



Mental Health and Recovery Services Board

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PRESS RELEASE

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Access to Mental Health Inpatient Beds

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Access to mental health inpatient beds has been a struggle in the mental health field for a long time. Since the 1960's, care for clients with severe mental illness has been the responsibility of local communities instead of state institutionalized psychiatric hospitals. It is the right of clients suffering from a severe mental illness to receive services in the least restricted environment. Local care coordination and advances in medication allow this to be possible. In 1954, there were more than 3,500 clients at the Northwest Ohio Psychiatric Hospital (NOPH). Today, there are 114 beds available. Currently, NOPH is at full capacity 99% of the time. To clarify further, NOPH is the only hospital in Northwest Ohio to accept forensic clients (patients committed by criminal courts). The percentage of forensic clients in state hospitals increased considerably in the last few years. On a recent count, (6/19/2017) 89 out of 114 clients at NOPH were under forensic status (78%). Therefore, accessing a state hospital bed for a non-forensic client is almost impossible. The inability to find a bed for a client who needs hospitalization creates long waiting times and a huge burden on mental health professionals, emergency room personnel and local law enforcement.

Our goal is not to return back to the 1950's practices and reinstate mass hospitalization. However, unfortunately, in one quarter (January 1, 2017 - March 31, 2017), we have served 429 face-to-face crisis interventions (in Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties). These crisis interventions occur when an individual is suicidal, homicidal or at imminent risk to harming themselves or others. This equals to almost five face-to-face crisis interventions daily! In that same quarter, 193 individuals from Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties were hospitalized. That equals more than two individuals from our communities being hospitalized daily. There is a major need for mental health services and access to additional beds for our community.

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