

Baltimore City Stabilization Center

Behavioral Health System Baltimore is planning a Stabilization Center that will better meet the need of people in Baltimore who are intoxicated in public and pose a risk to themselves or people around them. The planned center will be open around the clock and provide an array of support services to help clients stabilize their physical condition and take steps to improve their lives.



THE NEED FOR A STABILIZATION CENTER

- People with substance use disorders often do not receive the treatment they need.
- Public intoxication leads to contact with the healthcare system, police, emergency medical services or hospital emergency departments.
 - The most common health concern of frequent users of emergency medical services (EMS) in Baltimore City is substance use intoxication and/or mental illness (BEQUEST study 2008 – 2013)
- 32 percent of Maryland Medicaid enrollees with a substance use disorder visited the emergency department three or more times in a one-year period. (Hilltop Institute, 2010)
- Emergency departments cannot effectively address the underlying problem.

GOALS

BHSB is planning a center that:

- Is responsive to local needs
- Is grounded in a public health framework
- Is integrated into a comprehensive behavioral health crisis response system
- Offers a more effective way of addressing public intoxication including:
 - Mitigating the nuisance of people who are intoxicated in public places
 - Reducing harm associated with public intoxication
- Offers services that can prevent future episodes
- Provides an opportunity for engagement in behavioral health services
- Offers a less restrictive and less traumatic setting than jail or a hospital
- Shortens the length of stay in emergency departments or reduces visits
- Provides an alternative transport option and/or quick transfers from police custody or EMS personnel



PROPOSED SERVICES

The center will provide voluntary care for adults who are intoxicated and will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It will be able to serve 30 to 35 people at a time, with stays, on average, lasting between six and 10 hours. Planned services include:

- Medical screening and examination
- Basic first aid
- A bed
- Medical monitoring (including withdrawal scores and vital signs)
- Hydration and electrolyte replacement
- Food, clothing and showers
- Screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment for substance use, mental health and physical health disorders
- Case management for up to 30 days after a visit to ensure linkage to needed services, including behavioral health treatment, shelter assistance and health care

MEDICAL SCREENING AND REFERRAL PROCESS

- Clients will be referred directly to the center from:
 - Emergency medical system personnel
 - Hospital emergency departments
 - Behavioral health mobile crisis teams
- Indirect referrals will come through the mobile crisis team and originated by:
 - Police
 - Homeless outreach workers
 - Other service providers
- Specific protocol being established now

Behavioral Health System Baltimore is a nonprofit organization that oversees Baltimore City's behavioral health system—the system of care that addresses emotional health and well-being and provides services for substance use and mental health disorders. We advocate for and help guide innovative approaches to prevention, early intervention, treatment and recovery for those who are dealing with mental health and substance use disorders to help build healthier individuals, stronger families and safer communities.

CONTACT US
