

FACT SHEET | Critical Needs: Mental Health and Public Safety

2016 Budget for a Better Minnesota

Minnesota has neglected the state hospitals and mental health facilities responsible for treating Minnesotans who represent a danger to themselves or others for decades. These facilities need additional resources to better meet the needs of patients, and ensure staff and public safety. Governor Dayton is committed to reversing this trend. He has proposed significant investments to stabilize services at the Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center, the Minnesota Security Hospital in St. Peter, the Minnesota Sex Offender Program, and statewide community-based mental health services. These improvements will help Minnesotans get the care they need, while ensuring staff and public safety.

Improving Care and Safety

- **Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center**– Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center does not currently have the necessary resources to provide quality patient care and ensure safety for staff. Inadequate staffing, along with more patients from county jails, have brought new concerns for safety and security at the treatment center. In response, Governor Dayton has proposed significant new investments to help the Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center hire additional nursing staff, improve the quality of care provided, and alleviate safety and security risks for all. The Governor’s proposal would also increase the number of psychiatric treatment beds available at the state’s Community Behavioral Health Hospitals.
- **Minnesota Security Hospital** – The Minnesota Security Hospital in St. Peter is facing staffing shortages and increasingly challenging patients. The Governor’s supplemental budget proposal would provide for improved security systems, additional clinical and security staff, and a creation of a specialized unit for people with developmental disabilities. These improvements will help ensure that patients are cared for in therapeutic environment and that staff are safe in their workplace.
- **Community-Based Services** – The Minnesota Department of Human Services operates 120 residential facilities across the state, which provide a wide range of services, including mental health, chemical dependency, and care for people with developmental disabilities. Governor Dayton’s proposal would strengthen services for these vulnerable Minnesotans, create a mobile team of professionals to support private providers, and allow patients who need less assistance to transition into the community.

Enhancing Public Safety

- **Minnesota Sex Offender Program** – In response to the federal court order regarding the Minnesota Sex Offender Program, Governor Dayton has proposed proactive reforms to strengthen public safety and improve the way the program is run. This supplemental budget would invest in improvements recommended by court-appointed experts to regularly evaluate clients, enhance the provisional discharge evaluation process, and develop less-restrictive, secure facilities for program clients who are provisionally discharged by courts.
- **Safety at Human Services Facilities** – As Minnesota transitions individuals with mental illness out of county jails and into state-run mental health facilities, some of these new patients have caused significant challenges and disruptions for patients and staff at these facilities. In response, Governor Dayton has proposed creating a law enforcement office within the Minnesota Department of Human Services to respond to criminal activities perpetrated by civilly-committed individuals.
- **Improvements to the Competency Restoration Program** – When an individual is accused of committing a crime, but is deemed mentally unfit to stand trial, the State of Minnesota sends that person to a mental health facility to receive treatment before eventually standing trial. Today, many of these individuals are cared for in secure treatment centers, even though they could be served in a less-intensive setting. To free up hospital space for Minnesotans who need treatment in a secure setting, the Governor has proposed the creation of a new, stand-alone Competency Restoration Program to treat Minnesotans accused of a crime, but deemed incompetent to stand trial.