

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: October 1, 2021

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: Report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, providing an informational update on the Mental Health Emergency Center

File Type: Informational Report

BACKGROUND

In December 2020, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) signed a letter of intent with four area health systems to create a new psychiatric emergency room that will quickly assess and treat individuals in psychiatric distress. This new facility will reduce criminal justice system involvement for mentally ill, provide meaningful connections to community mental health services, and reduce potentially unnecessary psychiatric hospitalizations.

The facility will serve all residents regardless of ability to pay. Revenues are not anticipated to fully cover costs of providing care. The private healthcare partners have agreed to subsidize 50 percent of the operational deficit with the remaining subsidy coming from Milwaukee County. This project represents an innovative public-private partnership aimed at providing high quality emergency mental health services in a location that is convenient and accessible.

POLICY

County Board Resolutions	File No. 21-42, 21-314
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UPDATE

On August 31, 2021, Governor Evers announced \$5.7 million in funding in support of the Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC). The award will come to Milwaukee County in two separate components: \$4.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding will be awarded to Milwaukee County to directly support construction and startup costs of the venture. In addition, \$1.2 million in block grant funding will support enhancements to the mental health crisis intervention continuum of care including technology enhancements to increase communication and care coordination.

Construction of the MHEC facility is underway with all major structural supports in place. Simultaneous to construction, Advocate Aurora is beginning operational implementation for the MHEC.

FISCAL EFFECT

No anticipated variances from the existing project budget. This item is informational only.

TERMS

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director
Michael Lappen, Administrator, Behavioral Health Division
Matt Fortman, BHD Fiscal Administrator

PREPARED BY:

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APPROVED BY:

Shakita LaGrant-McClain
Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director

cc: County Executive David Crowley
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Sup. Felesia Martin, Chair, Health Equity, Human Needs, & Strategic Planning Committee
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