

## Time to First Follow Up Service for Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) Clients After Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitalization Discharge

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### Key Findings

- The annual number of inpatient stays for CRT clients (defined by number of discharges) decreased substantially in FY 2023.
- The annual number of CRT clients with inpatient stays (defined by number of unique clients with at least one discharge) decreased in FY 2023.
- In FY 2022, 41% of all CRT inpatient discharges received a same-day follow-up service by their CRT programs. This percentage decreased from FY 2022.
- In FY 2023, 76% of CRT inpatient discharges received a follow-up service within one week of being discharged.
- DAs differed markedly in how quickly they provided follow-up services after CRT inpatient discharges.

### Background

Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) is a community-based outpatient program for adults with severe and persistent mental illness. CRT programs are funded by the Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) and administered by 10 Designated Agencies (DAs) and 1 Specialized Service Agency (SSA) across Vermont.

This data brief provides information on the number of days between discharge from inpatient psychiatric care and the first receipt of follow up CRT services for clients who had been enrolled in CRT prior to their inpatient psychiatric admission. This measure complements the *Follow-Up After Hospitalization for Mental Illness (FUH)* recommended by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

### Methods

Data from two DMH databases were analyzed. The CRT Inpatient Admissions Database contains basic information on CRT inpatient stays and was used to identify all inpatient psychiatric discharges for CRT enrolled clients from FY 2014 through FY 2023. The Monthly Service Report (MSR) database contains client- and service-level data on all mental health services provided by DAs and SSAs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Link Plus software was used to identify the unique CRT clients with inpatient discharges and to determine the number of discharges for each CRT client. Link Plus was then used to link each CRT client to the Monthly Service Report (MSR) database to establish the date of the first follow up service after each inpatient discharge. The difference between inpatient discharge dates and follow up service dates was used to calculate the time between discharge and follow up.

### Results

Table 1 describes the number of discharges, number of clients discharged, and the range of discharges per client for CRT psychiatric inpatient stays. Each year, most CRT clients with inpatient discharges had a total of one or two discharges, but there was a small number of clients with as many as 23 discharges per year.

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Table 1  
CRT Psychiatric Inpatient Stays

	Number of Discharges	Number of Clients Discharged	Range of Discharges Per Client
FY2014	348	252	1 to 4
FY2015	355	247	1 to 6
FY2016	329	239	1 to 9
FY2017	364	245	1 to 10
FY2018	373	242	1 to 23
FY2019	448	293	1 to 7
FY2020	421	278	1 to 6
FY2021	421	251	1 to 11
FY2022	423	264	1 to 9
FY2023	376	247	1 to 6

Table 2 lists the number of inpatient psychiatric discharges per CRT client in each fiscal year. Note that, because of the rarity of having a large number of inpatient psychiatric discharges, CRT clients with four or more discharges were collapsed into the *4 or more* category in order to protect client confidentiality.

Table 2  
Number and Percent of CRT Clients by Number of Inpatient  
Psychiatric Discharges

	Number of Inpatient Discharges			
	1	2	3	4 or more
FY2014	183 (73%)	48 (19%)	15 (6%)	6 (2%)
FY2015	178 (72%)	49 (20%)	9 (4%)	11 (4%)
FY2016	187 (78%)	29 (12%)	16 (7%)	7 (3%)
FY2017	173 (71%)	50 (20%)	11 (5%)	11 (5%)
FY2018	175 (72%)	43 (18%)	16 (7%)	8 (3%)
FY2019	198 (68%)	63 (22%)	21 (7%)	11 (4%)
FY2020	182 (66%)	68 (25%)	14 (5%)	14 (5%)
FY2021	158 (63%)	48 (19%)	27 (11%)	18 (7%)
FY2022	169 (64%)	55 (21%)	21 (8%)	19 (8%)
FY2023	164 (66%)	58 (24%)	11 (5%)	14 (6%)

In previous fiscal years, it was typical for more than 50% of all CRT inpatient psychiatric discharges in Vermont to be followed up with an outpatient CRT service within the same day. However, in the past four years, closer to 40% CRT clients were followed up within the same day. Approximately 30% of all discharges each year received a follow up CRT service within 1 to 7 days subsequent to discharge, however this year saw that percentage increase to 35%. Smaller percentages of discharges received a follow up either 8 to 30 days or more than 30 days after discharge. Each year, 2% to 4% of inpatient discharges did not receive a follow up service. Figure 1 summarizes the time between inpatient discharge and the first outpatient follow up among CRT clients across Vermont for each the past ten fiscal years.

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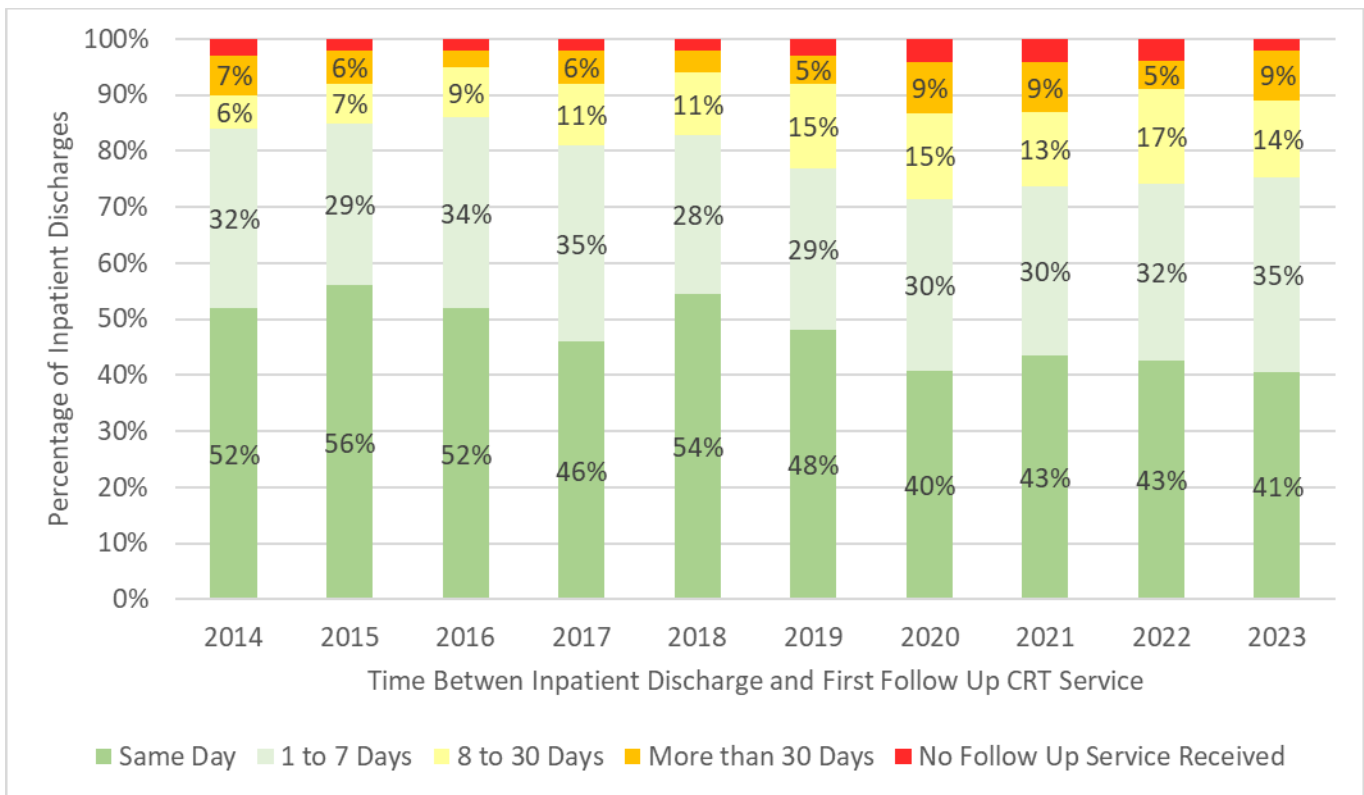


Figure 1 – Time Between Inpatient Discharge and First Follow Up CRT Service by Fiscal Year

While Figure 1 provides a useful visual representation of cumulative percent of CRT clients that fall into each of the five categories of time between inpatient discharge and the first follow up across each year of the study period, Table 3 provides the same data in greater detail (number, percent, and cumulative percent of inpatient discharges) and in tabular format.

Table 3

Number, Percent, and Cumulative Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Client in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Year

	Same Day			1 to 7 Days			8 to 30 Days			More than 30 Days			No Follow Up Service		
	#	FY %	Cml FY %	#	FY %	Cml FY %	#	FY %	Cml FY %	#	FY %	Cml FY %	#	FY %	Cml FY %
FY2014	183	52%	52%	111	32%	84%	21	6%	90%	24	7%	97%	12	3%	100%
FY2015	198	56%	56%	104	29%	85%	25	7%	92%	20	6%	98%	8	2%	100%
FY2016	172	52%	52%	111	34%	86%	29	9%	95%	9	3%	98%	8	2%	100%
FY2017	167	46%	46%	129	35%	81%	39	11%	92%	21	6%	98%	8	2%	100%
FY2018	202	54%	54%	106	28%	83%	41	11%	94%	16	4%	98%	8	2%	100%
FY2019	217	48%	48%	129	29%	77%	65	15%	92%	24	5%	97%	13	3%	100%
FY2020	170	40%	41%	128	30%	71%	65	15%	87%	39	9%	96%	17	4%	100%
FY2021	182	43%	43%	128	30%	74%	55	13%	87%	36	9%	96%	18	4%	100%
FY2022	183	43%	43%	136	32%	74%	71	17%	91%	23	5%	96%	17	4%	100%
FY2023	153	41%	41%	130	35%	76%	51	14%	90%	32	9%	98%	9	2%	100%

Figure 2 presents the time between inpatient discharge and first follow up CRT service in the same manner as Figure 1, but it presents only data from FY 2023 and breaks the data out across the 10 DAs and 1 SSA that are contracted to provide mental health services across Vermont.

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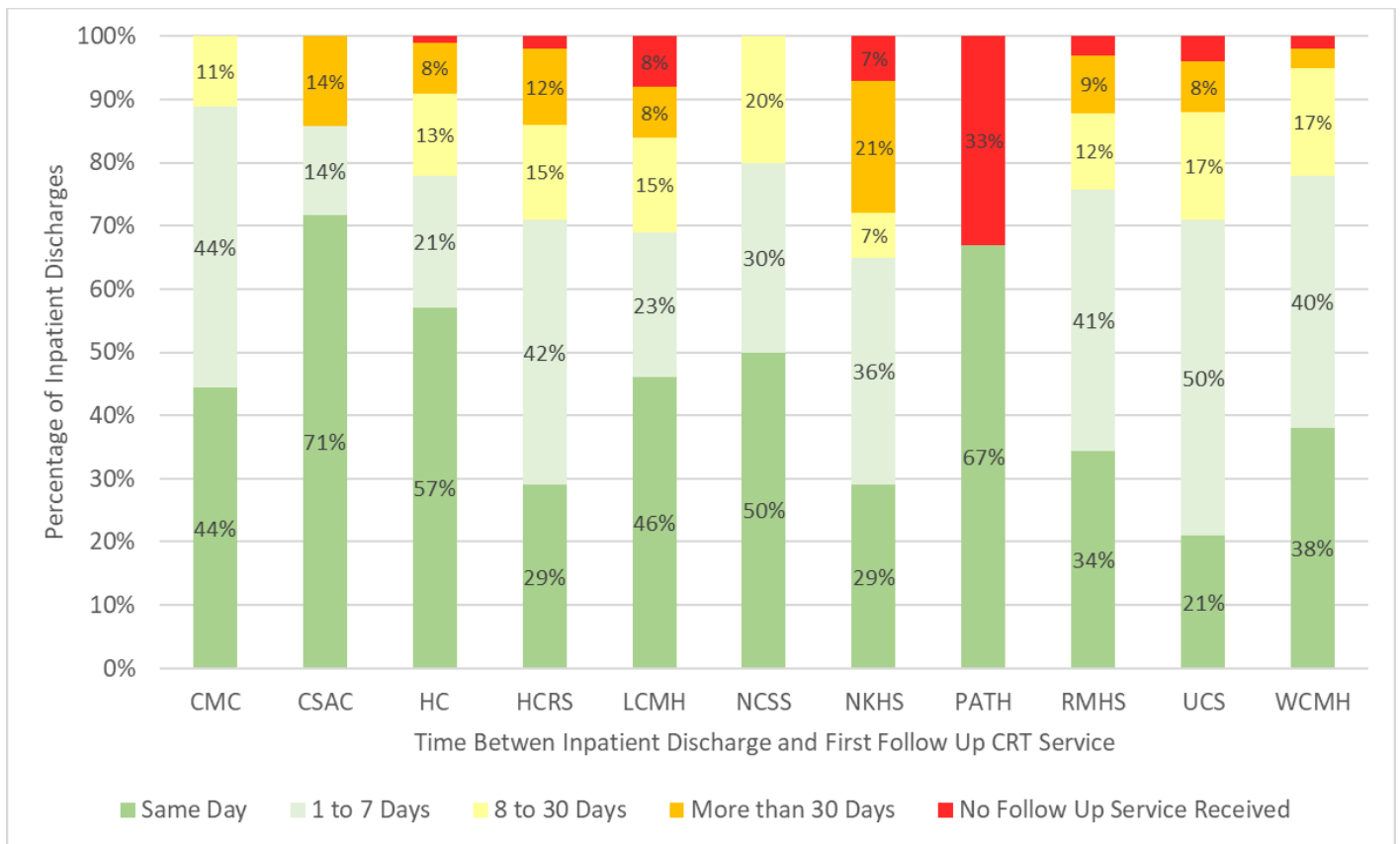


Figure 2 – Time Between Inpatient Discharge and First Follow Up CRT Service by Designated Agency, FY 2023

Table 4 presents the number and percent of inpatient discharges for CRT clients that fall into each of the five categories of time between inpatient discharge and the first follow up with an outpatient CRT service across all 10 DAs and 1 SSA in FY 2023.

Table 4  
Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Designated Agency in FY2023

	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More than 30 Days		No Follow Up Service	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
CMC	4	44%	4	44%	1	11%	0	0%	0	0%
CSAC	5	71%	1	14%	0	0%	1	14%	0	0%
HC	55	57%	20	21%	12	13%	8	8%	1	1%
HCRS	19	29%	27	42%	10	15%	8	12%	1	2%
LCMH	6	46%	3	23%	2	15%	1	8%	1	8%
NCSS	5	50%	3	30%	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%
NKHS	4	29%	5	36%	1	7%	3	21%	1	7%
PATH	2	67%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	33%
RMHS	26	34%	32	41%	9	12%	7	9%	2	3%
UCS	5	21%	12	50%	4	17%	2	8%	1	4%
WCMH	22	38%	23	40%	10	17%	2	3%	1	2%

Tables 5 through 15 present the number and percent of inpatient psychiatric discharges for CRT clients served by each of the 10 DAs and 1 SSA for the past ten fiscal years.

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**Table 5**  
Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by CMC in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	CMC									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30 Days		No Follow Up Service	
FY2014	12	52%	4	17%	0	0%	6	26%	1	4%
FY2015	7	39%	7	39%	0	0%	3	17%	1	6%
FY2016	10	59%	5	29%	0	0%	1	6%	1	6%
FY2017	9	45%	8	40%	0	0%	1	5%	2	10%
FY2018	4	80%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2019	3	38%	1	13%	1	13%	2	25%	1	13%
FY2020	2	50%	0	0%	0	0%	1	25%	1	25%
FY2021	6	55%	4	36%	0	0%	0	0%	1	9%
FY2022	4	50%	2	25%	1	13%	1	13%	0	0%
FY2023	4	44%	4	44%	1	11%	0	0%	0	0%

**Table 6**  
Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by CSAC in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	CSAC									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30 Days		No Follow Up	
FY2014	15	65%	5	22%	2	9%	0	0%	1	4%
FY2015	13	57%	4	17%	4	17%	1	4%	1	4%
FY2016	10	53%	4	21%	1	5%	3	16%	1	5%
FY2017	11	42%	8	31%	4	15%	3	12%	0	0%
FY2018	16	53%	10	33%	1	3%	1	3%	2	7%
FY2019	7	47%	6	40%	1	7%	1	7%	0	0%
FY2020	11	50%	6	37%	2	9%	2	9%	1	5%
FY2021	6	55%	1	9%	2	18%	1	9%	1	9%
FY2022	2	20%	1	10%	3	30%	2	20%	2	20%
FY2023	5	71%	1	14%	0	0%	1	14%	0	0%

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Table 7

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by HC in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	HC									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	21	38%	21	38%	4	7%	8	15%	1	2%
FY2015	44	61%	19	26%	5	7%	3	4%	1	1%
FY2016	39	54%	21	29%	10	14%	0	0%	2	3%
FY2017	31	43%	27	37%	9	12%	5	7%	1	1%
FY2018	39	56%	18	26%	10	14%	3	4%	0	0%
FY2019	75	66%	26	23%	9	8%	3	3%	1	1%
FY2020	41	45%	33	36%	10	11%	5	6%	2	2%
FY2021	37	52%	21	30%	6	9%	7	10%	0	0%
FY2022	70	53%	40	30%	15	11%	6	5%	1	1%
FY2023	55	57%	20	21%	12	13%	8	8%	1	1%

Table 8

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by HCRS in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	HCRS									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	37	55%	20	30%	5	7%	3	4%	2	3%
FY2015	24	46%	20	38%	2	4%	6	12%	0	0%
FY2016	24	36%	32	48%	7	10%	3	4%	1	1%
FY2017	32	38%	31	40%	13	16%	6	7%	2	2%
FY2018	58	53%	35	32%	10	9%	5	5%	2	2%
FY2019	25	32%	29	37%	26	20%	7	9%	2	3%
FY2020	25	31%	27	33%	20	24%	8	10%	2	2%
FY2021	24	29%	26	31%	23	27%	6	7%	5	6%
FY2022	31	37%	27	32%	19	22%	5	6%	3	4%
FY2023	19	29%	27	42%	10	15%	8	12%	1	2%

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Table 9

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by LCMH in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	LCMH									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	6	67%	2	22%	0	0%	0	0%	1	11%
FY2015	6	43%	3	21%	3	21%	2	14%	0	0%
FY2016	7	50%	6	43%	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%
FY2017	7	50%	6	43%	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%
FY2018	7	58%	3	25%	1	8%	1	8%	0	0%
FY2019	6	40%	2	13%	4	27%	2	13%	1	7%
FY2020	7	44%	3	19%	0	0%	5	31%	1	6%
FY2021	1	20%	3	60%	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
FY2022	3	50%	2	33%	0	0%	0	0%	1	17%
FY2023	6	46%	3	23%	2	15%	1	8%	1	8%

Table 10

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by NCSS in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	NCSS									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	10	67%	5	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2015	5	50%	3	30%	1	10%	0	0%	1	10%
FY2016	5	83%	1	17%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2017	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2018	3	38%	3	38%	1	13%	0	0%	1	13%
FY2019	5	46%	1	9%	3	27%	1	9%	1	9%
FY2020	9	47%	6	32%	2	11%	0	0%	2	11%
FY2021	3	18%	4	24%	2	12%	6	35%	2	12%
FY2022	5	50%	2	20%	2	20%	1	10%	0	0%
FY2023	5	50%	3	30%	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%

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Table 11

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by NKHS in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	NKHS									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	6	55%	1	9%	2	18%	2	18%	0	0%
FY2015	8	42%	5	26%	3	16%	2	11%	1	5%
FY2016	6	55%	3	27%	0	0%	1	9%	1	9%
FY2017	13	72%	3	17%	2	11%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2018	8	44%	5	28%	1	6%	3	17%	1	6%
FY2019	11	50%	5	23%	3	14%	1	5%	2	9%
FY2020	10	44%	7	30%	4	17%	0	0%	2	9%
FY2021	15	68%	3	14%	1	5%	2	9%	1	5%
FY2022	2	17%	4	33%	3	25%	3	25%	0	0%
FY2023	4	29%	5	36%	1	7%	3	21%	1	7%

Table 12

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by PATH in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	PATH									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014										
FY2015	5	71%	0	0%	1	14%	1	14%	0	0%
FY2016	5	50%	4	40%	0	0%	1	10%	0	0%
FY2017	4	31%	2	15%	2	15%	0	0%	1	8%
FY2018	11	61%	5	28%	2	11%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2019	10	53%	5	26%	3	16%	1	5%	0	0%
FY2020	11	69%	4	25%	0	0%	1	6%	0	0%
FY2021	2	29%	3	43%	1	14%	0	0%	1	14%
FY2022	1	14%	4	57%	0	0%	1	14%	1	14%
FY2023	2	67%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	33%



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Table 13

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by RMHS in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	RMHS									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	30	56%	18	33%	2	4%	2	4%	2	4%
FY2015	33	62%	15	28%	2	4%	1	2%	2	4%
FY2016	38	62%	17	28%	6	10%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2017	21	51%	16	39%	2	5%	2	5%	0	0%
FY2018	24	56%	13	30%	5	12%	0	0%	1	2%
FY2019	41	44%	31	33%	16	17%	4	4%	2	2%
FY2020	23	31%	24	32%	17	23%	7	10%	3	4%
FY2021	48	43%	43	39%	13	12%	5	5%	2	2%
FY2022	30	35%	31	36%	22	26%	1	1%	2	2%
FY2023	26	34%	32	42%	9	12%	7	9%	2	3%

Table 14

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by UCS in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	UCS									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	12	55%	9	41%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%
FY2015	11	55%	6	30%	2	10%	0	0%	1	5%
FY2016	8	50%	6	38%	1	6%	0	0%	1	6%
FY2017	7	64%	1	9%	1	9%	1	9%	1	9%
FY2018	4	31%	3	23%	4	31%	2	15%	0	0%
FY2019	7	64%	1	9%	0	0%	2	18%	1	9%
FY2020	5	29%	3	18%	2	12%	5	29%	2	12%
FY2021	4	33%	2	17%	1	8%	3	25%	2	17%
FY2022	2	25%	2	25%	0	0%	2	25%	2	25%
FY2023	5	21%	12	50%	4	17%	2	8%	1	4%

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Table 15

Number and Percent of Inpatient Psychiatric Discharges for CRT Enrollees served by WCMH in Each Time-To-Follow-Up Group by Fiscal Year

	WCMH									
	Same Day		1 to 7 Days		8 to 30 Days		More Than 30		No Follow Up	
FY2014	27	53%	21	41%	1	2%	0	0%	2	4%
FY2015	42	63%	22	33%	2	3%	1	1%	0	0%
FY2016	20	56%	12	33%	4	11%	0	0%	0	0%
FY2017	31	51%	22	36%	5	8%	3	5%	0	0%
FY2018	28	62%	11	24%	5	11%	1	2%	0	0%
FY2019	27	45%	22	37%	9	15%	0	0%	2	3%
FY2020	26	47%	15	27%	8	15%	5	9%	1	2%
FY2021	36	54%	18	27%	6	9%	5	8%	2	3%
FY2022	33	50%	21	32%	6	9%	1	2%	5	8%
FY2023	22	38%	23	40%	10	17%	2	3%	1	2%

## Discussion

The number of inpatient psychiatric discharges produced by CRT clients increased from 348 in FY 2014 to 376 in FY 2023, but the FY 2023 discharge total is substantially lower than the totals from the four previous fiscal years. Similarly, the number of CRT clients with inpatient admissions dropped from 252 in FY 2014 to 147 in FY 2023, but the four previous fiscal years had all seen higher client totals. Each year, most CRT clients with inpatient psychiatric discharges were only hospitalized once. The percentage of CRT clients with only one hospitalization has remained consistent from year to year (approximately 70%) for the most part, but FY 2023 saw only 66% with just one hospitalization. The number and percent of CRT clients with multiple psychiatric hospitalizations was higher than usual (35%) in FY 2023 and has risen in recent years.

As Figure 1 indicates, in FY 2023, 41% of all inpatient psychiatric discharges for CRT clients were followed up with an outpatient CRT service on the same day as the discharges. This marks a noteworthy decrease in same day follow ups and is the lowest percent of same day follow up in the ten years of the study period (see Table 3). On average, 31% of all inpatient psychiatric discharges for CRT clients were followed up with an outpatient CRT service one to seven days after being discharged. However, 35% of discharges were followed up one to seven days after discharge in FY 2023. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that, each year, an average of 80% of clients who were receiving state-provided outpatient care prior to psychiatric hospitalization received a CRT outpatient follow up service within one week of being discharged from inpatient care. However, FY 2023's 76% falls below this average. Relatively few discharges were followed up with CRT services after 8 days, however, 9% of clients were followed up more than 30 days after discharge in FY 2023 and this is up from 5% in the previous fiscal year. Approximately 2% of discharges for CRT clients were not followed up with an outpatient CRT service – an improvement over FY 2022.

Across the last five years, there has been a consistent statewide decrease in the percent of inpatient psychiatric discharges that received CRT follow up services on the same day as the discharge. However, DAs differed quite noticeably in how quickly they provided CRT follow up services after their clients were discharged from inpatient care (see Tables 5-15). In FY 2023, the percent of inpatient psychiatric discharges for CRT clients that were followed up with an outpatient CRT service on the same day ranged from 71% for CSAC to 21% for UCS. The percent of inpatient

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psychiatric discharges for CRT clients that were not followed up with an outpatient CRT service ranged from 0% for CMC, CSAC, and NCSS, to 33% for PATH. However, it should be noted that the DAs that serve a small number of clients may exhibit greater variability in the percent of CRT clients in each time-to-follow-up category. This is particularly true in the time-to-follow-up categories with fewer clients such as the No Follow Up category.

When ten-year trends were compared across the different DAs it became apparent that the percent of CRT clients followed up on the same day has decreased for most DAs since FY 2014. Of particular note, LCMH, RMHS, NKHS, HCRS, and UCS have all seen a greater than 20% decrease in the number of discharges followed up in the same day. HC saw a 19% increase in the number of discharges followed up in the same day, however.

The percentage of inpatient discharges followed up after 30 days decreased for most DAs. However, NKHS followed up 21% of their CRT clients' inpatient discharge after 30 or more days. CSAC and HCRS both failed to follow up with more than 10% of their CRT clients who were discharged from inpatient care. PATH failed to follow up at all with 33% of their inpatient discharges, all other DAs were under 10% in this time-to-follow-up category.