



Travis County Hospital District

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For immediate release:

Travis County Hospital District invests up to \$500,000 to increase inpatient psychiatric bed availability in Travis County.

The Travis County Hospital District (TCHD) voted last Thursday night to allocate up to \$500,000 to purchase additional psychiatric inpatient bed capacity at Seton Shoal Creek Hospital. This temporary measure will help ensure that psychiatric inpatient services are available to medically indigent residents who need this level of care. Funds will be made available to purchase the services, as needed, through September 30, 2006.

The need for additional inpatient psychiatric services in Travis County was a key concern discussed during the campaign to create the new hospital district.

"Although the Travis County Hospital District is still determining our ongoing role in mental health services in Travis County, we are committed to doing our part to alleviate the immediate bed availability crisis, while developing a long term strategy in association with funding stakeholders," said Trish Young, CEO. This amount of funding will pay for approximately 16-25 admissions per month at Seton Shoal Creek Hospital. Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center will provide patient screening, utilization management and transportation services needed to make the beds accessible to eligible individuals.

In December 2005, the District convened a psychiatric services stakeholder group that brings together key funding partners to address the ongoing issues around limited inpatient psychiatric beds and crisis services as well as to look at the continuum of care in mental health services.

The District is committed to continuing its current support for behavioral health counseling services and psychotropic medications provided by the network of 15 Community Health Centers operated by the City of Austin on behalf of the TCHD through an interlocal agreement.

TCHD wishes to continue to make strategic investments in the area of mental health services that ensure maximum impact, leverage expenditures, and provide accountability for its investments. To this end, it is interested in identifying the most effective and efficient way to help meet the needs of Travis County residents in the area of mental health services.

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