

2024 Session Outcomes

07/2024

Expanding behavioral health care capacity, improving access

Overview

Minnesota took multiple steps in the 2024 session to expand behavioral health care capacity and improve access to behavioral health care and treatment. New strategies will address systemic barriers that prevent people with disabilities and complex support needs from leaving hospitals, including emergency departments. Other measures, based on the recommendations of the Priority Admissions Task Force, will expand mental health treatment capacity, increase admissions to state-operated psychiatric hospitals, and support people experiencing mental health conditions in the community and in correctional settings. Rates will increase for many mental health and substance use disorder services. Other investments will support integrated health services in jails and hospitals, respite services for families, culturally specific services and school-linked behavioral health services.

2024 legislation

Removing systemic barriers for people with complex support needs in hospitals

Multiple strategies will address systemic barriers that keep people with disabilities and complex support needs in hospitals, including in emergency departments. Changes include allowing disability waiver services in hospitals, supporting people with high support needs who receive Elderly Waiver services, creating a vulnerable adult/developmental disability case management benefit for Tribal nations, addressing the backlog of MnCHOICES assessments, and adding transition planning as a service under the Alternative Care program. The measures will improve outcomes for children and adults who are stuck in hospitals and not getting the care they need to live and thrive at home or in the community.

Expanding capacity and improving access in state-operated psychiatric facilities

Following recommendations from the Governor's budget and Priority Admissions Task Force, the state will expand mental health treatment capacity, increase admissions to DHS-operated psychiatric hospitals, and make investments to assist people experiencing mental health episodes in the community and in correctional settings. Repurposing the substance use disorder program in St. Peter will add 16 beds to the Forensic Mental Health

Program. These additional beds will take pressure off the Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center, allowing for dozens more admissions there each year. A funding increase will allow the Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Hospital in Willmar to operate at its full 16-bed capacity, instead of eight beds. Together, the changes will address heavy demand and waiting lists for admissions to state-operated facilities.

Improving access to mental health care

The state also made additional investments in mental health care. A pilot program will improve mental health medication administration in jails. Another pilot partnership with jail facilities focused on case consultation will improve supports for people in jails. New resources will support planning for additional mental health capacity, both in Direct Care and Treatment facilities and in the community.

Supporting access to behavioral health services in the community

New investments will improve access to behavioral health services in the community. Mental health service rates will increase by an average of 4% as the state takes initial steps toward implementing the recommendations of the Medical Assistance Outpatient Rate Study. Rates for substance use disorder services in residential settings will rise 3%. Hospitals will receive a one-time increase in payments for mental health services. Rates for adult day treatment services will receive annual inflationary updates. The state will also provide more funding for respite services and school-linked behavioral health services. Medical Assistance will expand access to child and family psychoeducation services in schools, while developing future community-based benefits for people who need behavioral health services.

For More Information

DHS 2024 session fact sheets: <https://mn.gov/dhs/media/fact-sheets/2024-session-fact-sheets.jsp>