

## *Strengthening Colorado's Mental Health System A Plan to Safeguard all Coloradans*

### **Enhanced Community Supports and Services**

Colorado's community mental health and substance abuse treatment system of services and supports is fragmented and lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of all individuals who can, and should be treated in the community. We know that once those in crisis are stabilized they are best served in their communities, not in institutional care.

There are too many individuals seeking mental health care treatment through hospital emergency departments or becoming part of the criminal justice system.

People should be able to live in the least restrictive and most home-like setting possible, and the current service array doesn't provide for this.

The Department of Human Services is working to enhance community care through:

**Assertive Community Treatment Services** – Teams of professionals provide intensive services to individuals with mental illnesses, in the community, in a way that emphasizes outreach, relationship building and individualization of services and recovery. ACT teams are effective in reducing hospitalization and incarceration.

**Two 15-bed Residential Facilities** – Development of two new residential facilities to help fill the need for short-term transition from mental health hospitalization to the community for those who are not yet ready to live independently. These facilities would provide personal services, supervision and treatment to assist in the transition to home and community-based settings.

**Targeted Housing Subsidies** – The subsidies would provide funding to assist individuals who are on a waiting list for federal housing vouchers to find stable homes. These subsidies would be a stop-gap measure to help ensure those in need have the resources to assist with stability, independence and the safety of housing.

**Transition Specialists to Facilitate Wraparound Services** – A team would be created to develop intensive and comprehensive service plans for people with severe mental illnesses, and assist clients and communities in managing the transition from institutional settings to the community.

**Dramatically Expand Utilization of Adult Foster Care Placement** – Adult foster care homes are residential-like settings that provide 24/7 supervision for the mentally and physically disabled, and older individuals who can't live alone but don't need continuous nursing care. These individuals can live satisfying lives in adult homes, and this initiative would expand the access to these services and facilities.

The Governor's budget request for enhancing community supports and services is \$4,793,824.

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