

dailypress.com/health/health-notes-blog/dp-health-notes-virginia-psychiatric-register-of-available-beds-goes-live-20140304,0,3157929.story

dailypress.com

Mental Health Reform: Virginia register of available inpatient psychiatric beds goes live

By Prue Salasky

Daily Press

11:33 AM EST, March 4, 2014

As part of the mental health reforms pushed for after the November death of Gus Deeds, son of state Sen. Creigh Deeds, the state has launched a real-time psychiatric bed registry. advertisement

This state-led effort strives to provide pre-screeners with accurate, detailed information for bed availability in Virginia's public mental health hospitals, private hospitals and crisis stabilization units, according to a Tuesday, March 4, news release from the state's Department of Behavioral Health.

The online registry has been implemented statewide and is hosted by Virginia Health Information. The web-based bed registry is live and is ready for use by CSB (community service boards) clinicians to assist in locating an available bed for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis who are under an emergency custody order, ECO, and need to receive treatment under a temporary detention order, TDO.

(Currently an ECO lasts four hours and can be extended to six; if a bed is not found within that time, then a TDO cannot be obtained and law enforcement is required to release the individual. The time of these involuntary detentions is also likely to be expanded under pending legislation.)

"When a CSB pre-screener is attempting to locate a psychiatric bed for someone in crisis, time is of the essence," said John Pezzoli, Acting DBHDS Commissioner. "As changes are being made and examined, such as the General Assembly's consideration of lengthening the period of emergency custody, this online bed registry is another important tool to help ensure that people who need mental health help get it precisely when they need it most."

According to the DBHDS, The Virginia Acute Psychiatric and CSB Bed Registry will:

- be **updated at least daily** by state and private hospital and crisis stabilization unit (CSU) staff;
- provide up-to-date data that enables CSBs and psychiatric hospitals to search for bed availability at all private hospitals with psychiatric beds, state facilities, and CSUs 24-hours a day, seven days a week;
- allow bed registry users **to tailor queries to precise needs** (age, facility type, location, level of security, patient type, etc.);
- and enable DBHDS administrators to monitor and evaluate bed usage and availability and use that data to increase efficiency.

"In addition to helping emergency services personnel in their initial efforts to place patients in need of psychiatric care, information

gathered through the online registry can also shed light on how the need for inpatient psychiatric services varies statewide, regionally and locally.” said Michael Lundberg, VHI Executive Director.

While all public entities --I CSBs, Crisis Stabilization Units, and state hospitals are required to participate, private providers’ participation is voluntary.

The registry is not real-time but is updated at least daily to show available beds at each psychiatric facility in the state. Once an available bed is located using the online bed registry, CSB clinicians will still need to take the additional step of contacting the hospital directly to ensure that the hospital is able to accept the specific individual and whether the bed is appropriate to meet the individual’s psychiatric treatment as well as any other medical needs.

For more health news, go to www.dailypress.com/health

Copyright © 2014, [Newport News, Va., Daily Press](#)