

Minnesota's state-run behavioral health care system: Stable funding, upgraded facilities, new technology and autonomy

Direct Care and Treatment, the behavioral health care system operated by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, will become its own state agency in early 2025 after a transitional period. Substantial investments made in the 2023 session will stabilize Direct Care and Treatment funding and continue current levels of programs and services for people with mental illness, substance use disorders and intellectual disabilities. A facility for civilly committed sex offenders will expand. A new task force will reevaluate a state law that dictates when civilly committed people waiting in jails must be admitted to state-run treatment programs.

2023 legislation

Establishing Direct Care and Treatment as a new state agency. DCT is a highly specialized health care system that serves more than 12,000 patients and clients each year with conditions that are so complex or behaviors so challenging that other health care systems cannot or will not serve them. A board of directors and chief executive officer will oversee the new agency, an arrangement that mirrors those of other health systems. The changes will benefit operations and patient care. *FY2024-25: \$7.8 million; FY2026-27: \$7.5 million*

Preserving services at Direct Care and Treatment facilities. A substantial increase in base funding will offset rising costs for staff, food, utilities and other necessities at DCT facilities, where costs have gone up 11% to 33%. The investments mean that DCT can keep operating at current levels rather than suspending or scaling back programs and services. *FY2024-25: \$99.7 million; FY2026-27: \$110.0 million*

Improving patient care and safety with electronic health records. Once complete, the new electronic health record system will make comprehensive patient health records quickly accessible. This will help clinical staff who treat patients in all DCT facilities, as well as community health care providers who treat DCT patients in their facilities. Electronic health records also will bring DCT into compliance with state regulations. *FY2024-25: \$48.2 million; FY2026-27: \$6.3 million*

Expanding facilities for civilly committed sex offenders. New funding will allow the Minnesota Sex Offender Program to add more beds and administrative space to Community Preparation Services, a less restrictive treatment environment in St. Peter. *FY2024-25: \$21.6 million*

Bringing together key stakeholders to evaluate Minnesota's priority admissions law. A new task force will study the effect of the law, which determines when civilly committed individuals waiting in jails must be admitted to DCT treatment programs. They will make recommendations for changes to the law. *FY2024-25: \$108,000*

Related information

- [DHS 2023 session fact sheets](#)