

January 14, 1999

TO: The County Board of Arlington, Virginia

FROM: William T. Donahue, County Manager

SUBJECT: Appropriation of Funding from the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute for the Clarendon House Housing Counselor

RECOMMENDATION: Appropriate \$7,000 from revenue generated from the Memorandum of Agreement with the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute (001.0645) to the Department of Human Services (001.415) for the continuation of the housing counselor position at Clarendon House.

ISSUE: None.

BACKGROUND: Near the end of FY 1997, the Arlington County Board approved an allocation of \$19,470 from the Housing Fund Contingent (HFC) for a housing counselor position at Clarendon House. The funding was for one year only. The position was contracted out to Northern Virginia Family Service and the position has been filled since August 17, 1997. The housing counselor is located at the Clarendon House program and provides 20 hours per week of housing related service to seriously mentally ill individuals. The housing counselor works primarily with those individuals at Clarendon House who are living alone in their own apartments, have no formal support outside of Clarendon House and are at high risk for psychiatric hospitalization and eviction due to behaviors associated with their mental illness. The housing counselor provides comprehensive housing and case management services in order to prevent homelessness and to improve the housing situations of the individuals on her caseload. The housing counselor assists in providing an integrated system of service delivery in order to avoid any gaps in service delivery.

Performance and outcome measures have been collected since August 1997 to determine the effectiveness of the housing counselor's interventions. A clear need for this service has been documented; of the 27 persons served last fiscal year, four were evicted, but with the intervention of the housing counselor, none became homeless. Since the service of the housing counselor has been so effective and the HFC funding was only for one year, the Friends of Clarendon House sought new funding to sustain the position. In the fall of 1998, the Friends of Clarendon House were awarded \$13,000 from the Philip Graham Foundation to continue the position. This funding will run out in March 1999. In November 1998, the Clarendon House program entered into a Memorandum of Agreement

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with Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute to provide day support programming for 6 stable inpatients at the Institute. This partnership generates approximately \$350 a week in revenue from the Institute. In order to continue to provide the critical services offered by the housing counselor, it is recommended that this revenue be directed toward the funding of the housing counselor position. The long-term plan is to bill Medicaid for this service, which is now reimbursable under a new State Plan Option (SPO). Plans to accomplish this are already underway.

FISCAL IMPACT: These funds will fully support the activities and service of the housing counselor position; no local match is required. Medicaid funding will be sought to support the position beginning in Spring 1999.