jails, increasing permanent supportive housing capacity, and increasing funding for statewide discharge assistance plans.

Commissioner Land also spoke to the members about the budget items for DBHDS, the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), and the Virginia Department of Health intended to stem state hospital census growth while longer-term solutions take effect, such as reviewing incentive payments for disproportionate share hospitals, encouraging private acute care hospitals to accept more temporary detention orders (TDOs), and mandatory reporting of TDOs by private hospitals. She also went over the budget items intended to increase capacity for child and adolescent hospital beds.

Commissioner Land also broke down the mental health hospital items included in the budget proposal, which include adding critical clinical staffing at the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents, managing increased pharmacy costs at state hospitals, increasing funding for safety and security in state hospitals, annualizing new positions at Western State

¹ **Members Present:** Senator R. Creigh Deeds (chair), Senator George L. Barker, Delegate Robert B. Bell, Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr., Delegate Patrick A. Hope, Senator Janet D. Howell, Delegate Vivian E. Watts

Members Absent: Delegate Lashrecce D. Aird, Senator John A. Cosgrove, Jr., Delegate T. Scott Garrett, Delegate Todd E. Pillion, Delegate Margaret B. Ransone, Delegate L. Nick Rush

Hospital and new direct care positions at state hospitals, and adding temporary beds at Catawba Hospital. Regarding the additional temporary beds at Catawba, she explained they expected 28 beds to be available in 2020 and 28 beds in 2021, for a total of 56 additional temporary beds. The first six beds were added in November 2019, and six more beds are expected to be in operation by March 2020. All 28 beds are expected to be available by June 2020.

Additionally, she went over the budget items in the Governor's budget proposal that correspond to the continuing steps in STEP-VA and also talked about the community behavioral health budget items not related to STEP-VA, including increasing funding for Part-C-Early Intervention Services for children and toddlers with developmental delays and providing additional funds for the Virginia Mental Health Access Program. Lastly, Commissioner Land reviewed the budget items included in the proposal related to the Behavioral Health Enhancement (formerly known as the Behavioral Health Redesign), including funding workforce training in preparation for the behavioral health enhancement and aligning DBHDS licensing with Medicaid behavioral health services.

Presentation: Governor's Budget Proposals for DMAS

Dr. Alyssa Ward, Behavioral Health Clinical Director, Department of Medical Assistance Services

Dr. Ward gave a brief overview to the members about the Governor's budget proposals for DMAS. She went over a timeline for the planned implementation of the Behavioral Health Enhancement and talked about the budget items included in the budget proposal related to such implementation.

Discussion: Recommendations for 2020 Session

Finally, the members decided which recommendations to move forward with for the 2020 Session of the General Assembly and assigned members to patron the recommended bills.

For more information, see the [*Commission's website*](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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