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February 7, 2019

Mark W. Binkley, Interim Director  
South Carolina Department of Mental Health  
Post Office Box 485  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Dear Director Binkley:

On behalf of the Healthcare and Regulatory Subcommittee, thank you, and your staff for your recent presentation to the Subcommittee relating to the Department of Mental Health's history and organization. In preparation for our next meeting, please respond to the following by February 19, 2019:

### *Governing Body*

- Is the agency aware of efforts by the Governor's office to fill the three vacancies on the Mental Health Commission? If so, what is the status of those efforts?
- What is the Commission's process for regularly reviewing agency *policies* that govern the operation of DMH?
- What is the Commission's process for regularly reviewing *regulations* governing the operation of DMH?

### *Investigations*

- Please provide a list of complaints involving DMH clients or facilities, investigated by the agency or other investigating body, over the past seven years. Specifically include allegations of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or sexual harassment, and structure the response in a manner so as to protect the identities of any alleged victims or alleged perpetrators.

### *Employees*

- Please provide any completed DMH-specific comparative salary studies. Also describe employee retention programs, employee benefits unique to DMH, and recruitment policies.
- Has any turnover analysis occurred for the organizational units experiencing high turnover? If so, provide the results of that analysis.
- Describe the employee evaluation process.

### *Relationships with Other Entities*

- Provide a list of relationships or cooperative agreements with not-for-profit organizations.
- How are contracted programs evaluated/audited?
- How many embedded mental health counselors are in hospital emergency departments? How is the effectiveness of embedded counselors evaluated, and are you able to forecast future needs?
- What is the current status of hospital services for mentally ill patients?
- What is the agency's role, if any, in addressing mental illness in the Departments of Corrections and Juvenile Justice?
- Describe mental health diversion courts. Has the agency evaluated the effectiveness of the program? Does it need to be expanded? If so, where should the expansion occur?

### *Agency Strategic Planning*

- Please provide a list of future goals and the analysis used to determine these goals.
- Highlighting the 2008 and 2012 cuts, what is the agency's current budgetary state? Forecast where the agency would be had it not experienced those cuts.
- What are the agency's potential financial needs based on its future goals?
- What cost saving measures have been implemented?
- Please provide an analysis of patients treated by county. Which counties have definitive gaps in service?
- For the seven percent of people who are not served within the timeframes setup in 2011, has an analysis been done of why? If so, what are the reasons, or identifiable trends?
- Provide an analysis of current statutes which are outdated.

### *Information Technology*

- What is the current state of the agency's information technology systems?
- What are DMH's information technology needs, and what are the plans to meet those needs?
- Is there sufficient broadband access across the state to support DMH's telepsychiatry network?

### *Nursing Homes*

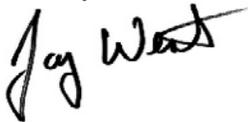
- What is the agency's current nursing home capacity? What are the additional needs on the horizon?
- How do the nursing homes work with other entities when a patient has a dual diagnosis?
- What is the federal government's process to approve additional veterans nursing homes? What should we anticipate as a state, as far as the need for additional beds or funding? Will that be sufficient to provide services to the forecasted number of veterans needing beds?

*Crisis Stabilization Centers*

- How are crisis stabilization centers evaluated?
- What is the anticipated roll out plan across the state?

If these questions would yield responses that are not an accurate reflection of the agency or if additional time is needed to respond, please contact Committee staff. The Subcommittee looks forward to our next meeting, on February 19, 2019. Thank you for your service to the citizens of South Carolina and for your continued cooperation with the legislative oversight process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay West". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Jay West  
Subcommittee Chair

cc: The Honorable Robert L. Ridgeway, III  
The Honorable Bill Taylor  
The Honorable Chris Wooten