

Strengthening the System: STEP-VA and Behavioral Health Enhancement

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DBHDS continues to work with its partners – including the CSBs, private providers, DMAS, and others – to implement core services throughout Virginia and develop new or enhanced Medicaid rates to support a full continuum of services. These initiatives are critical to improving access, increasing quality and accountability, and implementing high quality, evidence-based services that reduce utilization of more intensive and costly levels of care and produce better outcomes for Virginians. This effort is critical in these unprecedented times to address:

- Building a strong safety-net and consistent, core services is critical to reducing utilization of higher levels of care including alleviating the state hospital census.
- An additional 1,720 deaths of despair (deaths due to suicide or overdose) are anticipated in Virginia, and Virginia has already reported a 66 percent increase in fatal overdoses in Q2 of FY20 compared to Q2 of last year. To mitigate the mental health impact of COVID-19, a strong safety-net system is critical.

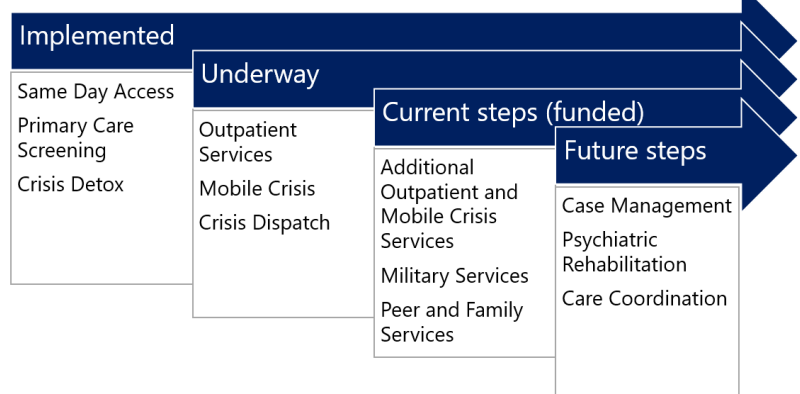
STEP-VA and BHE planning and coordination, as well as implementation of and provision of new services, continue despite the pandemic.

- This includes Outpatient Services funding disbursement and regional training as well as planning and launch of STEP-VA mobile crisis services funding.
- There continues to be ongoing quality review of implemented steps including Same Day Access, Primary Care Screening, and outpatient services. During FY 2020, a total of 60,070 same day assessments were reported statewide. Assessments were conducted with 55,483 unique individuals. CSBs provided a total of 77,795 primary care screens.
- Collaboration with DMAS on BHE services continues, and new rates for comprehensive crisis services are planned for December 2021.
- DBHDS has promulgated emergency regulations to align BHE services and begin implementation.

STEP-VA sustainability is supported by BHE.

- Medicaid is the largest payer of behavioral health services in the Commonwealth, and 50% of individuals served by the CSBs are Medicaid covered.
- BHE supports and expands the impact of STEP-VA in its intended vision of improving quality and access to care for all Virginians. BHE extends the scope of access/quality to the larger system beyond CSBs as the majority of Medicaid members are served outside the CSB system through private providers.

Status of STEP-VA



Behavioral Health Enhancement Priority Services

Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) • Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)
Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) • Comprehensive Crisis Services
Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) • Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

During the Special Session, \$30 million in funding for STEP-VA and \$10.3 million for BHE was re-allotted for FY22. This funding will help implement additional Outpatient and Mobile Crisis Services, Military Services, and Peer and Family Services as well as the implementation of all 6 BHE priority services.

DBHDS works to ensure behavioral health, substance use disorder, and developmental disability services are available to all Virginians who need them in the most community-oriented, integrated setting possible. More information is available at dbhds.virginia.gov/about-dbhds/policy-and-public-affairs/ga2021