

Response to Questions on the FY 2012 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Gross

Question: Does the County Executive's budget account for state deficiencies in Mental Health beds that might be passed along to localities?

Response: In June 2010, Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute closed six acute admission beds and, effective on July 1, 2011, an additional 13 beds will be closed. This will reduce the total bed count to 110, down from 129 in 2010. The reduction in beds reduces the safety net and forces high risk consumers to be transferred to hospitals outside the region on a more frequent basis.

To address this concern the region formed a planning committee in 2010 to analyze potential solutions. In addition to working with the regional planning committee, although not specifically developed to account for state deficiencies in Mental Health beds, the plan to create Intensive Community Treatment Teams (ICT), as proposed in the FY 2012 Advertised Budget Plan, will help to alleviate deficiencies. ICT teams will provide intensive, community based, case management and outreach services to persons with serious mental illness and/or serious substance use disorder. Research indicates that providing these services shortens the hospital stay for some individuals and allows others to avoid hospitalization. These outcomes will allow the CSB to minimize the potential impact of state deficiencies in Mental Health beds.