



STATE OF WISCONSIN | Legislative Audit Bureau

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Joe Chrisman
State Auditor

February 10, 2017

Mr. Michael Lappen, Administrator
Behavioral Health Division
Department of Health & Human Services
9455 Watertown Plank Road
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226

Dear Mr. Lappen:

I am writing in response to the recent questions you posed after the meeting of the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board on January 26, 2017.

First, you indicated that the Board was interested in determining which recommendations in our audit, report 16-14, were related to contract, statutory, or federal requirements. Our standard practice is to cite instances in which an auditee has not complied with specific legal requirements, and we followed this practice in report 16-14. You accurately identified the two recommendations that meet this condition:

- We recommend the Behavioral Health Division submit to the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board for its review and approval all fee-for-service contracts that are likely to total or exceed a value of \$100,000 (p. 20); and
- We recommend the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board comply with statutes by appointing a Board of Trustees for the psychiatric hospital as specified in s. 46.18 (1), Wis. Stats. (p. 70)

Second, you indicated the Board was concerned that the criteria for the recommendations contained in our report may be affected by the perspectives of future auditors. Our audit recommendations are those of the nonpartisan Legislative Audit Bureau and are not dependent on the particular views of individual staff members. Therefore, in subsequent audit engagements we will review and report on the extent to which our prior recommendations have been implemented. For those recommendations that were not implemented, we will review and report on the reasons they were not implemented. As was the case in report 16-14, any recommendations we make in future reports will be based on our evaluative expertise in assessing program efficiency and effectiveness.

Third, you asked that we address information in our report that has been interpreted by some as indicating that 27 individuals served by community-based programs are missing. Our report does not refer to individuals as missing, but instead uses the word "unknown" when referring to 27 recipients in Appendix 4 on page 4-10 of our report. The figure on page 4-10 shows the

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2015 treatment outcomes for recipients of the Community-Based Mental Health Residential Program. The treatment outcomes for 27 of the recipients who received services in 2015 were not recorded in the data provided to us by the Behavioral Health Division. Therefore, we designated the treatment outcome for these individuals as unknown.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Chrisman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Chrisman
State Auditor

JC/PS/bm

cc: Members of the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board