



December 6, 2010

To: Members of the Special Committee on Review of Emergency Detention and Admission of Minors Under Chapter 51

From: George Quinn, Wisconsin Hospital Association, Senior Vice President
Matthew Stanford, Wisconsin Hospital Association, Associate Counsel
Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Wisconsin Counties Association, Senior Legislative Associate

Cc: Laura Rose, Deputy Director, Legislative Council
Richard Sweet, Senior Staff Attorney, Legislative Council

Re: Joint Wisconsin Hospital Association and Wisconsin Counties Association proposal to create a Wisconsin Emergency Detention Collaboration Council and develop emergency detention process and outcome measures.

Wisconsin's system for caring for individuals in need of emergency mental health care works best when county agencies, state agencies, private and public health care providers, law enforcement and patient and consumer advocates are working together. In some areas of the state, this collaboration is happening while in others it is not. Nor has there been a statewide forum for such collaboration.

The previous three meetings of the Study Committee have shown that 1) solutions to emergency detention problems can be found when stakeholders are working together, and 2) much more can be accomplished to improve Wisconsin's emergency mental health system if a structure were in place for key stakeholders to continue to meet, collaborate, and solve problems relating to emergency detentions.

Thus, to build on the momentum of the Study Committee, the Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin Hospital Association are jointly proposing that the Study Committee support **the creation of a non-statutory Wisconsin Emergency Detention Collaboration Council consisting of representatives from the following five stakeholder groups: County government, State government, health care providers, law enforcement, and patients/consumers.**

The purpose of the Council would be to bring the five stakeholder groups together into a common forum to work together to identify, communicate, and advocate for sustainable best practices relating to emergency detentions.

Key initial tasks of the Council would likely include:

- Identifying and communicating to stakeholders replicable and sustainable emergency mental health care best practices throughout Wisconsin;
- Identifying and understanding available data on emergency mental health care that is already being collected but sometimes not used;
- **Developing voluntary process and outcomes measures for emergency mental health care that can be used to improve Wisconsin's emergency detention system** (this is proposed as a preferred alternative to the last bullet point proposal on page 4 of the Legislative Council Staff Memorandum); and
- Encouraging similar stakeholder collaboration on a regional or local level.

Future roles of the Council could include providing a collaborative forum to discuss, identify, and possibly advocate for further statutory changes to improve Wisconsin's emergency detention system.

If supported by the Study Committee, the Wisconsin Counties Association and Wisconsin Hospital Association would lead the efforts to create this Council. The Council would be a private entity and would not require legislation to create. It is anticipated that this Council would begin meeting following the conclusion of the Study Committee and would meet approximately four times per year. Additional details, including particular invitees to the Council, would be determined in the near future.

We would be happy to discuss this proposal in greater detail with the Study Committee if that is desired.