

REGIONAL EMERGENCY DETENTION BED NEED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, St. Croix County Community Justice Collaborating Council has established a Mental Health Subcommittee that prioritizes a work plan to focus on secure regional emergency detention beds needs; and

WHEREAS, work of the Mental Health Subcommittee of the Community Justice Collaborating Council included collection of local, regional and state data related to the availability of emergency detention beds, including Wisconsin Counties utilization of Winnebago and Mental Health Institute; and

WHEREAS, the Mental Health Subcommittee of the Community Justice Collaborating Council concluded that the trend toward increasing usage of the Winnebago Mental Health Institute was mainly due to the loss of local resources (hospital beds) over the years; and

WHEREAS, meetings were conducted with current regional emergency detention providers Mayo Clinic Health Systems and Hospital Sisters Health Systems, both located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and found that increasing capacity for secure emergency detention services is not part of either of their current planning; and

WHEREAS, after review of financial information related to the operation of a secure emergency detention facility in a hospital setting it was concluded that Medical Assistance reimbursement rates are insufficient; and

WHEREAS, information the subcommittee reviewed indicated the operational loss for a 10-bed secure emergency detention facility in a hospital setting is approximately one million dollars annually; and

WHEREAS, it is unlikely that hospitals would develop or expand this service due to the significant financial loss, which is largely due to overall low reimbursement rates, including reimbursement rates from Wisconsin Medical Assistance; and

WHEREAS, Pepin County is concerned about any additional closure of hospital secure emergency detention facilities due to the low reimbursement rates; and

WHEREAS, a meeting with the Division Administrator, Division of Care and Treatment Services-Wisconsin Department of Health Services, was held to discuss regional needs for emergency detention bed needs; and

WHEREAS, the Division Administrator, Division of Care and Treatment Services-Wisconsin Department of Health Services reported that the state was in the process of completing a bed need study, but the focus of that study was not on regional emergency detention bed need, but focused on the state mental health institutes, which includes Winnebago Mental Health Institute; and

WHEREAS, increased bed capacity at Winnebago Mental Health Institute would not fully meet regional needs due to distance from Pepin County with the round-trip estimate to be approximately 7 hours; and

WHEREAS, a trip of this distance not only creates additional expense for law enforcement, but also requires adjustments and challenges for law enforcement to cover community safety while officers are out of county; and

WHEREAS, this extended transport time for an individual with mental health needs only exacerbates the situation as they are handcuffed and transported in a squad car; and

WHEREAS, the utilization of Winnebago Mental Health Institute creates a situation where the individual can feel isolated from their families and support systems due to the distance from home; and

WHEREAS, the St. Croix County Sheriff's Office Data Analyst identified law enforcement transportation costs along with emergency detention data related to trips and costs of Winnebago Mental Health Institute which was shared with local legislators at a meeting in April of 2018 (see attached summary); and

WHEREAS, the Pepin County Board of Supervisors believes the solution to increasing secure regional emergency detention bed access in a hospital requires action from the legislature to increase Medical Assistance reimbursement rates; and

WHEREAS, the Pepin County Board of Supervisors believes there is support from local legislatures to introduce legislation during the next session to address access to secure regional emergency detention.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pepin County Board of Supervisors urges the state legislature to develop and support legislation to fund secure regional emergency detention bed access in a hospital setting to increase regional access, which will provide additional local resources for individuals in need of emergency mental health services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Pepin County Board of Supervisors directs the County Clerk to forward this resolution to the Office of the Governor, all members of the Legislature, Wisconsin Counties Association, and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary.

RECOMMENDED BY THE PEPIN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS VOTE


John Andrews, Vice Chairperson

6 0 1 0
In favor Oppose Absent Abstain

FISCAL IMPACT REVIEWED – The absence of local resources and excess costs that result from the issues as noted above will be an ongoing challenge for Counties to manage due to fixed County funding and levy limits and thus may result in reductions to other programs due to the limited funds.


Pamela Hansen
Finance Director

X _____
Recommend Not Recommended

COUNTY BOARD ACTION:

X ADOPTED
____ DEFEATED
____ TABLED

by the Pepin County Board of Supervisors on this 18th day of Sept. 2019
In favor 12 Oppose 0 Absent 0 Abstain 0


Audrey Bauer
County Clerk


County Board Chair

Resolution: 27-19
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