

## Study Resolution

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### Review of Virginia's State-Operated Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitals

Authorized by the Commission on November 7, 2022

WHEREAS, Virginia operates eight inpatient psychiatric hospitals for adults and one for children and youth in various locations throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, these hospitals are overseen by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to the health and well-being of patients that the services and treatment provided in state psychiatric hospitals is evidence-based and effective; and

WHEREAS, delivering evidence-based and effective services and treatment requires a sufficient number of qualified and experienced clinicians and staff; and

WHEREAS, the number of admissions to inpatient psychiatric hospitals has increased dramatically in recent years and there are currently waitlists for each state hospital; and

WHEREAS, there is evidence that some patients do not require the level or type of services or treatment provided by psychiatric hospitals but are still admitted due to a lack of alternatives; and

WHEREAS, some patients remain in state psychiatric hospitals for longer than necessary due to barriers to discharging them into community-based services; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the state's inpatient psychiatric hospitals. In conducting its study, staff shall (i) evaluate whether the state hospitals have sufficient space and staff to meet demands for admissions, (ii) evaluate hospitals' staffing strategies and hiring practices, especially for clinicians and other direct care staff, (iii) evaluate the criteria and policies used by state hospitals for admitting and discharging patients, (iv) identify the most common and substantial barriers to discharging patients, including forensic patients, who are clinically ready to be discharged, (v) evaluate the development and execution of treatment plans for patients, (vi) evaluate the outcomes of patients, (vii) determine whether a portion of patients could be more effectively served in a setting different from a state hospital, and (viii) evaluate DBHDS's oversight of the state hospitals.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including each of the state's inpatient psychiatric hospitals, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, all community services boards, and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.