



Joint Subcommittee to Study  
Mental Health Services  
in the  
Twenty-First Century

*LEO ECO/TDO Work Group*

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Jennifer M. Wicker  
Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association

# Community Hospital Trends at a Glance



- Emergency department lengths of stay have increased, especially for children and adolescents.
- Inpatient lengths of stay have increased across all populations.
- Hospitals struggle to recruit and retain sufficient behavioral health staff.
- Special populations are consistently hard to place (i.e. young children and severe DD).

# Children & Adolescents



- The pandemic has caused a disruption in normal behavioral health supports, resulting in delayed community interventions.
- There are only a few pediatric behavioral health units in Virginia, and they are often full due to COVID-19 and other medical conditions.
- Child psychiatrists are especially difficult to recruit.

# Why are Patients Boarding in the ED?



- Inpatient bed availability is being stretched:
  - Reduction in behavioral health beds to ensure proper COVID-19 infection management.
  - Staff shortages across all behavioral health personnel puts limits on the number of available beds.
  - Patients' acuity require more time for inpatient treatment, increasing length of stay.
- Patients' refusal to be tested for COVID-19.
- Families' preference for children to be admitted near home.

# How Hospitals Are Adapting



- When possible, admitting patients to medical floors.
- Utilizing more staff to conduct bed searches.
- Beginning treatment in the ED.
- Increasing coordination between psychiatrists and emergency physicians.
- Increasing coordination with CSB partners for step-downs.

# How Hospitals Are Partnering



- This summer, Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD) will be adding 6 beds in their ED to hold mental health patients and opening a medical/psychiatric unit with 7 beds in the fall. During 2022, they will add a total of 60 C&A beds in two phases.
- Carilion Clinic has initiated a Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) to divert inpatient admissions. CPEP provides treatment in the ED and intensive case management. Additional funding for Private Hospital Pilots will allow the program to expand.

# How Hospitals Are Partnering - Cont'd



- HCA Tucker Pavilion at Chippenham will open a 12-bed geriatric unit in July, re-open 37 beds that have been closed due to construction and expand adolescent outpatient services.
- Riverside is developing an inpatient program for detox and addiction that is being considered by DBHDS for the Private Hospital Pilot funding.
- Inova accelerated the hiring of an emergency service psychiatrist to increase rounding and treatment in the ED.

# Recommendations



- Funding to offset costs of travel nurses.
- Funding and authorization to allow alternate transportation providers sit with patients in the ED.
- Greater community-based services.





# Questions?

Jennifer M. Wicker  
[jwicker@vhha.com](mailto:jwicker@vhha.com)  
(804) 393-2619