



**Seminole Behavioral
Healthcare**

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12/20/12

Chairman Brodeur and Members of the Seminole Delegation,

Re: Assisted Outpatient Treatment:
Economical Quality Mental Health Care

In 2004, the Baker Act was revised to include outpatient commitment, often called Assisted Outpatient Treatment or AOT. This legislation was spearheaded by the Florida Sheriff's Association to help combat the rising tide of mentally ill individuals entering the criminal justice system and supported by community providers as the least restrictive means of encouraging treatment adherence. It is the standard of care in 44 states and has been shown to decrease the need for admission to state hospital facilities around the country.

Soon after the law was passed, the Treatment Advocacy Center, a national organization that focuses on meeting the needs of the chronic and persistently mentally ill, awarded a 75K pilot grant to Seminole Behavioral Healthcare to facilitate implementation of the new law. Seminole Behavioral Healthcare, in collaboration with the Seminole County Sheriff's Office and the County Court System set up an 18 month pilot program that implemented 36 outpatient court orders. Twenty-one (21) clients completed their outpatient court order during the 18 months. On average, there was a 47% drop in hospital days and a 77% decline in days incarcerated for these 21 individuals. This equates to a savings of \$303,728.00 for hospital care and \$14,455 in jail costs.

Additional savings were realized because all of these clients were being considered for admission to state hospital which was avoided for 32 of the 36 residents. By a conservative estimate, this yielded a savings to the state of \$100,000.00 per client or 3.2 million dollars during this 18 months period. The results in Seminole were almost identical to studies from New York State and Duke University, clearly demonstrating that AOT is cost effective.

Since the completion of this pilot, Seminole has continued to use AOT. We see success stories everyday as clients show improvement in their treatment compliance and move forward with their lives. The success of this program relies on intensive care management and committed staff engaging clients at all levels. As the state has decreased the use of state hospital services, the average number of clients under AOT in Seminole has risen to more than twenty which is overwhelming our current resources.

We believe that we must continue to use AOT to assist clients become successful members of our community. In order to do this, we need funding for 1.5 FTE to be responsible for coordinating the care of these individuals. In addition, since Seminole has been responsible for 94 of the 130 successful AOT orders in the state, we believe that we should take the lead in educating others around the state in how to successfully implement AOT. We are seeking financial support to create a training program that will be made available to all community providers through onsite and webinar based trainings. The total cost of this project would be \$350 K to cover staff and training materials. The overall savings to the state would far exceed this financial outlay and the benefits to clients and their families will be priceless.

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SEMINOLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OVERVIEW

<p>Case Management</p> <p>The primary goal of Case Management Services is to optimize the functioning of individuals and maximize their self-sufficiency and to create strategies to reduce or eliminate the tendency to foster dependency among individuals with a mental illness.</p>	<p>Crisis Support</p> <p>Crisis Support Services provide comprehensive clinical assessments for residents who are in crisis or who are brought in by police, family or friends. Available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.</p>	<p>Psycho-Educational Program</p> <p>The Turning Point Program is an active day program that focuses on helping clients with mental illness to develop insight and understanding into their condition and its treatment, and learn strategies to recover and reintegrate into the community.</p>
<p>Outpatient Counseling</p> <p>Short term solution focused counseling is available for residents facing a challenge or crisis in their lives. A team of licensed clinicians with a wide range of specialties are available.</p>	<p>Residential Treatment Facility</p> <p>Our 16 bed Residential Treatment Facility is designed to assist individuals with serious and persistent mental health issues to learn to live more independently in the community. The program is staffed 24 hours a day by experienced and qualified counselors.</p>	<p>Detoxification</p> <p>Detoxification Services support clients during withdrawal from alcohol and opiates and usually lasts 3-5 days. Detoxification clients are assessed and continually monitored by qualified, experienced staff 24 hours a day.</p>
<p>Co-Occurring Disorders</p> <p>The Seminole Center for Co-Occurring Disorders provides the opportunity for Individuals who have both serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders to learn how to effectively cope with and manage psychiatric symptoms, while also reducing the frequency and severity of substance abuse occurrences.</p>	<p>Outreach</p> <p>The HOPE and PATH programs reach out to those who are homeless and dealing with substance abuse and mental health issues and to individuals involved with, or at risk of becoming involved with, the criminal justice system or those who have been admitted into the State Hospital system.</p>	<p>Sedona Clubhouse</p> <p>The Sedona Program is based on the clubhouse model, a place where members can meet and mingle with their peers and become involved in a host of community reintegration groups and activities for those with chronic mental illness.</p>
<p>Independent Housing</p> <p>The Hacienda is a 12-unit HUD apartment complex devoted specifically to individuals dealing with chronic and persistent mental health issues. Each individual unit has its own bedroom, kitchen, bathroom and living room area. The complex is considered independent housing and is monitored by Case Managers and a Housing Coordinator.</p>	<p>Crisis Stabilization</p> <p>The Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) is a short-term inpatient unit for individuals in need of intensive treatment to resolve debilitating psychiatric symptoms. The CSU provides a safe environment in which to assist clients who have thoughts and behaviors that cause them to be a danger to themselves or others, or that make it impossible for them to care for themselves appropriately in the community. The average length of stay is three days.</p>	<p>Community Education</p> <p>The Academy provides structured educational and targeted outreach activities for community members not traditionally utilizing agency services. Educational curricula are available to community members as well as mental health professionals.</p>
<p>Medical Services</p> <p>Outpatient Medical Services are available to individuals in need of evaluation and/or treatment with psychotropic medication. Referred clients are given a Comprehensive Psychiatric Evaluation.</p>	<p>Children and Family Services</p> <p>Provides mental health services to families in Seminole County. Therapeutic needs are identified through an assessment, and service needs are determined jointly with the families and their primary counselors. Individual and family counseling, play therapy, and a child psychiatrist are available.</p>	<p>If you or someone you know is in need of help, contact us:</p> <p>Access Center Hotline 407-323-2036</p>