



Juvenile Diversion Project

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Behavioral Health Services: Juvenile Diversion Project

Project Description

Over the past decade, Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department (FBJPD) has experienced a significant increase in the number of youth with mental health issues. Although the total number of juvenile cases has slightly decreased over the last several years, it is estimated that the number of cases involving mental health disorders has nearly doubled. In Fort Bend County (FBC), the lack of comprehensive and coordinated services for youth with serious mental illness has resulted in the Juvenile Probation Department (including the detention facility) becoming the assessment, stabilization, and even treatment center for many of these youth.

The FBC Behavioral Health Juvenile Diversion (BHJD) program will focus on the development of specialized interventions and a services delivery system to better identify youth with mental illness and divert them to the appropriate services. The FBC BHJD program will enhance the safety net, provide necessary interventions, increase the array of services, including diversion services, and as a result reduce incarceration of youth with serious mental illness and other complex behavioral health needs as well as improve the functional outcomes for these youth. The FBC BHJD will include cross-systems training and development of data tracking to ensure the appropriate response to mental health needs of youth and to monitor outcomes.

The FBC BHJD program will provide intensive care coordination and assessment services at the first point of contact with law enforcement or other intercept points (e.g., schools, hospitals) to identify, triage, and divert youth to appropriate clinical services.

Goals and Relationship to Regional Goals

FBC expects to see a reduction in the percentage of youth with complex behavioral health needs that are incarcerated. The FBC project also expects to see an improvement in functioning of youth served by the FBC BHJD program. The FBC BHJD project presents a major opportunity to enhance the service delivery system for a complex behavioral health population (youth with serious mental illness at risk of involvement or further involvement with the legal system).

This project addresses the following regional goals:

- Develop a regional approach to health care delivery that leverages and improves on existing programs and infrastructure that is responsive to patients needs throughout the entire region, and improves health care outcomes and patient satisfaction;
- Increase access to primary and specialty care services, with a focus on underserved populations, to ensure patients receive the most appropriate care for their condition, regardless of where they live or their ability to pay.

5-year Expected Outcome for Provider and Patients

FBC expects to see a reduction in the percentage of youth with behavioral health needs that are incarcerated and improve their functional status.

For more information, please contact : 1115waiver@fortbendcountytexas.gov.

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