



CRISIS REDESIGN: AN UPDATE #2

Planning for Crisis Mental Health Services has been ongoing in Austin/Travis County for the past several years.

- The Psychiatric Services Stakeholder Committee (an ad hoc group convened by Travis County Healthcare District in early 2006) continues to meet and provide guidance and oversight for the implementation of the service design.
- Members include: The Travis County Healthcare District, Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center (ATCMHMR), Seton Health Care Network, St. David's Hospital, St David's Community Health Foundation, Travis County Commissioners' Court, Travis County Probate Court, City of Austin, and Austin City Council.

Grant and funding requests since January 8, 2008:

I. ATCMHMR submitted a proposal to fund the establishment of an outpatient competency restoration program (OCRCP) in Travis County. There is broad community support for this program, with core partners including Travis County Courts, Travis County Adult Probation Department, Travis County Attorney's Office, Travis County District Attorney's Office, Travis County Sheriff's Office, and Travis County Public Defender's Office. The grant request was submitted to Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) on January 31, 2008. The program, if funded, would:

- serve adult defendants who have been found Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) and are currently incarcerated in the Travis County Jail
- Provide programming Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 4 PM; competency restoration training will occur in the AM and additional services consistent with DSHS service packages will occur in the PM. (Additional services will include rehabilitation services, psychiatric evaluation and medication monitoring, etc.)

II. ATCMHMR is completing, under the oversight of the Psychiatric Stakeholder Committee, a competitive grant request to DSHS. The grant request is based on DSHS "Psychiatric Emergency Services Centers and Projects Focused on Jail diversion or Alternatives to State Hospitalization" Contract Amendment Proposal. Work is ongoing to identify and procure a facility for Crisis Respite and Competency Restoration beds. It has a submission date of February 29, 2008 and includes the following elements:

- Additional in-patient beds in community psychiatric hospitals
- Mental health teams to work in local emergency rooms
- Crisis respite beds
- Utilization management of all resources.

Activities since January 8, 2008 are noted below:

1. Positions are being added to the Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams
2. Staff are being increased for Crisis Hotline
3. Eight staff have completed training for American Association of Suicidology (AAS) certification, including three trainers
4. Programs have started at the Inn as part of the upgrade to Crisis Residential
5. Hiring is completed at the Inn for the upgrade to Crisis Residential
6. Clinical training program is in full-swing with monthly presentations
7. Staff have visited Harris County MHMR Center to review Hotline protocols, staffing and equipment needs