

**Resolution of Recognition of Evident Need and
Support for the Advancement of a New State Hospital
Within the State’s System of Care**

December 8, 2021

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Behavioral Health Planning Council assumes its duties as the state’s principal advisory body established under Public Law 102-321 (42 U.S.C 300X-4), to monitor, review, and evaluate the allocation and adequacy of behavioral health services in North Dakota and to meet federally mandated requirements, and whose members are duly appointed by the Governor of North Dakota to advise the Governor regarding the administration of the state’s behavioral health practices and policies; and

WHEREAS, the membership of the Council represents the diverse voices and interests of the people of North Dakota, bringing forth vast strengths and perspectives from consumers of mental health and substance abuse services, family members, advocates, referral sources, schools, institutional and community-based service providers, the general disability community, and the criminal justice system, and covering an expanse of expertise including a shared knowledge of individual and general consumer situations, Medicaid, service delivery systems, reimbursement issues, housing and community development, legal issues, community resources, recovery, peer mentoring, service delivery, children's issues, and advocacy for mental health and substance abuse issues; and

WHEREAS, the Council has endorsed and guided the development and implementation of the state’s current behavioral health strategic plan, covering the breadth of state behavioral health needs, and in so doing, has adopted a Statement of Vision that recognizes *With full regard for the value of each person, appropriate behavioral health services, encompassing the full continuum of care, are readily available at the right time, in the right place and manner, and by the right people, offering every North Dakotan their best opportunity to live a full, productive, healthy and happy life—free of stigma or shame, within caring and supportive communities*; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes the inherent value and necessity for a properly sized and situated State Hospital as a critical component of the state’s comprehensive system of care, providing specialized care and highly trained staff and ensuring the capacity of the state to provide for its citizens the full expanse of services demanded of a balanced, efficient, and modern continuum of care, documented by multiple studies; and

WHEREAS, the current State Hospital facilities, having served the state for multiple generations, now exhibit profound deterioration, documented by structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing deficiencies or failures approximating 76%, significantly evidencing that these facilities have long outlived their expected lifespans; and

WHEREAS, any measured, deferred maintenance budget cannot sustain the volume and cost of needed repairs and systems replacement, and where the current, antiquated facilities lack adequate natural light, healing green space, and pose safety risks for patients and staff, outright failing to provide for an

appropriate setting that will speed recovery, improve patient and staff safety, and improve overall satisfaction of patients and staff; and

WHEREAS, the co-location of the current State Hospital facility with an adjoining prison facility contributes to the stigma, prejudice, and discrimination of individuals with mental illness, denying patients and residents served at the State Hospital the right to receive appropriate and respectful care in a safe and healing environment.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the North Dakota Behavioral Health Planning Council, acting within its assigned charge to provide studied advice to the state on critical issues of care regarding behavioral health services within North Dakota, does endorse

- Building a new, modern State Hospital central facility, located in Jamestown, ND, and, in the form of public/private partnership, funding, incentive, or new facility, provide for regional services distributed across the state to provide specialized care, allowing for reasonable and ready access to appropriate and specialized behavioral health services for all state residents; and
- Adopting and advancing, through policy and funding across all appropriate agencies, the full implementation of all program goals specified within the statewide behavioral health strategic plan; and
- Securing and sustaining a statewide behavioral health system that facilitates an integrated continuum of care across all services, directed to the unique needs of every person served.

FURTHERMORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the North Dakota Behavioral Health Planning Council petitions the North Dakota Department of Human Services, the Office of the Governor, the Acute Psychiatric Care Committee, and the full North Dakota 68th Legislative Assembly to authorize and secure sufficient and sustainable financial resources and supporting policies that accomplish each of these stated aims.