

## **Part 4: Notes**

## OVERVIEW

### 1. The Scope of This Report

The Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) is responsible for a variety of publicly funded outpatient, inpatient, residential and support services provided to children and adults who have an emotional disturbance, mental illness, and/or substance abuse disorders. DMH contracts with one designated agency (DA) in each geographic region of the state to be responsible for ensuring needed services are available through local planning, support coordination and outcomes monitoring within their region. A specialized service agency (SSA) is a separate entity also contracted by VDH that provides community services to a specific population. This report describes clients served and services provided during FY2007 by the Vermont State Hospital, ten designated agencies, and one specialized service agency for mental health services. Specialized Service Agencies that provide services under contract with ADAP are not included in this report. On intake, most clients are assigned to one of these programs within the agency (primary program assignment) although the services they receive may be provided by more than one program in that agency (program of service).

The Department of Mental Health is responsible for the Vermont State Hospital and mental health programs at Vermont's designated agencies, including Children's Services Programs, Adult Mental Health Outpatient Programs, Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs, and Emergency Services Programs. Many community mental health designated agencies also provide substance abuse services under contract with the State's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs in the Health Department.

The Vermont State Hospital (VSH) is a state-operated psychiatric hospital located in Waterbury, Vermont. The hospital serves patients on both a short-term and a long-term basis. Short-term patients include individuals who are experiencing an acute psychotic episode and criminal defendants referred to the hospital for psychiatric evaluation of sanity and/or competency to stand trial. The law requires that patients must be deemed to be in need of mental health treatment not available in a less restrictive setting. Longer-term patients include patients with a chronic mental illness who continue to be too actively psychotic to be integrated into the community, and patients whose mental disorders and physical handicaps require a higher or more specialized level of care than is available in the community. Inpatient behavioral health care is also provided by four regional hospitals in Vermont and the Brattleboro Retreat; data on clients served by these facilities are not included in this report.

Children's Services Programs provide services to children and families who are experiencing emotional or psychological distress or are having problems adjusting to changing life situations. These programs primarily provide outpatient services (clinical, service planning, community supports, crisis, vocational and respite services).

Adult Mental Health Outpatient Programs serve individuals 18 years of age and over who do not have prolonged serious disabilities but who are experiencing emotional, behavioral, or adjustment problems severe enough to warrant professional attention. Services offered include clinical, service planning and community support services and some crisis services.

Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) Programs serve adults with severe and persistent mental illness. In addition to regular clinical services, CRT Programs provide day treatment services, service planning, community supports, supported employment and a variety of housing services to clients who have a major mental illness.

Emergency Services Programs serve individuals who are experiencing an acute mental health crisis. Emergency services include diagnostic and psychotherapeutic services such as evaluation of the client and the circumstances leading to the crisis, crisis counseling, screening for hospitalization, referral and follow-up. These services are provided on a 24-hour a day, 7-days-per-week basis with both telephone and face-to-face services available as needed.

The Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs is responsible for providing services to people with alcohol and/or drug abuse problems and their families in a community setting through community mental health centers and other providers. This report describes services provided by designated agencies and includes individual and group treatment, diagnosis and evaluation, and intensive outpatient services. Seven of the ten regional designated agencies provide substance abuse programs. In the WCMH catchment area, substance abuse services are provided by Central Vermont Substance Abuse Services. In the LCMH catchment area, substance abuse services are provided by Copley Hospital. In the NCSS catchment area, substance abuse services are provided by Champlain Drug and Alcohol Services. Substance Abuse Programs provide services to adults and

children. During FY2007, 10% of substance abuse service recipients were under 18 years of age and 18% were under 20 years of age.

## **2. Community Provider Agencies**

Community-based services are provided to individuals throughout the state through contracts with nonprofit community provider agencies. The community provider agencies are designated by DMH at differing levels: designated agencies (DAs), and specialized service agencies (SSAs). The agencies and the areas they serve are described below.

### Designated Agencies

DMH funds community mental health services provided by designated agencies (DAs). Each DA serves a specific service or catchment area. Mental health services catchment areas broadly align with counties with the exceptions noted below. Together these mental health areas cover the entire state. Populations for these catchment areas are based on National Census figures obtained from the Vermont Department of Health.

The Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC) serves all of Addison County except the towns of Granville and Hancock.

Northwestern Counseling and Support Services (NCSS) serves Franklin County and Grand Isle County.

The Howard Center for Human Services (HCHS), which serves Chittenden County, changed its name to The Howard Center after the period covered by this report.

Lamoille County Mental Health Services (LCMH) serves Lamoille County. For Children's Services, Lamoille also serves the towns of Craftsbury, Greensboro, Hardwick, and Standard from the Northeast Kingdom, and Woodbury from Washington County.

Health Care and Rehabilitation Services of Southeastern Vermont (HCRS) serves all of Windham County and Windsor County except the towns of Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge.

Northeast Kingdom Human Services (NKHS) serves Caledonia, Essex and Orleans Counties except the towns of Craftsbury, Greensboro, Hardwick, and Standard for Children's Services.

The Clara Martin Center (CMC) serves recipients in Orange County (except the towns of Orange, Williamstown, and Washington which are served by WCMH), the towns of Granville and Hancock in Addison County, and the towns of Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge in Windsor County.

Rutland Mental Health Services (RMHS) serves Rutland County.

United Counseling Services (UCS) serves Bennington County.

Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMH) serves Washington County as well as the towns of Orange, Williamstown, and Washington from Orange County, with the exception of Woodbury for Children's Services.

### Specialized Service Agencies

DMH contracts with one SSA that provides community services to a specific population statewide.

The Northeastern Family Institute (NFI) in Williston provides intensive residential treatment for children and adolescents who are experiencing an emotional disturbance from all parts of the State of Vermont.

## **3. Clients Served**

This report is based on a complete enumeration of clients served by Children's Services Programs, Adult Mental Health Outpatient Programs, Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs, Emergency Service Programs, and Substance Abuse Programs, and by the Vermont State Hospital. Although clients may receive services from

more than one of these community-based programs, each client has a primary program assignment within the agency providing the services. Clients involved in other programs such as Retired Senior Volunteers Programs (RSVP), Head Start Programs, and Counter Measures Regarding Alcohol Safety on the Highway (CRASH) Programs are included only if they were also served by one of the programs listed above. Clients served by Emergency Service Programs are included in this report only if they become registered clients of the agency. In some cases, clients who receive only emergency services do not become registered clients of the agency. It should be noted that the clients and services reported for NFI include only those who receive DMH-funded services.

Tables that describe clients categorize them according to their primary program assignment rather than the program(s) by which they were served. Because of this, the numbers of clients served within each community service provider agency and VSH represent an unduplicated count of individual clients. Clients served by more than one program at a provider agency are counted only once. Individuals who were served by more than one provider agency, however, are counted more than once, as are individuals served by a provider agency and VSH. Table entries with the symbol "-" indicate either "no data reported" or "not applicable". Due to rounding, table entries with 0% indicate percentages that are less than 0.5%.

Clients who had not been assigned to a specific program as of the end of the fiscal year are reported as "unassigned" in the tables based on primary program assignment. At most community provider agencies, these are primarily clients who have only been seen on an emergency basis, or clients who have only recently entered treatment. (Statewide, 4% of the clients who were not assigned to a specific program at the end of FY2007 had received only emergency services during that year.)

Tables that describe services provided by programs at community provider agencies categorize clients according to the program by which services were provided. Because of this, clients who received services from more than one program of service are counted more than once in tables that describe the services provided. Thus, the client totals in the tables that describe services do not equal the client totals in the tables that describe demographics. Table entries with the symbol "-" indicate either "no data reported" or "not applicable". Due to rounding, table entries with 0% indicate percentages that are less than 0.5%.

It should be kept in mind that many DAs do not register or record mental health services to every individual who might be seen in the course of client treatment. Collaterals, such as parents, children, or spouses of registered clients, for instance, frequently receive services coincident to services to the primary client. Family therapy is especially likely to involve individuals who do not become registered clients so that the number of clients reported would be substantially fewer than the actual total number of individuals seen.

The rate of clients served per 1,000 population in Table 1-2 is presented as a comparable standardized measure of the proportion of the residents of specified geographical regions who are served by specified programs. This utilization rate is computed according to the formula:

$$R = \frac{1,000C}{P}$$

where R is the rate of clients served per 1,000 population, C is the number of clients served, and P is the age-specific population of the geographic area in question. Children's Services utilization rates are based on the catchment area population of residents under 18 years of age. CRT, Adult Mental Health Outpatient, Substance Abuse and VSH service utilization rates are based on adult population counts. Total population counts are used to calculate utilization rates for unassigned clients. Counts for the catchment area populations were based on National Census figures (July 1, 2005) obtained from the Vermont Department of Health.

### Vermont Population of Service Areas

<u>Provider / Catchment Area</u>		<u>Child &lt;18</u>	<u>Adult 18 +</u>	<u>Total</u>
Statewide		133,483	489,567	623,050
CSAC	Addison	8,044	28,921	36,965
NCSS	Franklin/Grand Isle	13,738	41,879	55,617
HCHS	Chittenden	32,058	117,555	149,613
LCMHS	Lamoille	5,302	19,193	24,495
HCRS	Southeast	20,925	81,246	102,171
NKHS	Northeast	13,948	50,734	64,682
CMC	Orange	6,334	22,953	29,287
RMHS	Rutland	13,012	50,731	63,743
UCS	Bennington	7,706	29,293	36,999
WCMH	Washington	12,416	47,062	59,478

#### 4. Age

The age of clients was calculated from their date of birth and is current as of December 31, 2006, the midpoint of the period covered by this report.

#### 5. Income

Income is based on clients' or their families' report of gross annual household income. The income reported should include all sources of income including Supplemental Security Income (S.S.I.) benefits, welfare payments, unemployment compensation, alimony and child support payments, in addition to income earned from employment or investment. All income from all members of a residential/economic unit should be included. If a client lives with unrelated others with whom he or she does not pool financial resources, income of the other resident(s) should not be counted toward the client's income.

#### 6. Responsibility for Fee

Responsibility for fee is reported for five categories: Medicaid, Medicare, other insurance, state agency contract, and uninsured. Providers can report up to three payers for each client. Therefore, the categories are not mutually exclusive and clients may be counted in more than one category. "Medicaid" includes all clients who are covered by Medicaid, including people on the Medicaid Waiver. "Other Insurance" includes all clients with other third-party insurance excluding Medicaid and Medicare. This category includes private insurance, service contracts, Veterans Administration, Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS), worker's compensation, and other state agencies. "State Agency Contracts" includes clients whose services are partly funded by DMH, ADAP, DCF and Vocational Rehabilitation contracts. Finally, the "Uninsured/unknown" category is the residual category for clients who are not reported in any of the other categories noted above.

Medical insurance does not necessarily cover mental health services and, even when these services are covered, the reimbursement may be substantially less than the cost of the services. Because of this, insured clients should be considered partly self-paying clients as well.

Information on responsibility for fee presented here is current as of the end of the report period (06/30/07). Since insurance coverage is subject to change, the insurance coverage reported here may not have been in effect for the entire year of the report.

## 7. Diagnosis

Diagnostic categories included in this report are based on the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition (DSM IV). Clients may receive more than one diagnosis. These clients will be reported under more than one diagnostic group. For this reason, the total number of diagnoses will exceed the total number of clients served. Specific diagnoses have been grouped into diagnostic categories according to the following specifications:

### Organic Brain Syndromes:

Senile and Presenile Dementias (290.1x, 290.20, 290.21, 290.30, 290.4x, 209.00);  
Some Organic Brain Syndromes (293.00, 293.81, 293.82, 293.83, 294.00, 294.10, 294.00, 294.10, 294.80, 310.10);  
Psychoactive Substance-Induced Organic Mental Disorders (291.00, 291.10, 291.2x, 291.30, 291.40, 291.80, 292.00, 292.11, 292.12, 292.81, 292.82, 292.83, 292.84, 292.89, 292.90).

### Schizophrenic and Other Psychotic Disorders:

Schizophrenic Disorders (295, 1x, 295.2x, 295.3x, 295.9x, 295.6x);  
Paranoid Disorders (297.10, 297.30, 297.90, 298.30);  
Autism (299.0x, 299.8x, 299.9x);  
Psychotic Disorders Not Classified Elsewhere (295.40, 295.70, 298.80, 298.90).

### Affective Disorders:

Major Affective Disorders (296.2x, 296.3x, 296.4x, 296.5x, 296.6x);  
Other Specific Affective Disorders (300.40, 301.13, 311.00);  
Atypical Affective Disorders (296.70, 296.82).

### Anxiety Disorders:

Phobic Disorders (300.21, 300.22, 300.23, 300.29);  
Anxiety Neuroses (300.01, 300.02, 300.30);  
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (300.00, 308.30, 309.81, 309.89).

### Personality Disorders:

Personality Disorders (301.00, 301.20, 301.22, 301.40, 301.50, 301.60, 301.70, 301.81, 301.82, 301.83, 301.84, 301.90);  
Factitious Disorders (300.16, 300.19, 301.51).

### Adjustment Disorders:

Adjustment Disorders (309.00, 309.23, 309.24, 309.28, 309.30, 309.40, 309.82, 309.83, 309.90).

### Social Problems:

Conditions Not Attributable to a Mental Disorder that are a Focus of Attention or Treatment (15.81, 61.10, 61.20, 61.80, 62.20, 62.30, 62.82, 62.88, 62.89, 65.20, 71.01, 71.02).

### Substance Abuse:

Substance Use Disorders (303.9x, 304.0x, 304.1x, 304.3x, 304.4x, 304.6x, 304.7x, 304.8x, 304.9x, 305.0x-305.7x, 305.9x);

### Childhood Non-Psychotic Disorders:

Attention Deficit Disorder (314.00, 314.01, 314.80);  
Conduct Disorder (312.00, 312.20, 312.90, 313.81);  
Anxiety Disorders of Childhood or Adolescence (309.21, 313.00, 313.21).

### Other Psychological Disorders:

Gender Identity Disorders (302.5x, 302.60, 302.85);  
Paraphilias (302.10, 302.20, 302.30, 302.40, 302.81-302.84, 302.90);  
Psychosexual Dysfunctions (302.70-302.76, 306.51);  
Other Psychosexual Disorders (302.00, 302.89);

Psychological Factors Affecting Physical Conditions (316.00);  
Disorders of Impulse Control (312.31-312.35, 312.39).

Mental Retardation/Developmental Disorders:

Mental Retardation (317.0x, 318.0x-318.2x, 319.0x);  
Specific Developmental Disorders (315.00, 315.10, 315.31, 315.39, 315.50, 315.90).

## **8. Problems**

Part of the intake process for each client is a problem checklist. The problem areas are not mutually exclusive, as an individual may have more than one type of problem. Since this assessment is conducted only at intake, the problems may not be current for long-term clients. Problems apparent at intake may have been resolved and/or new problems may have arisen. Also, clients admitted prior to FY2002 were not assessed with reference to Mood, Criminal, Victim and Runaway. This information is not collected for clients treated at the Vermont State Hospital.

## **9. Length of Stay**

Information on clients' length of stay is based on admission dates reported by community provider agencies and VSH. These dates represent the most recent admission for the clients, not the date of their first admission. For this reason, these figures may substantially understate the total length of time clients have been in treatment.

Community provider agencies vary in their standard operating procedures with regard to discharging and readmitting clients. Some agencies routinely discharge clients after specified periods of inactivity. Other programs rarely discharge long-term clients with severe and persistent disorders.

## **TYPES OF SERVICE**

### **10. Clinical Interventions**

#### Individual, Family and Group Therapy

Individual, Family and Group Therapy refers to all psychotherapeutic and substance abuse services. Individual Therapy is a method of treatment that uses the interaction between a therapist and the individual to facilitate emotional or psychological change, to alleviate distress, and change substance use. Family Therapy is a method of treatment that uses the interaction between a therapist, the individual and family members to facilitate emotional or psychological change and to alleviate distress. Group Therapy is a method of treatment that uses the interaction between a therapist, the individual, and peers to facilitate emotional or psychological change and to alleviate distress.

Psychotherapeutic services described in this report refer to services received by clients. A group therapy session in which one clinician meets with five clients, for instance, is counted as five services. Individual therapy sessions involving couples or families may involve multiple services as well. Individual and family therapy sessions tend to last about one hour. Group therapy sessions average about 1 1/2 hours statewide. Individual, family and group therapy services are reported for nonresidential programs only.

#### Medication and Medical Support and Consultation Services

Medication and Medical Support and Consultation Services include evaluating the need for, prescribing and monitoring medication, and providing medical observation, support and consultation for an individual's health care. These services include evaluation of the need for psychoactive medication, the prescription by a qualified clinician, therapist, psychiatrist or nurse practitioner of psychoactive drugs intended to favorably influence or prevent symptoms of mental illness and the monitoring and assessment of patient reaction to prescribed drugs. Medication and Medical Support and Consultation Services are reported for nonresidential programs only.

### Clinical Assessment

Clinical Assessment refers to psychiatric, psychological, psychosocial, substance abuse, and/or developmental assessment sessions and the preparation of individualized plans, including the administration and interpretation of psychometric tests and the preparation of reports. Clinical Assessment services average about 1 hour and 20 minutes in duration and are reported for outpatient programs only when they are recorded as a separate service.

### Assessment Bed

Assessment Bed provides an intensive time-limited (maximum 60 days) stable setting to formulate a diagnosis; evaluates an individual's and family's strengths and needs; and begins service planning and coordination, therapy, community supports, and medication services as necessary. This is for children's services only and is an exception to most assessments that are done in a child's home, school or community. A breakdown of these services by provider is not given in Part 2A as there is only one Children's Services Program that provides assessment bed services. During FY2007, NFI provided assessment bed services to 9 young clients.

## **11. Day Services**

The Day Services reported in this book include community-based Day Services and Partial Hospitalization. Note that Children's Services do not provide day services.

Day Services are group recovery activities in a milieu that promote wellness, empowerment, a sense of community, personal responsibility, self-esteem and hope. These activities are consumer-centered. This service provides socialization, daily skills development, crisis support and promotes self-advocacy. The primary providers of Day Services are Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs and Substance Abuse Programs.

Partial Hospitalization is an intensive (4-16 hours/day), time-limited (maximum 21 days) service provided as an alternative to inpatient care to prevent or shorten psychiatric hospitalization and promote recovery. Partial Hospitalization services are provided to individuals who would otherwise meet inpatient criteria, and medical personnel (nurse, physician) are accessible to provide services during hours of operation. Treatment modalities include diagnosis and evaluation; service planning and coordination; community supports; individual, group and family therapy; medication services and psycho-educational skill development for managing symptoms. During FY 2007, RMHS provided Partial Hospitalization services to 104 clients in the Adult Mental Outpatient Program and 23 clients in the CRT Program.

## **12. Service Planning and Coordination**

Service Planning and Coordination fall under the broad category of Case Management. Service Planning and Coordination assists individuals and their families in planning, developing, choosing, gaining access to, coordinating and monitoring the provision of needed services and supports for a specific individual. Services and supports that are planned and coordinated may be formal (provided by the human services system) or informal (available through the strengths and resources of the family or community). Services and supports include discharge planning, advocacy, and monitoring the well being of individuals (and their families) and supporting them to make their own decisions.

## **13. Community Supports**

Community Supports fall under the broad category of Case Management. Community Supports include specific, individualized and goal-oriented supports, which assist individuals (and families) in developing the skills and social supports necessary to promote positive growth. These supports may include assistance in daily living, supportive counseling, support to participate in community activities, collateral contacts, and building and sustaining healthy personal, family and community relationships. All of these activities may also be provided in a group setting. Community supports may further include family education, consultation and training services that provide family members, significant others, home providers and foster families with the knowledge, skills, and understanding necessary to promote positive change.

## **14. Employment Services**

Employment Services assist transition-age youth and adults in setting and achieving career and work goals. These services have four components. Employment assessment involves evaluation of the individual's work skills, identification of the individual's preferences and interests, and the development of personal work goals. Employer and job development helps clients gain employment by developing and supporting employers. Activities for employer development include identification, creation or enhancement of job opportunities, education, consulting, and assisting co-workers and managers in supporting and interacting with individuals. Job training assists an individual to begin work, learn the job, and gain social inclusion at work. Ongoing support to maintain employment involves activities needed to sustain paid work by the individual. These supports and services may be given both on and off the job site, and may involve long-term and/or intermittent follow-up.

Part 1 reports provision of these services by program of service. A further breakdown by community provider for Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs, the primary provider of these services, is given in Part 2C.

## **15. Crisis Services**

Crisis Services are time-limited, intensive supports provided for individuals and families who are currently experiencing, or may be expected to experience, a psychological, behavioral, or emotional crisis. Services may also be provided to the individual's or family's immediate support system. These services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Crisis Services consist of two component parts: (1) Emergency/Crisis Assessment, Support and Referral, and (2) Emergency Beds.

### Emergency/Crisis Assessment, Support and Referral

Emergency/Crisis Assessment, Support and Referral is a nonresidential service which includes initial information gathering, triage, training and early intervention, supportive counseling, consultation, referral and crisis planning. In addition, supports include: outreach and stabilization, clinical diagnosis and evaluation, treatment and direct support, and integration/discharge planning back to the person's home or alternative setting. Assessment may also include screening for inpatient psychiatric admission.

### Emergency/Crisis Beds

Emergency Beds offer emergency, short-term, 24-hour residential supports in a setting other than the person's home. Part 1 reports provision of these services by program of service. A further breakdown by community provider for Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs is given in Part 2C.

## **16. Housing and Home Supports**

Housing and Home Supports provide services, supports and supervision to individuals in and around their residences up to 24 hours a day. Data on housing provided by other organizations are not included in this report.

Residential services (by the day) are provided in a variety of settings. Staffed Living services are residential living arrangements for one or two people, staffed full-time by providers. Group Treatment/Living services are group living arrangements for three or more people. Licensed Home Providers/Foster Families are individualized shared-living arrangements for children, offered within Home Providers/Foster Families homes that are licensed. Unlicensed Home Providers/Foster Families are individualized shared-living arrangements for children and adults, offered within Home Providers/Foster Families homes. Both licensed and unlicensed home providers/foster families are contracted workers and are not considered staff in their role as contracted provider. All of the above services consist of residential days. Residential services in these settings frequently include planning and coordination together with other therapeutic, educational and supportive services as part of the overall residential service package.

Supervised/Assisted Living services (by the hour) are regularly scheduled or intermittent supports provided to an individual who lives in his or her home or that of a family member. These services are not provided by Children's Services Programs.

Residential facilities in the community that house community mental health clients but are not funded by the Department of Mental Health are not included in this report. These facilities include community care homes, nursing homes, boarding houses, some intermediate care facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities, and a number of other residential settings. Residential substance abuse treatments provided by designated agencies are also excluded from this report.

Institutional services are days in residence at the Vermont State Hospital. The day on which patients were admitted to this institution is included, while the day patients were discharged is excluded. Residential services provided at the Brattleboro Retreat are not included in this report.

### **17. Respite Services**

Respite services assist family members, significant others (e.g., roommates, friends, or partners), home providers, and foster families to help support specific individuals with disabilities. Respite services (by the hour or by the day/overnight) are provided on a short-term basis because of the absence, or need of relief, of those persons normally providing care to individuals who cannot be left unsupervised. Respite services are provided by Children's Services.

### **18. Condition on Termination**

Clinical staff are asked to rate as "improved," "unchanged," or "worse" the condition of each client whose case is closed. These ratings represent the professional opinion of the clinicians. Condition on termination is not reported by the Vermont State Hospital.

Discharge rates reported for designated agency clients may underestimate the actual rates. This occurs because it was not possible to identify clients who were discharged during a quarter in which they received services and their condition on termination had not yet been rated.

Clients who died while they were on the rolls of the community program or institutions are counted as discharged clients and are included in the discharge rate.

## **VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL**

### **19. Admissions and Discharges**

Admissions to and discharges from the Vermont State Hospital include both first admissions and readmissions. Individuals with more than one admission or discharge during the year have been counted more than once in these totals.

For purposes of calculating total patient days and overall daily census, the day each patient is admitted to the hospital is counted as a full day in residence, while the day each patient is discharged is not counted as a day in residence.

### **20. Legal Status**

Patients are admitted to the Vermont State Hospital in one of several legal statuses. These have been grouped into four categories for purposes of this report: voluntary, emergency, forensic and other. Emergency, forensic and other admissions are all involuntary admissions to the Vermont State Hospital.

Voluntary admissions include conditional voluntary admissions and regular voluntary admissions. In order to qualify as a conditional voluntary admission, the patient must have enough insight and capacity to make a responsible application. He or she must be mentally ill and in need of hospitalization. He or she must want to be admitted to the hospital as a voluntary patient; no third party may sign the patient in. Conditional voluntary patients must sign a consent form for admission which states that they understand their treatment will involve inpatient status, that they

desire to be admitted to the hospital, and that they consent to admission voluntarily, without any coercion or duress. There is no special time limit on this type of admission. When the treatment team feels the patient is well enough to leave the hospital, he or she may be placed on a pre-placement visit, conditionally released, or discharged.

Regular voluntary admissions are similar to conditional voluntary admissions except that the patient must be discharged immediately when he or she gives notice.

Of the 35 voluntary admissions to the Vermont State Hospital during FY2007, all were conditional voluntary admissions; none were regular voluntary admissions.

Emergency admission includes admissions for emergency examination and admissions under a warrant for immediate examination. Admissions for emergency examination occur upon written application by an interested party accompanied by a certificate signed by a licensed physician who is not the applicant. The application sets forth the facts and circumstances which constitute the need for an emergency examination and which show that the person is in need of treatment. After being examined by a VSH psychiatrist and found to be in need of hospitalization, the application for involuntary treatment is filed with the Waterbury Circuit Court. A hearing date is then set. (Patients are sometimes administratively discharged or conditionally released prior to the hearing date.)

Admissions under a warrant for immediate examination occur in emergency circumstances in which a certification by a physician is not available without serious and unreasonable delay and when personal observation of the conduct of a person constitutes reasonable grounds to believe that the person is in need of treatment and that he or she presents an immediate risk of serious injury to self or others. A law enforcement officer or mental health professional may make an application, not accompanied by a physician's certificate, to any district or superior judge for a warrant for an immediate examination. If the judge is satisfied that a physician's certificate is not available without serious and unreasonable delay and that probable cause exists to believe that the person is in need of an immediate examination, the judge may order the person to submit to an immediate examination at the Vermont State Hospital. Upon admission, he or she shall be immediately examined by a licensed physician. If the physician certifies that the person is in need of treatment, the person shall be held for an emergency examination (discussed above). If not certified, the person must be discharged immediately.

Of the 128 emergency admissions to the Vermont State Hospital during FY2007, 123 involved emergency examinations and 5 were under a warrant for immediate examination.

Forensic admissions include admissions for court-ordered observation and commitments following competency and hospitalization hearings. Admissions for observation occur when a district court sends a criminal defendant to the Vermont State Hospital for psychiatric evaluation. An outside forensic psychiatrist sees the patient to determine if he or she was insane at the time of the alleged offense, had the mental state required for the offense charged, or is competent to stand trial for the alleged offense. These orders vary from 15 to 60 days. These patients cannot leave the hospital or be released from the hospital without an order from the court. Once the examination has been completed and the evaluation is received by the court, a hearing date is set for final disposition.

A commitment following a competency and hospitalization hearing is a civil commitment following an observation order and a hearing on the question of competency to stand trial and sanity at the time of the offense. In most cases it means that a person has been found not competent to stand trial and in need of hospitalization. All relaxation of restrictions must be approved by the head of the hospital. Some patients have to be returned to court before being released to the community, and in these cases all requests for relaxation of restrictions must be approved by the head of the hospital and the Commissioner. Prior to discharge, clear-cut aftercare plans must be approved by the head of the hospital, and the state's attorney requires a 10-day written notice prior to any release.

Of the 75 forensic admissions to the Vermont State Hospital during FY2007, 63 were for observation and 12 were for commitment following competency and hospitalization hearings.

Other types of legal status include revocation of conditional release, revocation of orders of non-hospitalization, involuntary court commitment for 90 days, and transfers under interstate compact. A revocation of conditional release occurs when the head of the hospital revokes a conditional discharge before that discharge becomes absolute because the patient failed to comply with the conditions of the discharge. A revocation of orders of non-hospitalization occurs when a judge revokes an order of non-hospitalization because the patient failed to comply with the conditions of the order. An involuntary court commitment for 90 days applies to a patient who has been committed by the court after having been found mentally ill and in need of treatment. This is a civil commitment for a period not to exceed ninety days. If, prior to the expiration of the court commitment, the treatment team feels the

patient is not ready to leave the hospital, they may apply for continued treatment. If the patient is well enough to leave the hospital, he or she may be discharged at the expiration of the court commitment order. Transfers under interstate compact usually occur when the patient is a former Vermont State Hospital patient (this is not a necessary condition, however) and is in an institution in another state. When both states' Departments of Developmental and Mental Health Services agree that it would be in the best interest of the patient to return him or her to this hospital, the patient is transferred on a "transfer under the interstate compact." The patient must be committed to the hospital in the other state since voluntary patients cannot be transferred under this compact.

Of the 5 VSH admissions with a legal status listed as "other" in this report, 2 were involuntary court orders for 90 days, and 3 were revocations of orders of non-hospitalization.

## **21. Type of Admission**

Patients reported as first admissions to the Vermont State Hospital have had no previous admissions to that institution. Patients reported as readmission have previously been admitted to the hospital, although those admissions may not have occurred during the report period. The reader should keep in mind that the length of stay of first admissions includes all of the time these patients have spent in the Vermont State Hospital while the length of stay of readmission includes only the current admission, which may be only a fraction of their total time in the hospital.

## **22. Discharge Rate**

The discharge rate for clients admitted to the Vermont State Hospital during FY2007 (Tables 3-14 through 3-19) is based on the number of days between each patient's admission to the hospital and his or her discharge. Patients discharged six or fewer days after their admission are reported as discharged within 1 week, patients discharged 13 or fewer days after their admission are counted as discharged within 2 weeks, etc. It should be kept in mind that these discharge rates are cumulative, not mutually exclusive. Patients counted as being discharged within one week of their admission are also counted as being discharged within two weeks of their admission, etc.

## **23. Length of Stay**

Two measures of the length of stay of patients in residence at the Vermont State Hospital at the end of the fiscal year are presented in Tables 3-20 through 3-25. The arithmetic "mean" is derived by adding the length of time between each patient's most recent admission and the last day of the fiscal year (June 30, 2007) and dividing the grand total by the number of patients in residence at the end of the year. The "median" length of stay is the time between the most recent admission and the end of the year for the patient who had been at the hospital as long as half of the patients in residence. The median is the fiftieth percentile.

At any given time, many patients will have been in the hospital relatively short periods of time while a few patients will have been in the hospital for very long periods of time. Because of this, the distribution of lengths of stay is "skewed to the right." In this situation the mean is always greater than the median. The arithmetic mean presents a more accurate picture of the total utilization of the Vermont State Hospital by all patients in the various categories reported, while the median presents a more accurate picture of the length of stay of individuals in the categories.