

MENTAL HEALTH Minnesota

The Voice of Recovery

No More Delay: Crisis Services Can't Wait

We are profoundly concerned by the unwarranted delay in approval for the new location of the Diane Ahrens Crisis Residence.

When every hospital bed and healthcare dollar counts, crisis residential services deliver. Despite an approximately **95% success rate helping individuals avoid hospital level of care**, these stays are billed at **a fraction of the price**.

Our Policy and Outreach Associate, Ben Ashley-Wurtmann, testified this year about what better crisis services could have meant for him and his family:

“I knew that my parents got questions from well meaning neighbors about the lights and sirens response to our quiet cul-de-sac. Even in the midst of crisis, I started to think about how it would look if I asked for help. We were all scared about what was happening and if I would get better. We did not need the additional stigma.

And despite the concern shown for me by the first responders, they were out of their element. There was more that I could have done outside the emergency room or an inpatient unit. But those resources simply weren't available back then.”

Minnesota's mental health community has come a long way in building effective services. This year, the Legislature heard our unity on this need, and appropriated \$8.6 million in new funding to bring us closer to comprehensive mental health crisis response across the state. **We will fall short of that critical goal if crisis services are chased out of communities by unsubstantiated fears.**

Crisis beds are a resource, not a burden, for the communities they serve. Mental illnesses will continue to affect families all through out Minnesota. How we respond is up to us. **We call on the St. Paul City Council to approve the relocation of the Diane Ahrens Crisis Residence** so that this program can continue to help people safely avoid hospitalization and start their journey to recovery.



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