

Improving Care and Addressing Gridlock through the Discretionary Discharge Fund

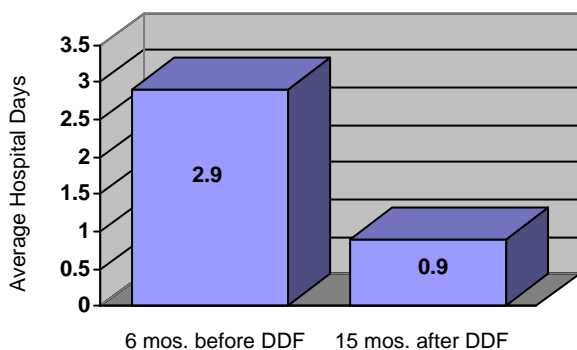
The Discretionary Discharge Fund (DDF) is one initiative approved for funding by the *Community Mental Health Strategy Board (CMHSB)** to help adults move out of State hospitals into the community and to help people who are at high risk of re-hospitalization stay in the community. This innovative approach was designed to move individuals to a less restrictive level of care, improve access to care that is tailored to the individual's specific needs, and help relieve system gridlock. Initially with CMHSB funds, 36 people were provided special types of services needed to overcome their severe challenges and succeed in the community. Since that time, additional people have been discharged from hospitals using DMHAS discretionary discharge funds not related to the CMHSB.

**(The Community Mental Health Strategy Board was created by the Connecticut General Assembly in 2002 to approve commitments and disbursements from a special fund that was designed to address issues and challenges in meeting the mental health needs of adults and children).*

The initial CMHSB initiative included special data collection at three-month intervals over a 15-month period for evaluating the results of the services provided with CMHSB funds. *Performance measurement data can help individuals in recovery, staff, and the general public see that the right services can make an important difference in the quality of the lives of people recovering from mental illness.*

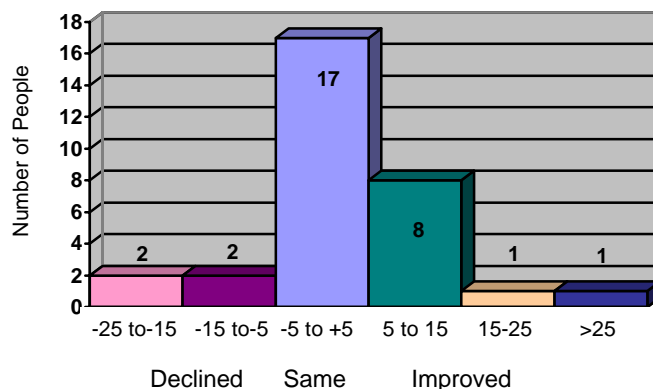
Of the 31 people studied, 71% needed **no** further hospitalization and overall use of hospital days declined by 69%.

Hospitalization Days
6 months before DDF vs. 15 months in DDF



Scores show 17 of the 31 people maintained the same level of functioning and 10 showed notable increases in functioning.

Differences in mGAF scores (a measure of a person's overall ability to function) at Program Start vs. 15 Months Later



The Discretionary Discharge Fund is a tool used to provide recovery-oriented services that may include such things as life skills coaching, housing services, and auxiliary staffing to support the person living in the community. DDF services promote high standards of innovation, quality and accountability.

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