

Issue Brief – Adult Beds at the State Hospital

UTAH STATE HOSPITAL

NUMBER DHS-07-07

ADULT BEDS AT THE STATE HOSPITAL

The Utah State Hospital (USH) is requesting funding of \$1,945,100 with \$1,550,100 in General Funds, \$193,500 from dedicated credits and \$201,500 from federal Medicaid funds and a supplemental appropriation of \$432,200 with \$358,700 from one-time General Funds, \$34,600 from dedicated credits and \$38,900 from federal Medicaid funds to open an existing 30 beds unit for adults.

OBJECTIVE

The patients at the USH have chronic mental illnesses. The goal of the USH is to provide a safe treatment environment for both the patients and staff.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

In section 62A-15-611 (2) of the Utah Code, the Utah State Hospital is to “[restore the number of beds allocated to 212 beds as funding permits; and every three years thereafter according to the state’s population.](#)”

Closure of the Geriatric Unit

In August of 2005, the State Hospital closed down the remaining geriatric beds bringing the total number of beds in use of 152 for the State Hospital. The decision to close the geriatric unit was because of lack of referrals from the local mental health community. Since August of 2004, the average number of geriatric patients was between 8 and 13.8. In the future, the geriatric patients will be absorbed into the adult unit. The concern of the Analyst is the State Hospital decided to close the geriatric ward in late 2005 without Legislative approval.

Adult Unit

As the adult population of mentally ill patients continues to grow along with absorbing the geriatric patients, the State Hospital has a need for additional beds. These are the patients that are severely and chronically mentally ill and require around the clock drug therapy to stabilize them enough to return to a less restrictive setting. Unfortunately, the State Hospital is categorized as an Institution for Mental Disease (IMD), and under federal guidelines, adult mentally ill patients between the ages of 22 and 64 do not qualify for Medicaid. There is an exception for facilities that are under 16 beds.

Options for Funding of Adult Beds

There are four options for the request for additional adult beds:

1. Fund the full request of \$1.9 million (\$1.5 million in General Funds) (Note: this amount is net of the savings of \$368,800 from closure of the geriatric unit);
2. Phase in the increase in beds over a two year period (15 beds per year at \$950,000 with \$750,000 in General Funds);
3. Explore the option of converting the adult wards to independent entities of 16 beds to capture Medicaid funding; and
4. Not fund the request.

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the Analyst that the Utah State Hospital receive an appropriation of \$950,000 with \$750,000 from General Funds, \$97,000 from dedicated credits and \$103,000 from federal Medicaid funds (for Geriatrics) for phase one to open 15 beds for FY 2007. The Analyst also recommends a supplemental appropriation of \$216,100 with \$179,300 from one-time General Funds, \$17,300 from dedicated credits and \$19,500 from federal Medicaid funds for FY 2006. The Analyst further recommends that the State Hospital receive permission from the Legislature before closing units in the future.