

Behavioral Health Urgent Care Pilot Program

Session Law 2021-180, Section 9F.11.(g)



Report to the

**Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services**

and

Joint Legislative Committee on Medicaid

and

Fiscal Research Division

by

**North Carolina Department of Health and Human
Services**

December 18, 2024

Introduction

As mandated by S.L. 2021-180 Section 9F.11.(a), the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SUS) was allocated \$1.5 million per year for the fiscal years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, totaling \$3 million in non-recurring funds to be directed to Recovery Innovations, Inc. (RI) for the Dix Crisis Center in Onslow County. The aim of the pilot was to establish a Tier 3 Behavioral Health Urgent Care (BHUC) program to serve individuals experiencing mental health crises requiring urgent care, typically for up to 23 hours.

S.L. 2021-180, Section 9F.11.(f) outlined specific reporting requirements for the program, mandating that Dix Crisis Center submit the following information to DMH/DD/SUS for inclusion in the required report.

1. Number of Individuals Served: the total count of individuals served in the BHUC unit, the average length of stay, and the number of repeat crisis episodes.
2. Comparative Data: a comparison of service outcomes between the BHUC and the facility-based crisis unit at Dix Crisis Center.
3. Occupancy Rates: the level of occupancy during the pilot.
4. Outcome Measures: objective outcomes demonstrating the program's impact on hospital emergency room visits and law enforcement crisis responses.
5. Detailed Budget: a full list of expenditures related to the State appropriations.

Section 9F.11.(g) of the session law required DMH/DD/SUS to, in turn, submit a report, which includes the information referenced above, to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Joint Legislative Committee on Medicaid, and the Fiscal Research Division on the BHUC pilot program by October 1, 2023.

Project Implementation Challenges and Adjustments

Implementation encountered delays due to construction setbacks at the Dix Crisis Center and complications in finalizing fiscal agreements between DMH/DD/SUS, Trillium Health Resources, Onslow County, and RI. The contract was executed in September 2022, with the BHUC facility beginning operations in December 2023. Consequently, \$1,358,930.28 of unexpended funds reverted in FY 2022-2023, and alternative funding was identified to ensure continuity.

Outcome Metrics

The outcome data shown in Table 1 below provides insights into how individuals from various counties (Onslow, Craven, Carteret, and Other/Unknown areas) are served during the period from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Key interpretations of the data in the chart below include the following.

1. Onslow seems to have higher engagement from first responders compared to the other counties.

- Emergency room is a primary source of diversion to the BHUC: 383 individuals were diverted from emergency rooms, with the majority from Onslow (i.e., 181 cases).
- A significant number of cases that might have avoided treatment. Specifically, 570 individuals were classified as "*Would not have gone to treatment*," which implies the BHUC played a crucial role in diverting these cases from potential non-treatment.
- Jails and other sources also contributed to a sizable portion of referrals, with 164 diverted from other sources and 137 cases lacking entry or diversion forms.
- Few emergency room or mobile crisis referrals were made. For example, only 13 individuals were redirected to emergency rooms or mobile crisis services.
- A majority of the population was served through State funds.

Table 1: Patient Diversion Data



Dix Crisis Intervention Center YTD Report for OCCOC
Report Period: 7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024

First Responder Dropoffs	Onslow	Craven	Carteret	Other/Unknown
Count	47	10	13	38

Diverted to DCIC from	Onslow	Craven	Carteret	Other/Unknown
Emergency room	181	38	34	130
Jail	11	4	4	11
Other	59	18	13	74
Would not have gone to treatment	249	54	46	221
No Entry	31	2	6	28
No diversion form completed	0	0	0	70
Total	531	116	103	534

Diverted from DCIC (at Capacity) to	Onslow	Craven	Carteret	Other/Unknown
Caller Declined Alternative Treatment	15	5	2	43
Emergency Room	2	0	0	11
Mobile Crisis	10	0	0	28
Referred To Another Mh Facility/Program	1	0	0	2
Referred To Other Provider	0	0	1	0
Referred To Subst. Abuse Treatment Fac/Program	1	0	0	5
Total	29	5	3	89

Insurance Source	Count	Percent
Trillium Medicaid	248	19%
Trillium State	695	54%
Other	331	26%
No Entry	10	1%
Total	1284	

Additional outcome data relating to Occupancy, referral disposition, length of stay, and readmissions is outlined in Table 2 below.

Key interpretations of the data include:

- An occupancy rate of 79% which is only slightly below the target rate of 80%.
- Only 10% of discharged guests were readmitted within 30 days.
- The average First Responder Time was 17 minutes, only slightly above the expected 15-minute response time.

4. Admissions were processed quickly, with an average rate of 6.7 minutes, which exceeds the one hour originally anticipated.
5. The average stay was just above the 3-day expectation.
6. There were 1,204 are unique (i.e., unduplicated) individuals served.
7. A total of 130 individuals were readmitted within 30 days of discharge.
8. The majority of the referrals were self-referrals (i.e., 53%), followed by hospital staff and law enforcement (i.e., 8%).

Table 2: Patient Outcome Data



Dix Crisis Intervention Center YTD Report for OCCOC
Report Period: 7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024

Incentives	Month
Occupancy (80% capacity expectation)	79%
Recidivism (less than 25% within 30 days expectation)	10%
First Responder Time (less than 15 minutes expectation)	17 mins
Aftercare Appointment (within 72 hours expectation)	120.1 hrs
Admission Timeframe (1 hour maximum expectation)	6.7 mins
Average Length of Stay (3 day expectation)	3.3 days

Guests Served	Month
Total Guests Discharged	1284
Unduplicated Guests Discharged	1204
Readmitted within 30 Days	130
Total Guests Active YTD	1316

Admission Legal Status	Count	Percent
Voluntary	1091	85%
Involuntary	186	14%
No Entry	7	1%
Total	1284	

Diagnosis Type	Count	Percent
Mental Health	412	32%
Substance Use	855	67%
No Entry/Unknown	17	1%
Total	1284	

Referral Source	Count	Percent
Family	78	6%
Friend	44	3%
Hospital Staff	101	8%
Law Enforcement Officer	99	8%
Mental Health Provider	15	1%
Mobile Crisis - Law Enforcement	12	1%
Mobile Crisis - Self/Family/Friend	68	5%
Mobile Crisis - Service Provider	53	4%
No Entry	47	4%
Paramedic	14	1%
Self	683	53%
No diversion form completed	70	5%
Total	1284	

Substance Use Dx Type	Count	Percent
Alcohol	381	45%
Cannabis	1	0%
Cocaine	30	4%
Hallucinogen	0	0%
Inhalant	0	0%
Nicotine	0	0%
Opioid	293	34%
Psychoactive	0	0%
Sedative	1	0%
Stimulant	149	17%
Total	855	

This data highlights that the RI BHUC is mostly meeting its occupancy and recidivism goals, while performing well on quick admissions. However, areas like aftercare appointment scheduling could improve. Substance use, particularly alcohol and opioid abuse, dominates the diagnoses. Most referrals are self-referrals, followed by hospital staff and law enforcement. The BHUC pilot has demonstrated clear success in diverting individuals from emergency departments, reducing the burden on hospitals, and law enforcement, and offering immediate stabilization for behavioral health crises.

Financial Overview

Expenditures for the BHUC project includes itemized lists of expenditures such as salaries, employee benefits, program supplies, and professional services, which directly correspond to the allocation of state appropriations. The detailed expenditure charts below provide financial data for RI International's BHUC facility, tracking revenues and operating expenses across various periods from July 2023 to June 2024 (FY24). Key insights are reflected in the data, including the following.

1. Total expenses: \$805,529.94
2. Salary and wages for the year-to-date (YTD): \$498,797
3. Employee benefits YTD: \$125,108
4. Office Occupancy: Rent: \$2,600 per month, for a total of \$29,132 YTD
5. Supplies and services related to programs were relatively minor, with YTD totals of \$1,380 for services and \$7,861 for supplies.

The bulk of the expenses are concentrated in salaries, wages, employee benefits, and office occupancy.

49	Travel													
50	Travel - Local Mileage	53.82	116.77	(44.23)	-	428.34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	555
51	Travel - Out of Town Domestic	-	192.00	115.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	307
52	Travel - International	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
53	Total Travel	53.82	308.77	70.77	-	428.34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	862
54														
55	Office Occupancy													
56	Rent - Non-Related Party	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	31,200
57	Rent - Related Party												-	-
58	CAM / Association Fees												-	-
59	Event/Meeting Space Rental												-	-
60	Utilities												-	-
61	Utilities - Water & Sewer (RIP)												-	-
62	Utilities - Electric (RIP)												-	-
63	Janitorial Services												-	-
64	Repairs and Maintenance - Facility	107.00	-	-	-	-	425.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	532
65	Real Estate Taxes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
66	Total Office Occupancy	2,707.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	3,025.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00	29,132
67														
68	Client Occupancy													
78	Total Client Occupancy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
79														
80	Program Services													
81	Laboratory Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
82	Travel - Client												-	-
83	Vehicle Related Expenses												-	-
84	Security Services												-	-
85	Linen Services												-	-
86	Pharmacy Services												-	-
87	Client Stipends												-	-
88	Contract Required Event												-	-
89	Other Professional Program Services	122.88	122.88	122.88	368.64	122.88	122.88	99.33	-	99.33	99.33	99.33	198.66	1,579
90	Translation & Interpreter Services												-	-
91	Training Expense Clients - Non-Related Party												-	-
92	Training Expense Clients - Related Party												-	-
93	Vehicle Lease												-	-
94	Total Program Services	122.88	122.88	122.88	368.64	122.88	122.88	99.33	-	99.33	99.33	99.33	198.66	1,380
95														
96	Program Supplies													
97	Recreational Supplies												-	-

98	Special Events	35.00	-	370.23	-	-	140.94	1,897.44	-	46.76	-	940.19	-	3,431
99	Cleaning Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
100	Client Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	57.12	-	20.23	187.30	21.65	8.75	-	295
101	Kitchen Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
102	Other Program Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	44.55	-	-	-	6.57	15.00	-	66
103	Recovery in Action Days Hui (Flexifunds)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
104	Program Supplies - Food	-	22.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.99	-	37
105	Program Supplies - Non-Food Items	-	-	-	-	-	109.42	14.99	-	216.03	-	123.93	19.97	484
106	Medical Supplies	68.87	129.48	557.27	52.12	521.18	852.39	53.95	-	530.41	747.71	53.90	1,151.67	4,719
107	Training Materials - Non-Related Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
108	Training Materials - Related Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
109	Start Up	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
110	Total Program Supplies	103.87	151.98	927.50	52.12	521.18	1,204.42	1,966.38	20.23	980.50	775.93	1,156.76	1,171.64	7,861
111														-
112	Office Supplies & Equipment													-
113	Office Expenses	294.16	-	259.38	603.91	6.58	99.76	387.87	31.29	396.28	37.53	277.71	-	2,394
114	Postage and Shipping	-	-	-	-	-	58.70	-	6.99	54.40	88.18	52.71	17.07	278
115	Printing and Copying	-	-	-	-	-	143.33	244.98	-	-	-	-	-	388
116	Minor Equipment Purchases & Repair	-	-	1,903.60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,024.00	342.80	5,270
117	Equipment Lease	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
118	Equipment Maintenance Agreement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
119	Total Office Supplies & Equipment	294.16	-	2,162.98	603.91	6.58	301.79	632.85	38.28	450.68	125.71	3,354.42	359.87	7,971
120														-
121	Insurance													-
122	Other Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
123	Insurance - Automobile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
124	Insurance - Property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
125	Insurance - General & Profess. Liability	550.46	1,017.09	1,029.62	1,061.29	1,015.52	1,216.71	1,121.21	1,142.09	1,342.60	1,252.31	1,078.74	846.94	12,675
126	Total Insurance	550.46	1,017.09	1,029.62	1,061.29	1,015.52	1,216.71	1,121.21	1,142.09	1,342.60	1,252.31	1,078.74	846.94	11,828
127														-
128	Telephone													-
129	Telephone - Voice & Data Lines	316.92	126.68	316.92	302.77	302.77	494.12	303.91	276.94	276.94	161.79	161.79	161.79	3,203
130	Cell Phones & Wireless Data	154.71	214.71	214.95	155.07	158.52	158.22	158.61	158.55	158.70	158.10	158.58	158.37	2,007
131	Total Telephone	471.63	341.39	531.87	457.84	461.29	652.34	462.52	435.49	435.64	319.89	320.37	320.16	4,890
132														-
133	Other Expenses													-
134	Meals - not travel related (business)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

135	Professional Fees - Accounting													
136	IT software and service related expenses	(179.91)	59.97	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		(120)
137	Professional Fees - Legal													-
138	Professional Fees - Consulting	-	-	-	3,133.94	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		3,134
139	Payroll/Benefit Miscellaneous Expense												-	
140	Board Expenses													-
141	Conference Expense													-
142	Over/Short/Small Bal Adjustments													-
143	Software & Service Related Expenses											13,284.99	13,328.46	13,285
144	Non-Reimbursable Expenses													-
145	Bank Service Charges													-
146	Advertising - Employee / Recruiting											90.00		90
147	Advertising/Sponsorships													-
148	Public Relations Expenses													-
149	Promotional/Marketing Expense	-	159.54	-	61.39	-	-	-	-	-	-	559.28		780
150	Dues and Subscriptions													-
151	Licenses and Fees													-
152	Donations													-
153	Business Taxes													-
154	Interest Expense													-
155	Mortgage Interest Peoria / Cambridge													-
156	Other Financing Cost Peoria / Cambridge													-
157	Bad Debts													-
158	Gain / Loss on Currency Exchange													-
159	Loss on Asset Disposal													-
160	Other Related Party Expenses													-
161	Penalties / Fines / Late Fees													-
162	Prior Year Expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			-
163	Total Other Expenses	(179.91)	219.51	-	3,195.33	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,934.27	13,328.46	17,169
164														
165	Property Management													
191	Total Property Management Expen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
192														
193	Direct Allocation Expenses													
194	Billing Services & Data Reporting	712.36	2,510.20	1,389.35	1,542.86	1,954.38	1,538.47	2,202.04	2,493.54	2,731.27	2,374.51	2,396.47	2,123.73	23,969
195	Quality & Compliance													-
196	Electronic Health Record	1,105.63	2,155.45	2,084.65	2,224.82	1,896.34	2,370.91	2,582.07	2,371.32	2,209.13	3,092.40	(9,374.20)	(384.34)	12,334

197	Contracts and Credentialing													
198	Local Shared Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
199	Regional Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
200	Regional Services II	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
201	PLACEHOLDER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
202	PLACEHOLDER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
203	PLACEHOLDER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
204	Direct Services Non Reimbursable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
205	Total Direct Allocation Expenses	1,817.99	4,665.65	3,474.00	3,767.68	3,850.72	3,909.38	4,784.11	4,864.86	4,940.40	5,466.91	(6,977.73)	1,739.39	34,564
206														
207	Capital Expenditures:													
210	Total Capital Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
211														
212	Indirect Allocation Expenses													
213	Indirect Admin Svs - Executive	1,025.84	2,082.07	1,903.16	2,032.00	2,445.43	3,151.07	3,090.44	2,941.36	2,429.00	2,566.41	2,198.90	2,051.18	27,917
214	Indirect Admin Svs - Finance	859.87	1,993.53	1,209.85	2,356.05	1,969.01	1,758.61	1,896.25	1,837.27	2,540.40	2,117.38	1,844.97	2,358.18	22,741
215	Indirect Admin Svs - HR													-
216	Indirect Admin Svs - MIS	297.02	1,413.65	1,208.05	1,238.37	1,506.16	1,226.67	1,184.51	1,137.95	1,152.35	1,138.05	2,496.19	(3,336.12)	10,663
217	Indirect Nonreimbursable Contra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
218	Sub Total Indirect Allocations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
219	Indirect Admin Svs - Non Reimbursab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
220	Total Indirect Allocation Expenses	2,182.73	5,489.25	4,321.06	5,626.42	5,920.60	6,136.35	6,171.20	5,916.58	6,121.75	5,821.84	6,540.06	1,073.24	60,248
221														
222	Total Expenses	35,462.90	70,327.52	69,574.38	71,367.85	66,737.97	75,060.17	87,147.02	73,501.97	85,852.99	85,848.77	84,648.40	63,144.32	805,529.94
223														
224	Adjusted Invoice amount	(35,462.90)	(70,327.52)	(69,574.38)	(71,367.85)	(66,737.97)	(75,060.17)	(87,147.02)	(73,501.97)	(85,852.99)	(85,848.77)	(84,648.40)	(63,144.32)	(805,529.94)

Conclusion

This report demonstrates that the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Pilot has met legislative requirements, both in terms of service provision and financial accountability. The program has addressed crisis behavioral health needs in the region and demonstrated a need for statewide expansion, supported by the consistency of reported outcomes and financial integrity.

The investment in the Onslow RI BHUC is one of many investments into the crisis system across the State. We are excited to see the RI BHUC improve access to Behavioral Health Crisis care in the Eastern part of North Carolina and serve key unmet needs. Overall, BHUCs play an important role as a crisis response and stabilization facility that serves as an alternative to the Emergency Department. In SFY 2022, 6,797 individuals were served in BHUCs across the State. In SFY 2023, that number increased with 7,008 individuals being served in BHUCs across the State. Future investment into BHUCs using ARPA-Medicaid Expansion incentive payments allocated in the budget for SFY2024 and 2025 will be used to increase the number of facilities available, expand their operating hours, and improve the quality of services provided.

DMH/DD/SUS's goal for the Crisis System is to provide high quality, timely, standardized treatment to anyone in crisis across the State. DMH/DD/SUS is using Crisis Now! as a model for this initiative, which outlines three key components of an effective crisis system: Someone to Call (e.g., 988), Someone to Respond (e.g., Mobile Crisis), and Somewhere to Go (e.g., BHUC). DMH/DD/SUS has received funding to invest in crisis system infrastructure (e.g., BHUCs, mobile crisis), in crisis stabilization (e.g., 3-way beds), in establishing a non-law enforcement transportation pilot, and in crisis system technology. DMH/DD/SUS released a plan for investments through the addition/expansion of nine BHUC's over the next two years in Alamance, Buncombe, Caldwell, Haywood, Onslow, Pitt, Rockingham, Rowan and Vance counties; the Rockingham facility opened in April 2024. DMH/DD/SUS continues to engage with consumers, providers, hospitals, and LME/MCO partners to receive feedback on planned Crisis System investments.