

Scott Walker
Governor



DIVISION OF CARE AND TREATMENT SERVICES

1 WEST WILSON STREET
PO BOX 7851
MADISON WI 53707-7851

Linda Seemeyer
Secretary

State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Telephone: 608-266-2717
Fax: 608-266-2579
TTY: 711 or 800-947-3529

May 29, 2018

Dear:

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Department of Health Services (DHS) programming updates at the Jail Administration Meeting on April 24, 2018. Connecting clients with the mental health treatment services they need is a priority for all of us and I appreciate your willingness to learn about our current efforts to address mental health institution waitlists.

DHS believes state and county systems can reduce the waiting period for forensic treatment by beginning treatment to competency services in county jails. Jail-Based Competency Restoration (JBCR) engages individuals in mental health treatment as soon as possible and can subsequently shorten the length of stay within inpatient settings. Currently, the average length of inpatient stay for an individual undergoing treatment to competency at the mental health institutions is 107 days. The waiting period for admission is approximately 45 days. If treatment to competency services were initiated within the county jail setting, the subsequent inpatient length of stay could be reduced by approximately 30-40 days. Clearly this promising practice has a positive impact on inpatient capacity.

JBCR strives to provide competency restoration services to adult defendants in the least restrictive setting, assisting each participant in learning about the court system, how to help in his/her defense, and how to make rational decisions throughout the court process. These programmatic options have helped to reduce the admission list as well as the time clients spend within the mental health institutes. Since 2016, 77 clients have been served and program staff project to serve 102 people through June 30, 2018. On average these clients spend 34 fewer days at the mental health institutes than those who did not receive access to the program. Nine counties have agreed to utilize DHS contracted staff, Behavioral Consultants, Inc. to provide competency restoration treatment to jail inmates: Ashland, Brown, Dane, Eau Claire, Jefferson, Marathon, Outagamie, Racine, and Waukesha.

I am enclosing an agreement which outlines the DHS interest in offering treatment to competency services in jail settings. I believe these services offer advantages for county sheriff's departments and correctional populations. Please contact me with questions at Beth.Dodsworth@wisconsin.gov or 608-267-7705.

Sincerely,

Beth Dodsworth, LCSW
Director, Bureau of Community Forensic Services

Enclosure: County Agreement