Report on Priorities for Implementation of New Hampshire's 10-year Mental Health Plan of 2019 Pursuant to Chapter 248, Laws of 2019, (Senate Bill 292) to the New Hampshire Health and Human Services Oversight Committee, et al.



Division for Behavioral Health
New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

September 2023

The Department of Health and Human Services' Mission is to join communities and families in providing opportunities for citizens to achieve health and independence.

Nationally, the demand for mental health services is on the rise. While New Hampshire is not immune to national trends, the State has been able to make significant gains in each of the core goals outlined in the plan due to the commitment and resources that Governor Chris Sununu and the State Legislature have dedicated to the issue. As a result of Executive and Legislative branch support, the State continues to see advancements in efforts to build system capacity, support innovation, and expand the continuum of care. These efforts are critical to ensuring the changing needs of NH residents can be addressed by the State's mental health system moving forward.

Well ahead of the national curve, New Hampshire in 2022 launched a statewide integrated crisis response system that works 24/7/365 to support children, youth, adults, and families in emotional distress. The NH Rapid Response Access Point connects with people via phone, text, or chat and can even deploy specially trained mobile crisis responders to the place of crisis. The State's Rapid Response system is comprised of nearly 100 compassionate and skilled crisis workers who have supported and provided hope more than 40,000 times to NH residents.

NH Rapid Response is one example of how the State's 10-Year Mental Health Plan has made access to behavioral health care easier for NH residents. Please see the attached summary for a comprehensive list of key accomplishments since the State's 10-Year Mental Health Plan was initially published in 2019.

Despite substantial progress, there is always more to learn, adjust, and do to ensure the State's mental health system of care is responsive to the changing needs of our residents. Since the 10-Year Plan was published, the issue of residents waiting in an emergency department for a mental health bed has come to the forefront. In an effort to eliminate the ED boarding wait list, DHHS recently launched Mission Zero in partnership with the New Hampshire Hospital Association and the National Alliance on Mental Illness New Hampshire. Mission Zero is bringing together the entire mental health system to eliminate the hospital emergency department boarding challenge for good by simultaneously addressing systemic barriers through a series of interventions with the greatest impact and viability that align with the goals of the 10-Year Plan.

As the Department's focus shifts to 2024, the State's priorities on the 10-Year Plan and Mission Zero include:

- Fully engage in planning of the Certified Behavioral Health Clinic model that creates an opportunity to advance integration of behavioral health and physical health care, increase the use of evidence-based practices, and improve access.
- Further expand crisis services through the development of location-based Rapid Response Crisis Centers to create additional alternatives to emergency rooms for children, youth, and adults in crisis.
- Continue partnerships to expand independent housing, supported housing, and residential treatment options across each individual's lifespan to ensure they are able to transition through levels of care that meet their clinical needs.
- Expand DRF capacity and coordinate inpatient bed flow to ensure patients under the State's care are admitted into the most appropriate and least restrictive inpatient psychiatric bed as quickly as possible.

- Ensure widespread awareness and understanding of the state's *Strong as Granite* media campaign to promote behavioral health awareness and inform residents about how to access services and encourage help-seeking as a routine and positive action.
- Focus on workforce development by offering professional development opportunities for current staff and expand the pool of workers through the establishment of new certification pipelines for peers and crisis workers.
- Expand focus on the birth to six-year-old population including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACSs) prevention and expansion of the new Early Childhood Wraparound service approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The Department has launched Mission Zero to elevate and accelerate some of these priorities as identified in the 10-Year Plan. Together with elected officials, advocates, peers, and providers, the Department will continue our focus to ensure we have a comprehensive, welcoming, high-quality, and sustainable mental health system.

Sincerely,

Lori Weaver

Lori Weaver
Commissioner
New Hampshire Department of
Health and Human Services

New Hampshire's 10-Year Mental Health Plan

Key Accomplishments - January 2019 - July 2023

NEW HAMPSHIRE DHHS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Goal 1: Expand Coordinated Continuum of Care

- Developed a centralized Rapid Response Access Point; 40,000+ calls since launch
- Developed hand-off pwrotocols between 988 Lifeline Centers, Rapid Response Access Point, and 911
- Implemented and expanded Transitional Residential Enhanced Care Coordination (TRECC) for youth; enrollments increased from 54 in 2021 to 172 youth enrolled in 2023
- Launched statewide Critical Time Intervention (CTI) for adults transitioning from a DRF to the community; CTI has graduated more than 100 people in its first year
- Awarded a $1M federal Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) planning grant to explore the CCBHC model of integrated care

Goal 2: Increase Community Education

- Launched Strong as Granite public awareness campaign to educate Granite Staters about the available resources and encourage individuals to access services
- Launched Onward NH early intervention campaign
- Contracted with UNH to create an online behavioral health Resource Center to provide education on the Children's System of Care framework, evidence-based practices for families and providers, and searchable provider resources for families

Goal 3: Intervene Earlier through Prevention & Early Intervention Strategies

- Since 2020, allocated $450K of new State funds annually to support suicide prevention programming; investment has expanded the reach of suicide prevention efforts, trainings, and awareness
- NH Suicide Prevention Council revised the statewide suicide prevention plan
- Established school suicide prevention planning and training standards
- Developed a standardized suicide screening and risk assessment tool for use in emergency departments
- Developed the Early Childhood Prevention and Treatment for Behavioral Health Plan including efforts to implement Early Childhood Wraparound, support workforce expansion and database development for Child Parent Psychotherapy
- Implemented Early Childhood Wraparound services for youth birth through age 5, serving 35 children and families in July 2023
- Juvenile Justice Transformation work created a pathway for a universal strengths and needs assessment and connection to community supports prior to court involvement

Goal 4: Ensure Robust Outpatient Services

- Expanded children's system of care through Senate Bill 14 (2019); amending RSA 135:F
- Increased the Housing Bridge subsidies by more than100 vouchers in 2022
- Piloted Integrative, a housing voucher program for individuals with mental illness and criminal records; program doubled from 25 in 2020 to now serve 50 adults in 2023
- Contracted to expand supported housing by 60-beds to provide 6 new specialty residential programs for adults in every mental health region in the state
- Expanded partnership with NH Housing Finance Authority and secured grant funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Launched birth to 5 early childhood enhanced care coordination
- Increased enrollments for FAST Forward (high fidelity wraparound services) from 100 youth and families in 2019 to 520 youth and families in 2023

- Increased the availability of specialized treatment programs for First Episode Psychosis from 1 team in 2018 to 4 teams in 2021
- Contracted in 2023 for 20 specialty residential beds for individuals with complex physical and behavioral health needs

Goal 5: Expand Step-up/Step-Down Service Options

- Maintained 80% occupancy since launch of the new Recovery Oriented Step-up/Step-down programs in 2021 (15 beds total)
- Created the Comprehensive Assessment for Treatment to establish clinical need for children's residential care; placements made based on identified needs and strengths

Goal 6: Transform Crisis & Inpatient Services

- Transformed crisis services; integrated mobile crisis launched statewide in Jan. 2022
- Partnered with NH Department of Safety to launch the 988 Crisis and Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- Increased Designated Receiving Facility rates and added 24 beds since 2019
- Established 38 new transitional housing beds since 2019
- State acquired Hampstead Hospital and opened NHs first ever Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility
- Developed a new contract to support successful discharge planning for youth from Hampstead Hospital that includes intensive in-home clinical supports
- Amended NH's substance use disorder Institutions for Mental Disease Medicaid waiver to include serious mental illness and prison in-reach services pre-release
- Partnering with Solution Health to help construct 120 inpatient psychiatric beds for adults, children, and geriatric patients

Goal 7: Strengthen Integration of Peers and Natural Supports

- Expanded training and consultation services for peer support agency leadership and boards to strengthen governance, management, and program policies
- Expanded Family Peer Support within the FAST Forward program, serving over 1000 families since 2019
- Expanded youth peer support services within the FAST Forward program, with over 60 youth enrolled in July 2023
- Increased requirements to integrate peers throughout the continuum of care via new contract provisions in all adult mental health contracts

Goal 8: Infuse Resources to Stabilize & Grow the System

- Increased Medicaid rates by 3.1% in January 2020 and another 3.1% in January 2021
- $5M of Directed Mental Health Payments made annually since SFY 2019
- Increased the transitional housing/community residence per diem by 88%
- Applied for and was awarded more than $10M in federal COVID-related one-time funds
- Increased budget to support high-quality residential treatment to serve children based on clinical need
- State budget (2024/25) included $13.7M to increase behavioral health Medicaid rates

Goal 9: Leverage Strong Leadership, Strategic Advocacy & Grassroots Support

- Established Governor's Advisory Commission on Mental Illness and the Corrections System; partnered with the Council of State Governments Justice Center on a high utilizer assessment project with jails and behavioral health providers
- Established the Governor's Statewide Oversight Commission on Mental Health Workforce Development
- Established and facilitate the Children's System of Care Advisory Committee
- Senate Bill 85 (2023) establishes a Behavioral Health Crisis Funding/Sustainability Study Commission to develop recommendations on how to fund NH's comprehensive crisis system; the bill also eliminated prior-authorization requirements for mobile crisis services

- NH Firearm Safety Coalition engaged in activities such as the Gun Shop Project to strengthen the relationships among behavioral health, public health, and the firearm community (gun shops, firing ranges, and firearm safety instructors); spread Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) training with the American Association of Pediatrics
- Piloted the Zero Suicide initiative with three organizations that offer substance use treatment and recovery and the Department of Corrections

Goal 10: Cultivate & Maintain a High-Quality Workforce

- Invested $5M of ARPA Home and Community Based Services funds to support direct care staff at Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs)
- The CMHCs, in partnership with participating colleges and DHHS, are developing a cooperative learning experience for Bachelor students to create a workforce pipeline
- Developed the Peer Workforce Advancement Plan
- Conducted mental health, suicide prevention, and crisis intervention training for more than 275 staff from state corrections, county jails, judicial branch, and probation and parole officers in 2021
- Expanded the State Loan Repayment Program eligibility to include behavioral health clinicians under supervision with less than 12 months of supervision
- Developing new certification programs for peers and crisis worker, expected to launch before the end of 2023, to enhance workforce training options
- Contracted for creation of a Resource Center to provide technical assistance and trainings to promote successful implementation of evidence based programs
- Invested in state-wide training for Child Parent Psychotherapy providers and co-occurring disorder training/ consultation for mental health and substance use providers

Goal 11: Improve Technology & Infrastructure Capacity

- Created four new staff positions in the Bureau for Children's Behavioral Health (2020)
- Established New Hampshire's first suicide prevention specialist position at DHHS (2021)

Goal 12: Expand Meaningful Quality Assurance & Monitoring

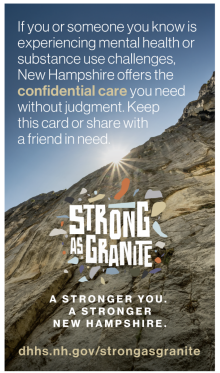
- Actively evaluating the crisis system transformation with support from a contracted vendor, reviewing and implementing system improvements
- Process improvement work underway to align NH's two 988 Lifeline Centers to improve in-state answer rates and ensure a consistent caller experience
- Streamlined administrative requirements, annual data enhancements, and program reviews for the CMHCs
- Transitioned from vendor agreements to contacts with additional oversight for provision of children's residential treatment
- Contracted for annual evaluation of the Children's System of Care to ensure quality of implementation and evaluate ongoing needs, gaps, and improvements

A STRONGER YOU.
A STRONGER NEW HAMPSHIRE.

The objective of this campaign is to promote behavioral health awareness and destigmatize seeking help for mental health and substance use challenges. The campaign aims to educate Granite Staters about the available resources and encourage individuals to access services in a spirit of self-improvement, without fear or shame.

Our mission is to normalize getting help for mental health concerns and substance use by providing clear information, encouragement, and re-assurance. Through print and digital ads, social media, tv spots, radio and out-of-home media we aim to shift personal and societal attitudes towards behavioral health, making help-seeking a routine and positive action.

Unleashing Inner Strength, Defying Stigma, and Shaping a Resilient Future













New Hampshire Rapid Response

New Hampshire's Rapid Response crisis system officially launched on January 1st, 2022. The below data spans **January 2022 through April 2023.** This data is preliminary but being shared to illustrate that the system is up and running and available statewide and across the lifespan.

WHAT IS IT?

The New Hampshire Rapid Response system is comprised of three components: Centralized Access Point, Mobile Crisis Response Teams, and location-based services. These services, in the most simple of terms, are meant to provide people in NH with:

Someone to call, text or chat

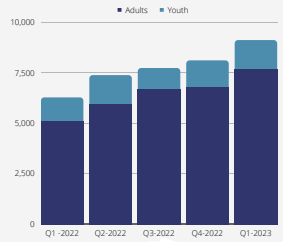
Someone to respond

Somewhere to go

41,697 CONTACTS

January 2022-April 2023 the access point assisted individuals 41,697 times via phone, text, and/or chat.



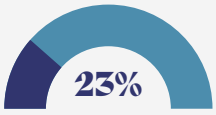


YOUTH & ADULTS

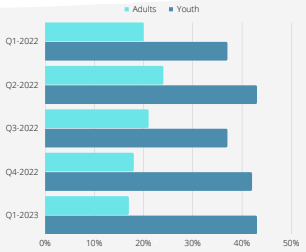
On average, **17%** of contacts with the access point were under 18 years old and **83%** were over 18

9,669

MOBILE DISPATCHES



On average, **23%** of access point interactions state-wide resulted in mobile dispatches



Youth & Adults

On average, **40%** of contacts resulted in mobile dispatches for youth and **20%** of contacts resulted in mobile dispatches for adults

NH Rapid Response created an opportunity to strengthen the community-based crisis response system designed to care for NH children, youth, adults, and families experiencing a mental health and or substance use crisis. Many dedicated professionals who work in NH's behavioral health system are dedicated to successfully implementing this new model. While Rapid Response is now live and partners have worked hard to get to this point, system improvement continues to ensure each communities' unique needs are being met. Please reach out; engage early and often.

General NH Rapid Response questions can be sent to: DBHCrisisTransformation@dhhs.nh.gov

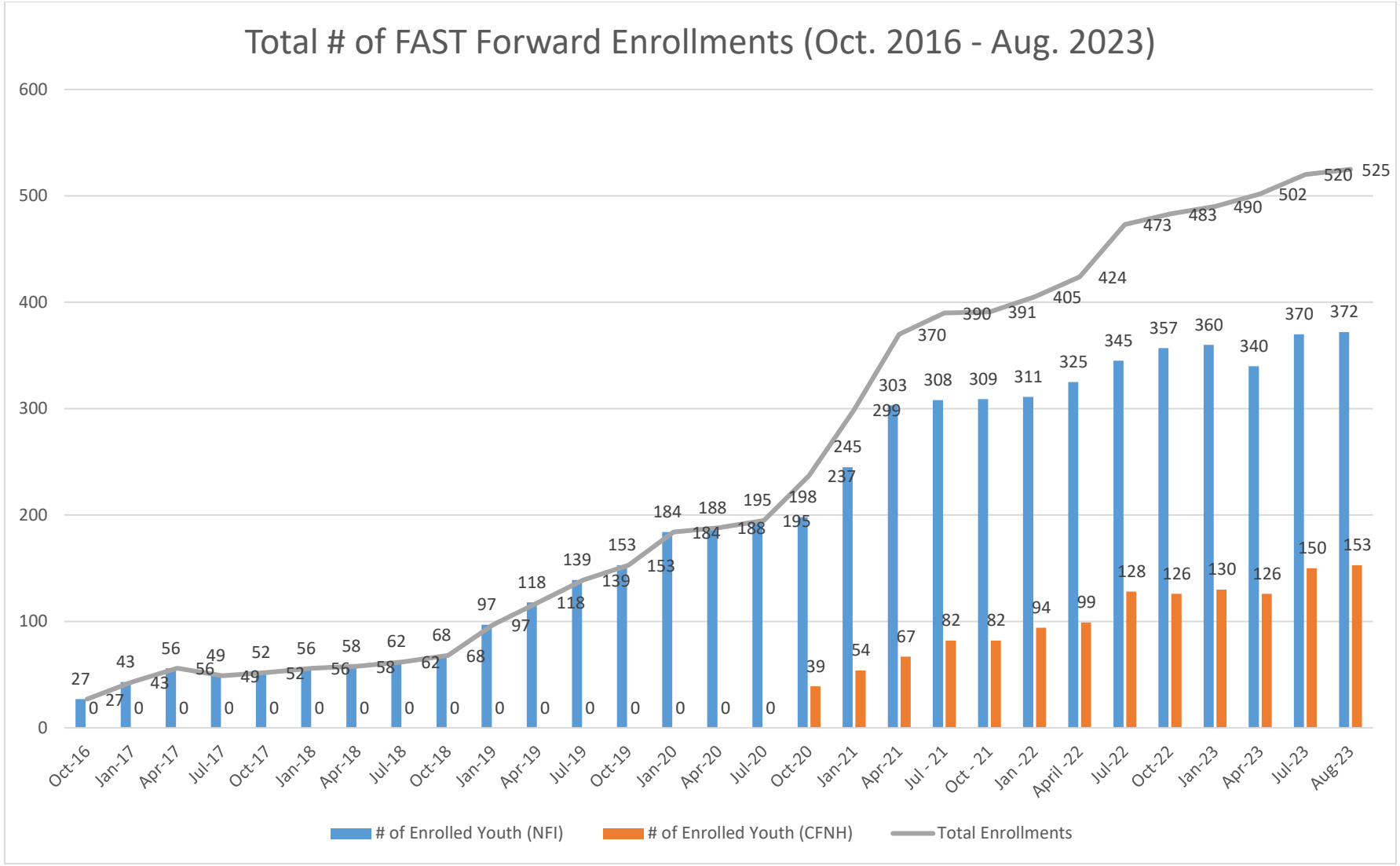
Get Help Now

Call/Text **833-710-6477**

Chat by visiting **www.nh988.com**

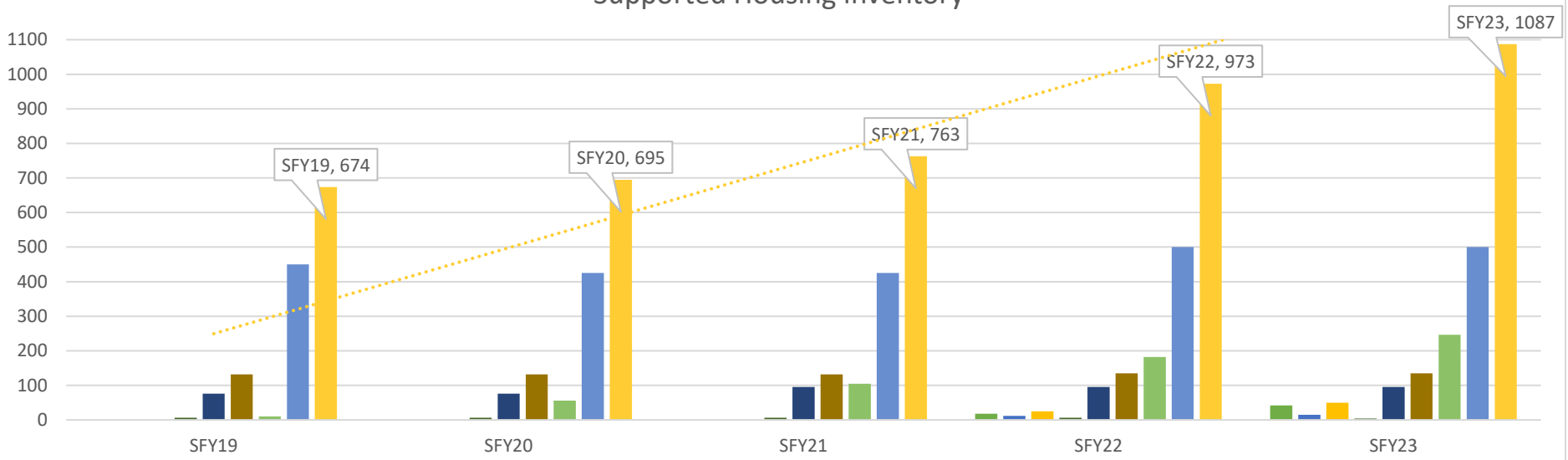
Updated September 2023

NFI North – 373 Enrolled, Connected Families – 153 Enrolled



Data produced from QuickBase on 9.9.23

Adult Mental Health
Supported Housing Inventory



60-bed expansion - 42 Open Beds
Various models - Northern HS, Nashua, Manchester, MFS, West Central, CLM supported apartments, Lakes community residence & CP in-home provider

Recovery Oriented Step-up/Step-down
3-bed programs operated by PSAs. Non-clinical peer run in collaboration w/CMHCs for clinical services; stays up to 120-days accept from hospital settings to facilitate a smooth transition back to the community and direc

Integrative Subsidy
Similar to Bridge but accepts people who otherwise are not eligible due to criminal records. Anticipated length of stay on subsidy is longer (approx. 5 years)

Peer Respite
2-bed programs operated by PSAs. Non-clinical short term (up to 10-days) to provide respite to avoid higher level of care/hospitalization

Transitional Housing Programs
Comprehensive care designed to support transitions from NHH to the community; Length of stay up to 2 years; programs operated by NFI

Community Residence
As outlined in State rule provide 24/7 services to support community living; stays are often permanent and/or longer term

811 (PRA & Mainstream) Permanent SH
Voucher tied to unit and housing support services provided

Housing Bridge Subsidy
Voucher tied to the individual and housing support services provided. Housing specialists in all 10 regions and integrated with CMHC services

TOTAL

Linear (TOTAL)