



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item Meeting of July 18, 2015

DATE: July 8, 2015

SUBJECT: Acceptance and Appropriation of Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services Crisis Intervention Team Assessment Site Expansion Grant Funding for the Department of Human Services.

C. M. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Authorize the County Manager or his designee to accept \$222,225 in Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services Crisis Intervention Team Assessment Site Expansion grant funds.
2. Appropriate \$222,225 in ongoing Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 funds from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (101.364501) to the Department of Human Services (101.52139).
3. Authorize the creation of 2.0 FTE grant-funded positions: 1.0 Mental Health Therapist and 1.0 Human Services Specialist in the Department of Human Services (101.52139).

ISSUES: This is a request to accept additional Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS) grant funds and create 1.0 FTE grant-funded mental health therapist position and 1.0 FTE grant-funded mental health worker position in the Department of Human Services (DHS) for FY 2016. A portion of the grant funding (\$57,749) will be used for contracted, specialized security services; the remainder (\$164,476) covers the grant-funded FTEs. No local match is required and no issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: DBHDS has awarded DHS additional staff and operations funding in the amount of \$222,225 for FY 2016. This funding is intended to support additional staffing for the expansion of the Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center to provide coverage 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Live coverage is critical in providing individuals in mental health crisis with timely access to services, assessments and treatment, and it helps ensure that law enforcement officers are able to return to service in a timely manner.

BACKGROUND: DBHDS has encouraged all Mental Health Crisis Intervention Centers in Virginia to provide live coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week (168 hours/week). Currently, the Arlington Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center is open 121 hours per week.

County Manager:

MJS / MNC

County Attorney:

[Signature]

MNC

29.

Staff: Julie Coldren, DHS

On-call emergency services therapists are available during the 47 hours a week (on weekends and overnight) when live coverage is not provided. Using on-call staff can increase wait times for consumers, their families, law enforcement and others involved in their care.

DISCUSSION: The Arlington Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center is operated by the Department of Human Services' Behavioral Healthcare Division. The center serves as a transfer of custody site for adults with serious mental illness who are brought by law enforcement to the center in lieu of arrest. Allowing people with serious mental illness to receive treatment in the community as opposed to in a correctional setting, where they are unnecessarily criminalized, results in improved outcomes for the individual in crisis and significant cost savings.

By law, the transfer of custody must be done from law enforcement to security officers specially trained in crisis intervention. After the transfer is completed, Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center therapists then conduct an assessment to determine the nature of the crisis, the individual's needs and level of risk. The therapist's role may also include making referrals to appropriate services and resources, obtaining Temporary Detention Orders for emergency hospitalization, and providing therapeutic interventions that assist the individual with de-escalation of the current crisis.

DBHDS, in awarding the grant to Arlington, cited the program as "exemplifying the type of program [DBHDS] wishes to expand across the Commonwealth." Arlington's Crisis Intervention Center has already produced significant outcomes:

- The number of individuals brought to the Crisis Intervention Center in lieu of arrest increased 19 percent from FY 2012 to FY 2014 (from 89 individuals to 106).
- By diverting people from jail, the center facilitates significant cost savings. The average cost of a jail bed per day is \$200.72, with an average length of stay for people with serious mental illness of 28 days. [Source: Behavioral Healthcare Division study at Arlington County Detention Facility]
- Prior to implementation of the Crisis Intervention Center, law enforcement personnel spent on average more than four hours on transfer of custody with individuals experiencing mental health crisis. The average time now is 2 hours and 3 minutes, a decrease of over 50 percent.

The additional clinical FTEs and security staffing provided by the grant will enable the provision of the live, round-the-clock coverage encouraged by DBHDS. Therapists will be on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide services at both the Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center and the Emergency Department at Virginia Hospital Center. This will facilitate access to services, allow more efficient assessments of people experiencing a psychiatric crisis and decrease the wait time for all involved in this process. Police will now be able to transport individuals experiencing a psychiatric crisis safely to either the Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center or the Virginia Hospital Center and return to service quickly.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no impact on net tax support in FY 2016. No local match is required and all expenses will be covered by the grant funds. A total of \$222,225 in grant funding is being appropriated in FY 2016, of which \$164,476 will be used to fund the creation of

2.0 grant funded FTEs (1.0 Mental Health Therapist and 1.0 Human Services Specialist). The remaining \$57,749 will be used for contracted, specialized security services.