



Virtual Crisis Care

Unified Judicial System

January 2021

January Updates

Emergency Mental Illness Hold and Involuntary Commitment Costs

In South Dakota, there are no centralized data systems that track data or costs related to emergency mental illness holds and involuntary commitments. The information needed to determine associated costs resides with various county agencies, including local law enforcement and auditor offices, the county Board of Mental Illness, private providers, Community Mental Health Centers, private hospitals, and the Human Services Center.

Costs vary across the state, but hold one similarity: the commitment process is expensive for counties, as well as the state. To gain a better understanding of how expensive holds and commitments are, the Unified Judicial System conducted case studies in partnership with four counties to determine county specific cost totals.

County Costs for Emergency Mental Illness Holds (FY 2020)

Counties	County Population	Number of Emergency Mental Illness Holds	Total County Costs for Emergency Mental Illness Holds
Brookings	35,077	76 to HSC and Avera Behavioral Health (CY 2020)	\$72,092.16
Butte	10,225	64 mental health calls and 14 transports to hospitals (CY 2019)	\$65,694.75
Lawrence	25,844	14 to HSC (CY 2020)	\$37,873.57
McPherson	2,297	2 to Avera St. Luke's (CY 2020)	\$5,209.44

State Costs for Involuntary Commitments (FY 2020)

In addition to the county costs, there are also costs incurred at the state level when someone has a mental health crisis and law enforcement places them on a hold and they are admitted to the Human Services Agency or a contracted bed.

HSC:

- Average daily cost for HSC: **\$830.10**
- Average length of stay at HSC for involuntary adult acute admissions discharged prior to their Board of Mental Illness Hearing: **3.2 days** (*This is the population that would most likely be diverted with Virtual Crisis Care.*)

Contracted Beds When HSC is Full:

- Total bed days paid to contracted psychiatric inpatient providers: **990**
- Amount HSC paid for contract beds in Appropriate Regional Facilities:
- Avera Behavioral Health Center: **\$675,000**
- Rapid City Regional/Monument: **\$117,914.83**

Virtual Crisis Care Information

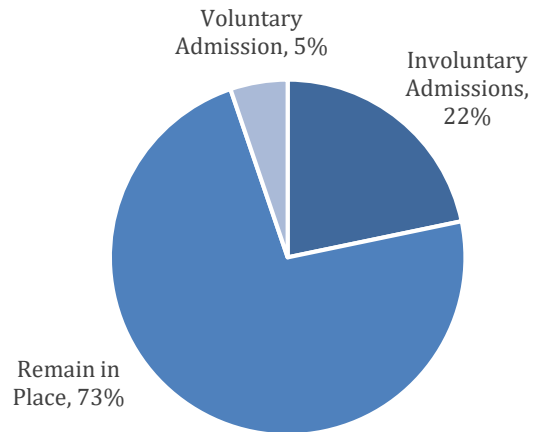
Total Usage

- Since launch, Virtual Crisis Care has been used 122 times.

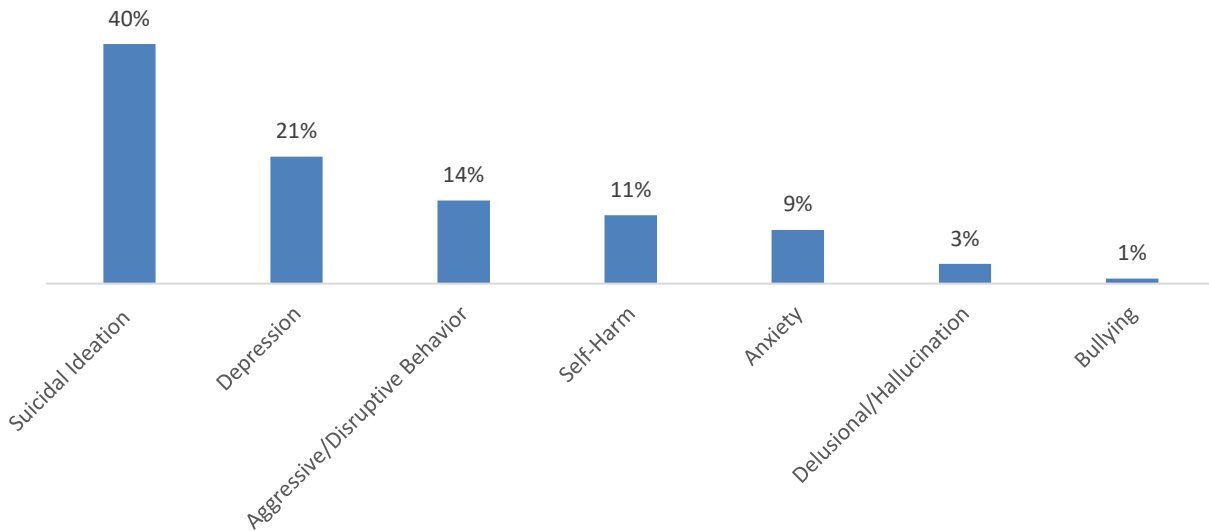
In the Media

- National Center for State Court, Behavioral Health Alerts, [1/4/21](#)
- National Conference of State Legislators, [1/29/21](#)

Outcomes



Nature of Request



“I’m super passionate about finding care for the people that are in need and in crisis and it’s super rewarding when you can provide that ... [Virtual Crisis Care is] taking a step in the right direction, rather than being frustrated with a system that, I think everyone would agree, has its challenges, its limitations, and maybe even, to a certain level, its failures.”

Captain Tavis Little, Lawrence County in his interview with the Black Hills Pioneer

For more information, contact Greg Sattizahn, State Court Administrator, at 605-773-3474