

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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Commissioner

Brattleboro Retreat Update

HEALTH REFORM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

OVERVIEW



SUSTAINABILITY PLAN –
ACTIVITY & PROGRESS TO DATE



BUSINESS RESTRUCTURING
UPDATE



EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

BRATTLEBORO RETREAT – SYSTEM OF CARE

- The Brattleboro Retreat provides essential capacity and Medicaid services in Vermont’s mental health system of care –serving annually over 5,000 children, adolescents and adults in need of treatment.
- 100% of Vermont’s children mental health inpatient capacity
- Over 50% of adult mental health inpatient capacity
- 12 new Level 1 beds online in the new year
- Mental health system is even more fragile due to COVID19
- If the most vulnerable cannot access care, we will see an increase in individuals waiting for care in Emergency Departments and lack of access to timely care
- Due to the impact of COVID-19 healthcare providers across Vermont are struggling due to changes in utilization and increased costs to respond to the COVID19 crisis.
- The impact of COVID-19 has significantly threatened the Retreat’s ability to provide mental health care to Vermonters, and Retreat’s financial situation is tenuous due to client census running low

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN: BACKGROUND

- The 9-point Plan that that was agreed to on behalf of AHS and BR Board outlines a “Three-Legged Stool” of sustainability focused on transformative changes for BR including:
 - Service Delivery Reconfiguration
 - Improvement to Business and Revenue Operations
 - Achievement of Organizational Efficiency
- Clear implementation steps and measurable performance metrics to monitor progress
- Contingency planning is represented in the Action Plan for Sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN: PROGRESS TO DATE

- The State, Retreat Leadership, and the Retreat Board have been working in good faith over the past 3 months to implement a 9-point Action Plan for Sustainability. This work has advanced in the right direction, and the progress is consistent with where we would want to be. Progress highlights include:
 - ✓ **Progress on Implementation of Action Plan for Sustainability**
 - *Alternative Payment Model* – Working with AHS payment reform team to implement APM for all inpatient services which will simplify Medicaid revenue streams for the Retreat, enabling them to manage to a more streamlined Medicaid ‘budget’ and to have more predictability in the timing and amounts of payments from AHS
 - *EHR Modernization*– Retreat working to partner with Rutland Regional Medical Center to partner on new EHR
 - *Employee and Labor Relations* – Retreat leadership and board have focused on employee communication and improving union relations
 - *Unit Reconfiguration & Services Delivery Vision* – Retreat continues to plan to advance unit reconfiguration opportunities to maximize care for the most acute and improve census; including the completion of the 12 new Level 1 beds
 - ✓ **Progress on 3rd party opportunities** – Retreat and Board are engaged and working to select an outside firm to assist in market demand analysis to attract equity and investment opportunities
 - ✓ **Strategic Business Restructuring** – Retreat and Board focusing on restructuring operations and streamlining areas of service delivery to focus on core inpatient services and reduce costs. This work aligns with the sustainability plan.
 - ✓ **Collaborative Partnership with AHS** – Retreat Leadership, Board and AHS have achieved a more transparent, productive and collaborative working relationship with shared goals and strategies to achieve them

OVERVIEW OF FUNDING TO DATE

- AHS has provided the Retreat with \$13.1M for the period of March – December 2020 in financial relief related to the COVID-19 pandemic. These payments were approved by the JFC to be funded from the Coronavirus Relief Fund.
- Like other healthcare providers across the state the Retreat has been grappling with the impacts of COVID19 which include lower census, revenue losses, workforce challenges and increased costs due to COVID19.
- Overall demand for inpatient services had declined which is the Retreat's primary book of services. It is expected that demand will rebound as Vermont progresses in recovery and opening and it will take time for census to recover.
- The current MOU has been extended and tied to the Action Plan for Sustainability.
- The Retreat is required to participate in a reconciliation process for the CRF Funding that is aligned with the other healthcare providers and the healthcare stabilization program.

BUSINESS RESTRUCTURING

- The Retreat leadership and BOD has been working with the VT Agency of Human Services (AHS) to develop and implement a Sustainability Plan that ensures the Retreat can continue to support our most vulnerable Vermonters.
- This sustainability work has advanced in the right direction. The Retreat will focus its clinical and financial resources on the care and services most needed in Vermont, including inpatient psychiatric and residential care. This will build a better Retreat for the future that is aligned with the Retreat's mission.
- These needed changes are part of a path forward to save the Retreat and make it a stronger, more sustainable organization in the future to preserve critically needed mental health care for children, youth and adults.
- The restructuring of the Retreat will impact the following programs:
 - HUB Opiate Treatment Program
 - Starting Now (outpatient addiction treatment program)
 - Meadows School
 - Mulberry Bush Childcare Center
- These programs support important community needs and the SOV and Retreat are working with other community providers to transfer services and care over the next few months. We believe alternative programs and services are available for those who access these programs.

BUSINESS RESTRUCTURING CONT.

HUB & Starting Now Outpatient

- The continued provision of addiction services provided through the Hub and Starting Now is top priority. ADAP has worked to identify existing community providers who are able to expand and cover the services that are provided by the Retreat.
- This is an opportunity to consolidate HUB services into one program in the community creating improved consistency, coordination, and efficiency. This will result in no reduction of available services in the area.

Mulberry Bush Daycare

- The Retreat needs to focus on its core services and mission related to the Vermonter's with complex mental health needs.
- Community access to high quality, affordable childcare is a priority for Vermont and CDD, the Retreat and other early childhood entities will work collaboratively to support the transfer of the childcare services to another community provider.

Meadows/Bridges Independent School

- AOE, AHS and local LEAs will work to transition current students to educational programs that best meet their social, emotional, and academic needs. We know that many children and youth benefit from programming that provides both academic learning and access to enhanced mental health and behavioral support.
- The transition may include:
 - Children/youth receiving individualized wrap around support through local school based mental health supports and programming
 - Hybrid learning and tutorial models within their existing public schools
 - Referral to other alternative educational day programs

NEXT STEPS

✓ Continued work on the Sustainability Plan and High Priority Action Items

- The implementation progress report (in links provided) addresses the degree to which the high priority action items in the sustainability plan have been met.
- AHS and BR Teams are meeting on a bi-monthly basis to execute and monitor the Action Plan strategies. Working sessions for specific Action Plan items are ongoing.

✓ Continued work on Quality Oversight Measures

AHS and Retreat continue to work on implementing quality oversight measures to be implemented by the Brattleboro Retreat under the oversight of DMH as outlined in H.960

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

- Testimony to be provided by the Brattleboro Retreat

RESOURCES

BR Documents including Osner Report: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/committees-and-studies/joint-fiscal-committee/meetings/2020-06-08>

Sustainability Plan: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-06-08/f62501ecea/Brattleboro-Retreat-Sustainability-Plan.pdf>

BR Presentation: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-06-08/1efcbc60bd/Brattleboro-Retreat-Presentation-060820.pdf>

June BR Report: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-06-08/bd8f2deebb/Brattleboro-Retreat-Complete-Retreat-Info-Minus-Plan.pdf>

July BR Report: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-07-29/d876755983/Brattleboro-Retreat-Act-139-Section-27-Report-Final.pdf>

August BR Memo: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-08-12/23cf3833f3/AHS-Update-on-Brattleboro-Retreat-08-04-2020-002.pdf>

September BR Report: <https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Meetings/Joint-Fiscal-Committee/2020-10-22/868d7f4466/Act-139-Section-27-Report-Final-Sept.pdf>