

State of Vermont

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Request for Information

**By the Department of
Mental Health for:**

**Involuntary Medication
Longitudinal Study**

Issue Date: September 19, 2017



Request for Information: Involuntary Medication Longitudinal Study

The Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) seeks information from interested parties regarding the potential implementation of a longitudinal study comparing the outcomes of patients who received court-ordered psychiatric medications while hospitalized with those of patients who did not receive court-ordered psychiatric medication while hospitalized, including both patients who voluntarily received medication and those who received no medication, for a period of 1998 to the present.

Background

In the Spring of 2017, the Vermont State Legislature passed *Act 82: An act relating to examining mental health care and care coordination*, in an effort to better analyze and address a number of issues and concerns about Vermont's mental health system of care that were being raised by advocates, treatment providers, legislators, and the public. As part of Act 82, the Vermont Legislature required the Agency of Human Services to perform a review of involuntary treatment and medication:

On or before December 15, 2017, the Secretary of Human Services, in collaboration with the Commissioner of Mental Health and the Chief Superior Judge, shall analyze and submit a report to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and the House Committee on Health Care regarding the role that involuntary treatment and psychiatric medication play in inpatient emergency department wait times, including any concerns arising from judicial timelines and processes. The analysis shall examine gaps and shortcomings in the mental health system, including the adequacy of housing and community resources available to divert patients from involuntary hospitalization; treatment modalities, including involuntary medication and non-medication alternatives available to address the needs of patients in psychiatric crises; and other characteristics of the mental health system that contribute to prolonged stays in hospital emergency departments and inpatient psychiatric units. The analysis shall also examine the interplay between the rights of staff and patients' rights and the use of involuntary treatment and medication¹.

As part of this review, Act 82 directs DMH to issue a *Request for Information* (RFI) for a longitudinal study comparing the outcomes of patients who received court-ordered (i.e. involuntary) medications while receiving psychiatric hospitalization with those of patients who did not receive court-ordered medication while receiving psychiatric hospitalization. Based on the results of this RFI and a number of other factors, Vermont may choose to support the implementation of the proposed study in the future.

¹ <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2018/Docs/ACTS/ACT082/ACT082%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

Act 82 states:

(c)(1) On or before November 15, 2017, the Department shall issue a request for information for a longitudinal study comparing the outcomes of patients who received court-ordered medications while hospitalized with those of patients who did not receive court-ordered medication while hospitalized, including both patients who voluntarily received medication and those who received no medication, for a period from 1998 to the present. The request for information shall specify that the study examine the following measures:

- (A) the length of an individual's involuntary hospitalization;*
- (B) the time spent by an individual in inpatient and outpatient settings;*
- (C) the number of an individual's hospital admissions, including both voluntary and involuntary admissions;*
- (D) the number of and length of time of an individual's residential placements;*
- (E) an individual's success in different types of residential settings;*
- (F) any employment or other vocational and educational activities after hospital discharge;*
- (G) any criminal charges after hospital discharge; and*
- (H) other parameters determined in consultation with representatives of inpatient and community treatment providers and advocates for the rights of psychiatric patients.*

(2) Request for information proposals shall include estimated costs, time frames for conducting the work, and any other necessary information².

Request for Information

Per Act 82, DMH is seeking information from interested parties who wish to provide conceptual proposals for implementing the longitudinal study outlined above. Proposals and information collected through this RFI will be used solely for analysis and will not have any bearing on the awarding of future state contracts. However, the information submitted to DMH may be used to inform a future funding allocation or decision by the State to implement a longitudinal study specific to court-ordered psychiatric medication and post a *Request for Proposals* to complete the study.

Interested parties responding to this RFI should submit the following information to DMH:

- 1) Name and contact information of the individual or organization that is responding to the RFI.
- 2) A short summary of your experience and capabilities that relate to the subject matter and implementation of the proposed study.

² <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2018/Docs/ACTS/ACT082/ACT082%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

- 3) A summary proposal of the estimated costs, time frame, feasibility and methods for implementing the longitudinal study as described above. Per Act 82, the proposed study will need to examine the following measures:
- a. the length of an individual's involuntary hospitalization;
 - b. the time spent by an individual in inpatient and outpatient settings;
 - c. the number of an individual's hospital admissions, including both voluntary and involuntary admissions;
 - d. the number of and length of time of an individual's residential placements;
 - e. an individual's success in different types of residential settings;
 - f. any employment or other vocational and educational activities after hospital discharge;
 - g. any criminal charges after hospital discharge; and
 - h. other parameters determined in consultation with representatives of inpatient and community treatment providers and advocates for the rights of psychiatric patients.

As part of the submission, respondents are encouraged to highlight and discuss any elements or measures of the study that may be challenging or costly to implement.

There is no page limit required for submissions to this RFI.

Written submissions must be received by November 15th, 2017 at 4:30 PM.

Submissions should be sent electronically in PDF format to Jennifer Rowell at Jennifer.rowell@vermont.gov.

Additional questions may be directed to Jennifer Rowell at Jennifer.rowell@vermont.gov or 802-241-0090.