cdhs
Colorado Department
of Human Services
people who help people

STATE OF COLORADO 1876

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

Jail-based Restoration

Throughout Colorado, judges have ordered individuals awaiting trial to be evaluated for their competency to participate in their own defense. Often times these individuals are found to be Incompetent to Proceed, meaning they must be restored to mental competency before they can stand trial for their alleged crimes. During the evaluation and restoration process these individuals are cared for by the Colorado Department of Human Services in forensic beds at the Mental Health Institute at Pueblo.

The demand for competency evaluations, restoration services and support and general inpatient psychiatric beds has grown dramatically over the last several years. At the same time, hospitals have closed psychiatric units, and the number of available beds for those in crisis and in need of hospitalization has significantly declined. In 2010, Colorado ranked 48th in the nation in total public and private psychiatric beds.

Currently, Colorado has insufficient capacity to meet the needs of those individuals requiring psychiatric hospitalization. There is a waitlist at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Pueblo that averages approximately 19 individuals per day.

To address this issue, the Governor is proposing:

20-bed Jail-based Restoration Program – This restoration program would be housed at an existing jail in the Denver area to serve people in the criminal justice system who require competency evaluation and restoration services. The increase in the jail-based beds correlate to an increase in available beds and access at the Mental Health Institutes for people who require psychiatric hospitalization.

The program would operate at an approximately 45 percent lower cost per day than the State Mental Health Institutes, and is based on a successful model implemented in San Bernadino, Calif., that has proven to be an effective resource to address this need.

The Governor's budget request for this program is $2,063,438.

###