

Recommendations: Implementation of STEP-VA

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services should work with community services boards (CSBs) to develop at least one performance measure to indicate whether each CSB is performing same-day behavioral health assessments for each consumer who visits the CSB during same-day assessment hours. (Chapter 2)

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services should work with community services boards (CSBs) to develop at least one performance measure that will assess whether each CSB is offering a sufficient number of same-day assessment hours at each clinic within its service area to meet community demand. (Chapter 2)

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) should pilot phase two of primary care screening at a subset of community services boards (CSBs) that are at different levels of readiness to implement the service. The agency should evaluate the effects of phase two on these CSBs' operations and consumers and use this information to determine whether phase two should be expanded to all CSBs. DBHDS should report on the findings of the pilot program and proposed next steps for primary care screening to the staff and chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance committees following one year of the pilot. (Chapter 2)

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services should dedicate a senior-level behavioral health staff position to lead and oversee STEP-VA planning and implementation on a full-time basis. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 5

The General Assembly may wish to consider including language in the Appropriation Act allowing the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to use a portion of future STEP-VA funding for STEP-VA oversight and administration functions at DBHDS. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 6

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services should (i) develop a strategy for all community services boards to access up-to-date information on STEP-VA implementation status, key decisions, and established requirements and (ii) maintain designated points of contact at the agency for providing technical assistance. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services should base its STEP-VA funding allocation decisions on (i) the demand for specific behavioral health services in each community services board's (CSB) service area and (ii) each CSB's capacity to meet those needs. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 8

The General Assembly may wish to consider amending clause 3 of Chapter 607 of the 2017 Acts of Assembly to require community services boards to initiate the provision of all STEP-VA services by July 1, 2022. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 9

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) should not begin disbursing funds to community services boards (CSBs) for STEP-VA's crisis services until DBHDS and the CSBs have completed sufficient planning, including the requirements, performance measures, and funding allocation plans. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 10

The General Assembly may wish to consider including language in the Appropriation Act (i) directing the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to submit requirements, performance measures, and funding allocation plans for each of the remaining steps of STEP-VA to the staff and chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance committees, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and the Secretary of Finance, and (ii) directing the Department of Accounts to withhold appropriated funds for each of the remaining steps of STEP-VA until DBHDS and the community services boards demonstrate that planning is complete, including requirements, performance measures, and funding allocation plans. (Chapter 3)

RECOMMENDATION 11

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services should prioritize the remaining steps of STEP-VA to reflect needs of the communities served by Virginia's community services boards. (Chapter 3)
