



# Commission meeting



June 12, 2024

Briefing

## In this presentation

■ Sheriff Leonard's perspective on the mental health crisis

2024 workplan recommendations

BHC impact through legislation and budget

## In this presentation

Sheriff Leonard's perspective on the mental health crisis

■ **2024 workplan recommendations**

BHC impact through legislation and budget

## Additional considerations explored since May meeting

- How could additional focus be placed on healthcare workforce issues?
- Are monitoring efforts comprehensive enough to drive accountability?
- What programs should be prioritized for monitoring and evaluation?
  - \_ Can we get the bandwidth to monitor Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)?
  - \_ Are there opportunities to drill down further into STEP-VA this year?
- What should be the scope of a study on assault & battery against law enforcement?
  - \_ Is the most recent legislation a suitable legal vehicle that requires more buy-in from stakeholders, or should VA find a new legal mechanism by looking at other states?

# Workplan revisions made to address May meeting considerations

## Potential workstreams

Potentially not feasible in 2024  
Added since May

BHC roles	May 2024	June 2024 (revised)
1. Tracking current efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crisis services implementation</li> <li>Healthcare workforce programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crisis services implementation</li> <li>Healthcare workforce programs</li> <li>Collaborate with VHWDA</li> </ul>
2. Monitoring program implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key system metrics</li> <li>Permanent supportive housing</li> <li>Follow ups on STEP-VA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key system metrics</li> <li>Program monitoring schedule</li> <li>Permanent supportive housing</li> <li>Follow ups on STEP-VA</li> </ul>
3. Conducting research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligning crisis services</li> <li>Study of HB 267 / SB 357*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligning crisis services</li> <li>Law enforcement training</li> </ul>
4. Building and maintaining knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BHC meetings at service locations</li> <li>BH 101 training</li> <li>Youth mental health learning cohort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BHC meetings at service locations</li> <li>BH 101 training</li> <li>Youth mental health learning cohort</li> <li>Competency and restoration policy academy</li> </ul>
5. Facilitating legislative and budget actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BHC legislative agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BHC legislative agenda</li> </ul>

\*Referred from Virginia Disability Commission

# BHC Executive Committee recommendations for 2024 workplan

BHC roles / staff workstreams	Source	Tentative completion
<b>1. Tracking current efforts</b>		
a. Crisis services implementation	Budget language, SB 574	December
b. Healthcare workforce programs	Staff recommendation	September
c. Collaborate with VHWDA	Staff recommendation	December
<b>2. Monitoring program implementation</b>		
	BHC directed	
a. Key system metrics		July, October
b. Program monitoring schedule		September
c. Permanent supportive housing		October
d. Follow ups on STEP-VA		December
<b>3. Conducting research</b>		
a. Aligning crisis services	SB 574	November (interim), October 2025 (final)
b. Law enforcement training	Staff recommendation	November
<b>4. Building and maintaining knowledge</b>		
	BHC directed	
a. BHC meetings at service locations		September
b. BH 101 training		October
c. Youth mental health learning cohort		November
d. Competency and restoration policy academy		June
<b>5. Facilitating legislative and budget actions</b>		
a. BHC legislative agenda	BHC directed	November/December

## Placing greater focus on healthcare workforce

- Collaborate with Virginia Healthcare Workforce Development Authority (VHWDA) to learn about and support efforts to address workforce crisis
  - \_ Del. Willett can help identify opportunities as Chair of VHWDA
- Foster communication and coordination between BHC and VHWDA
  - \_ Undertake collaborative initiatives
  - \_ Share findings and information
  - \_ Sponsor legislative action, if needed
- Map workforce initiatives related to behavioral health workers

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: December 2024, ongoing

# Adopting schedule of program monitoring and evaluation to ensure efforts are comprehensive and efficient

- BHC could develop rolling list of programs to monitor and evaluate
  - \_ Comprehensive list would include major programs and initiatives funded by the GA
  - \_ All member suggestions would be captured and considered
- Prioritization criteria could be used to determine scheduling (e.g., funding alignment with BHC strategic goals)
- Initial list and schedule would be approved by BHC members
  - \_ Updated annually as needed
- With a pre-approved schedule, staff could complete work on one program and efficiently transition to the next without having to wait for the next annual workplan

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: September 2024



# Adding bandwidth to monitor and evaluate Permanent Supportive Housing

- COVES fellow will conduct background research and first stages of program monitoring and evaluation through end of August
- Additional BHC analyst will conduct all monitoring
  - Will wrap up any remaining PSH activities
  - Targeting August 2024 hiring date

Staff lead: Kiara Brown / TBD  
Scheduled completion: October 2024, ongoing

# Evaluation efforts on STEP-VA currently limited due to lack of reliable data and accepted measures

- 2023 BHC report on STEP-VA found that the program
  - \_ has not fully achieved its goal to expand access, in part due to funding constraints
  - \_ lacks adequate metrics and data to determine whether quality has improved
- Data and metrics needed to further evaluate STEP-VA will not be available until 2025
- 2024 budget language offered by BHC members directs DBHDS and Secretary of HHR to make data and metrics available, and to understand funding gap
  - \_ Develop all final STEP-VA performance measures and benchmarks for all services, and ensure that performance measures are designed to capture outcomes in CSB performance contracts
  - \_ Identify the unmet need for each STEP-VA service and estimate the cost of satisfying the need
  - \_ Report to BHC by December 2024
- DBHDS executing on system transformation to obtain reliable data that can be used to measure outcomes; expected completion December 2024

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: December 2024

## Researching alternatives to affirmative defense for individuals with mental illness and other disorders\* charged with ABLEO does not appear needed at this time

- 2024 legislation (affirmative defense) garnered support from broad array of stakeholders compared to prior years
  - \_ Most law enforcement did not oppose
  - \_ GA passed House Bill 267 (Watts) and Senate Bill 357 (Boysko) in 2024, Governor vetoed
- Additional information about other states' practices unlikely to facilitate passage
- Meeting between patrons and opposed stakeholders could help alleviate remaining stakeholder concerns
- Potential 2025 study could examine how to ensure that a new affirmative defense law is fully utilized when appropriate

\*Other disorders may include neurocognitive disorders and neurodevelopmental disabilities; ABLEO: assault and battery against a law enforcement officer

# Examining how to expand LEO training could help improve interactions with and reduce arrests of individuals with a mental illness and other disorders\*

- Affirmative defense legislation would help individuals after they have been arrested for ABLEO
  - \_ Still face negative impact of arrests and potential incarceration
- Expanded crisis services should help reduce how frequently law enforcement is involved with individuals in a mental health crisis or with another disorder\*, and charges for ABLEO
- When law enforcement needs to be involved, training such as CIT can help minimize negative interactions and circumstances that can lead to an arrest
- Unclear to what extent law enforcement receives adequate training, and what barriers might prevent training
  - \_ BHC staff could examine this question as part of its research on aligning crisis services with the civil admissions process

\*Other disorders may include neurocognitive disorders and neurodevelopmental disabilities;  
ABLEO: assault and battery against a law enforcement officer

Staff lead: Claire Mairead  
Scheduled completion: November 2024, interim

# Appendix

# Mapping current efforts and tracking progress on crisis services and workforce programs for behavioral health care providers

- BHC staff to develop wholistic map of efforts aimed at developing crisis system and obtain detailed progress updates
  - BHC offered budget language directing HHR Secretary to report on plan for spending 2023-2024 crisis funding by December 2024
- Leveraging JCHC work to identify programs that bolster behavioral health care workforce and to assess their performance
  - JCHC reviewing all health care workforce programs, including behavioral health, in 2024
- Collaborate with VHWDA to share knowledge and present information to BHC members

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: December 2024, ongoing

# Monitoring and evaluating performance of permanent supportive housing

- Permanent supportive housing (PSH) integrates basic behavioral health services and primary care with stable housing for individuals with a serious mental illness
- Effective implementation can promote wellness, prevent homelessness, avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, and facilitate discharge from inpatient care
- PSH has received increasing funding through a variety of agencies and programs
  - \_ \$70M through DBHDS in FY24, up from \$17M in FY21
- Some outcomes are tracked, but no comprehensive evaluation of all PSH components
- BHC staff to analyze utilization and outcome data across funding streams and evaluate effectiveness of PSH in improving long-term outcomes
  - \_ Identify potential improvements needed
  - \_ Help evaluate whether / how much additional funding should be invested

Staff lead: Kiara Brown / TBD  
Scheduled completion: October 2024, ongoing

# Reporting on key metrics with objective, timely analysis of systemic issues of interest to members

- Data and objective analysis has not been consistently available to legislators wishing to understand major issues facing the behavioral health system
  - E.g., state hospital capacity and waitlists; TDO patients in private hospitals
- Multiple metrics have been tracked consistently since 2022 to form a baseline, identify trends, and provide early warnings
- Staff will continue working with BHC members and agency staff to identify opportunities to improve report and keep metrics relevant
  - Balance against reporting burden on agencies

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: Quarterly, ongoing



# Researching how to align civil admissions laws and processes with Virginia's evolving crisis system

- Virginia has invested millions to build a crisis response system in recent years but has not fully modernized the statutory/regulatory infrastructure needed for services to be fully used
- Civil commitment process appears especially misaligned with delivery of crisis services, creating barriers for treating patients in least restrictive environment
- SB 574 (Deeds) directs the BHC to study how to effectively align current civil admissions laws and processes with Virginia's crisis response system
- Staff will examine how to optimize the use of crisis services for individuals under ECO/TDO
  - Identify key statutory, regulatory, licensing, training, and reimbursement pain points and make recommendations to address them
- Interim briefing November 2024, final briefing fall 2025

Staff lead: John Barfield, Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: November 2024, interim

# Enhancing knowledge of behavioral health delivery system, major issues, and potential solutions

- Hold 3 BHC meetings at provider locations to better understand treatment settings and consumer needs
  - \_ E.g., CSB, crisis receiving center; inpatient hospital; regional jail with mental health services
- Provide members with “behavioral health 101” training
  - \_ Staff and subject-matter experts present key information about the behavioral health system and major issues
- Staff invited to participate in one of 8 state “learning cohorts” on funding youth mental health services
  - \_ Team includes BHC, Voices for Virginia’s Children, ChildSavers
  - \_ National project funded by Annie E. Casey Foundation

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: December 2024, ongoing

## Facilitating legislative and budget action

- BHC and peer organizations (e.g., JLARC, JCHC, Crime Commission) to present relevant research findings and recommendations to improve Virginia's system
  - BHC members vote throughout the year on which recommendations to adopt as part of the Commission's 2025 legislative agenda
- Finalize BHC recommendations & agenda in November 2024, by prefiling deadline
- Staff to work with DLS on prefiling and drafting bills, and with money committee staff on budget language
  - Support members throughout the session with talking points, presenting to committees and redrafting, as needed

Staff lead: Nathalie Molliet-Ribet  
Scheduled completion: December 2024, session

## In this presentation

Sheriff Leonard's perspective on the mental health crisis

2024 workplan recommendations

**BHC impact through legislation and budget**

# Nearly two-thirds of BHC-sponsored recommendations have been implemented since 2023

Total BHC recommendations implemented	2023	2024	Cumulative
Recommendations adopted by BHC	12	44	56
Recommendations implemented through BHC action	10	25	35
<b>% recommendations implemented</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>63%</b>

  

Recommendations implemented through BHC legislation	2023	2024	Cumulative
# Introduced through legislation	11	10	21
# Implemented through legislation	9	8	17
<i>% of legislative recommendations implemented</i>	<b>82%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>81%</b>

  

Implemented through BHC budget amendments	2023	2024	Cumulative
# Introduced through budget	1	34	35
# Implemented through budget	1	17	18
<i>% of budget recommendations implemented</i>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>51%</b>

# Impact of 2024 BHC legislative actions: BHC study of STEP-VA

Purpose	Bill/Budget	BHC patron
Improve effectiveness of CSB performance contracts by ensuring performance measures capture outcomes and have benchmarks (incl. STEP-VA) <sup>1</sup>	Language	Sen. Deeds Sen. Favola Del. Hope
Facilitate evaluation of STEP-VA outcomes by accessing CSB data captured in new data exchange as part of DBHDS IT modernization		DBHDS action
Improve efficiency and retention of CSB direct care staff by identifying and eliminating documentation and reporting requirements that are duplicative or not essential <sup>1</sup>	Language	Sen. Favola Del. Hope
Estimate funding needed to fully implement STEP-VA services by conducting a needs assessment	Language	Sen. Deeds Del. Hope
Understand how 2023-2024 funding has been used to transform crisis system	Language	Sen. Deeds Del. Hope

<sup>1</sup> From JLARC report entitled “Virginia’s state psychiatric hospitals”, 2023

# Impact of 2024 BHC legislative actions: BHC study of school-based mental health services, EDCOT, other

Purpose	Bill/Amount	BHC patron
Improve effectiveness of school-based mental health services by replacing Medicaid legacy services with modified behavioral health services that are evidence based	Language	Administration action
Build out school mental health programs by planning how to develop a joint program between DOE and DBHDS with flexible funding, measures, and technical assistance	Language	Sen. Deeds Del. Rasoul
Divert more individuals with a serious mental illness from the criminal justice system to court-ordered mental health treatment by assessing diversion options	Language	Sen. Deeds Del. Watts
Increase HAC membership on BHC to enhance ability to impact the budget	SB 125 HB 807	Sen. Favola Del. Rasoul

# Impact of 2024 BHC legislative actions: JLARC study of state psychiatric hospitals

Purpose	Bill/Amount	BHC patron
Improve recruiting and retention at state hospitals by increasing salaries for (1) clinical staff and (2) food & environmental services staff	\$10.4M/yr. \$7.9M/yr.	Sen. Deeds
Improve psychiatric placements for youths by identifying alternatives to CCCA	Language	Sen. Deeds Del. Hope
Reduce admissions to state hospitals by clarifying that ECOs/TDOs do not apply to individuals with strictly neurocognitive disorders or neurodevelopmental disabilities	SB 176 HB 888	Sen. Favola Del. Watts
Improve recruiting & retention at state hospitals by categorizing nurses as “full-time” at 36 hrs	SB 177 HB 806	Sen. Favola Del. Rasoul
Improve transparency and accountability at state hospitals by ensuring OSIG <sup>1</sup> fully investigates all complaints of abuse, neglect, and inadequate care	SB 178 HB 313	Sen. Favola
Shift discharge planning from CSBs to Central State and SVMHI <sup>2</sup> for patients with <30 days hospital stay	SB 179 HB 314 (Hope)	Sen. Favola Del. Hope

<sup>1</sup> OSIG = Office of the State Inspector General

<sup>2</sup> SVMHI = Southern Virginia Mental Health Institute



# Impact of 2024 BHC legislative actions: JLARC study of CSB behavioral health services<sup>1</sup>

Purpose	Bill/Amount	BHC patron
Improve transparency and quality by providing report on the outcomes of CSB consumers, trends, and underperformance for each CSB	Language	Sen. Favola Del. Watts
Maximize the capacity of existing crisis stabilization units (CSUs) by providing funding to fully staff them	\$2.5M/yr.	Sen. Deeds Del. Rasoul

<sup>1</sup> Budget amendments implementing recommendations for this study were initially introduced in 2023 but not included in the final “skinny” budget; Budget amendments were re-introduced in 2024



Next meeting  
July 9, 2024  
time and location TBD

Visit [bhc.virginia.gov](https://bhc.virginia.gov) for meeting materials