

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: July 12, 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 (DHHS), providing an informational update on the Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC)

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST:

This informational report is being submitted as directed by File No. 21-42 which requests regular informational updates on the status of the Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC).

POLICY

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

BACKGROUND

In December 2020, the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services 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.

UPDATE

As of July 2021, this project has made substantial progress in terms of both agreements and progress on facility construction. Both the Member Agreement, the agreement

defining the relationship between Milwaukee County and the four area health systems to oversee and financially subsidize this program, and the Master Service Agreement, the agreement defining the relationship between the MHEC governance body and the service operator (Advocate Aurora Health), have been fully signed and executed. These agreements represented the final step in formalizing the MHEC governance and commitment from all parties.

As of July 7, 2021, the City of Milwaukee Common Council approved all necessary permitting to move forward on construction at the site located on 12th and Vliet. Fencing has been installed onsite. Asphalt removal is expected to begin July 19.

Simultaneous to construction, Advocate Aurora is beginning operational implementation for the MHEC. The Administrator position, the role that will oversee operations at the MHEC, as been posted while other operational buildout continues.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This project is critical in providing continued access and treatment for individuals in psychiatric distress which is aligned with the strategic plan in determining how services get delivered to advance health equity.

FISCAL EFFECT

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

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

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

PREPARED BY:

Michael Lappen, Administrator, Behavioral Health Division

APPROVED BY:


Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Sup. Jason Haas, Chair, Finance Committee
Sup. Felesia Martin, Chair, Health Equity, Human Needs, & Strategic Planning Committee
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
Pam Matthews, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, Research & Policy Analyst, Comptroller's Office