

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joint Fiscal Committee
Mental Health Oversight Committee

FROM: Christine M. Oliver, Commissioner
Department of Mental Health

DATE: July 13, 2011

RE: **Act 43 of 2009 Required Updates on the Secure Recovery Residence**

This quarterly update advises the Joint Fiscal and Mental Health Oversight committees on the status of the secure residential recovery program for which the Department of Mental Health was issued a Certificate of Need on January 5, 2011. Reference documents are at <http://www.bishca.state.vt.us/sites/default/files/10-001-HFinalSOD.pdf> and <http://www.bishca.state.vt.us/sites/default/files/10-001-HFinalCON.pdf>.

The proposed facility was designed to serve a target population of Vermont State Hospital patients. This target population for whom a 15-bed secure recovery residence (SRR) was intended had decreased in size to the point that the need was insufficient to justify building the facility. In addition, moving forward with the SRR would not address the overall need to replace the Vermont State Hospital. The Department of Mental Health suspended the project in January 2011 and has spent no money on developing the plans authorized by the CON. Replacement of the existing Vermont State Hospital with a state-of-the-art health care facility, development of acute, VSH-level inpatient psychiatric capacity at the Brattleboro Retreat, and potential partnerships with community hospitals and mental health agencies are being assessed.

The acute inpatient capacity needs at Vermont State Hospital is under continuing review; however, determinations of bed capacity for VSH-replacement programs and facilities have not been made. An integrated care model for VSH replacement, locating acute inpatient psychiatric treatment as closely aligned with general medicine as possible, is a goal. The SRR planning process in which DMH and its stakeholders were engaged to develop a therapeutic environment of care incorporating the principles of recovery will be a valuable resource in our formulation of plans to meet the care needs of VSH patients.