Manatee County Behavioral Health Transportation Plan

in accordance with

Florida Statutes Chapter 394, Florida Mental Health Act / Baker Act
and Florida Statutes 397, Hal S. Marchman Alcohol and Drug Services Act

Three-Year Renewal
2019-2022

Submitted to:
Florida Department of Children and Families
Suncoast Region
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program Office

For approval by:
Chad Poppel
Cabinet Secretary
Florida Department of Children and Families
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INTRODUCTION

This Transportation Plan is developed to address and support the Designated Receiving System, in accordance with the changes enacted by 2016 Senate Bill 12 to Florida Statute Chapter 394.462 and 397.462 (Florida Mental Health Act, commonly referred to as the “Baker Act”) and Florida Statute Chapter 397.6795 (commonly referred to as the “Marchman Act). The Manatee County Acute Care System Task Force, which includes the Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, developed the Manatee County Behavioral Health Transportation Plan to provide a coordinated system for acute behavioral health care services in Manatee County. This established task force supports a comprehensive, efficient and successful system of acute care services per legislative intent. This Plan, as approved by the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners, is provided to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Suncoast Region Circuit 12 for approval from the Secretary of DCF.
**DEFINITIONS**

**Access center:** A facility that has medical, mental health, and substance abuse professionals to provide emergency screening and evaluation for mental health or substance abuse disorders and may provide transportation to an appropriate facility if an individual is in need of more intensive services.

**Addictions Receiving Facility:** A secure, acute care facility that, at a minimum, provides emergency screening, evaluation, detoxification, and stabilization services; is operated 24 hours per day, 7 days per week; and is designated by the department to serve individuals found to have substance abuse impairment who qualify for services under this part.

**Baker Act:** The Florida Mental Health Act.

**Behavioral Health:** Refers to either mental illness as defined in chapter 394, or substance abuse as defined in chapter 397, or co-occurring mental and substance use disorders.

**Behavioral Health Advanced Directive:** Written instructions prepared when the person is competent to do so which specify the behavioral health care that the individual does and does not want and that designates a health care surrogate to make those decisions for the individual at the time of crisis. Facilities are required to make reasonable efforts to honor those choices or transfer the individual to another facility that will honor those choices.

**Detoxification facility:** A facility licensed to provide detoxification services under chapter 397.

**Involuntary examination:** An examination performed under s. 394.463, s. 397.6772, s. 397.679, s. 397.6798, or s. 397.6811 to determine whether a person qualifies for involuntary services.

**Involuntary services:** Court-ordered outpatient or inpatient services for mental health treatment pursuant to s. 394.4655 or s. 394.467.

**Patient:** Any person, with or without a co-occurring substance abuse disorder, who is held or accepted for mental health treatment.

**Involuntary Examination:** An examination performed pursuant to F.S. 394.463 to determine if an individual qualifies for involuntary inpatient treatment under F.S. 394.3497(1) or involuntary outpatient treatment under F.S. 394.4655(1).

**Marchman Act:** The Hal S. Marchman Alcohol and Other Drug Services Act
**Mental Illness:** An impairment of the mental or emotional processes that exercise conscious control over one’s actions or the ability to perceive or understand reality, which impairment substantially interferes with the person’s ability to meet the ordinary demands of living. For the purposes of this part, the term does not include a developmental disability as defined in Chapter 393, intoxication, or conditions manifested only by antisocial behavior or substance abuse.

**Receiving Facility:** Any public or private facility designated by the Department of Children and Families to receive and hold involuntary patients under emergency conditions or for psychiatric evaluation and to provide short-term treatment. The term does not include a county jail.

**Private Receiving Facility:** Any hospital or facility operated by a for-profit or not-for-profit corporation or association that provides mental health services and is not a public facility.

**Public Receiving Facility:** Any public or private facility or hospital designated by the department to receive and hold or refer, as appropriate, involuntary patients under emergency conditions for mental health or substance abuse evaluation and to provide treatment or transportation to the appropriate service provider. The term does not include a county jail. Services shall be provided to all persons, regardless of their ability to pay, receiving state funds for such purposes.

**Warm Hand-Off:** An approach to proactively providing information and referral with a focus on patient-centered care, ensuring that the client is connected to a service provider that is able to provide what the clients wants and needs.

**Wellness Recovery Action Plan:** A self-designed prevention and wellness process that includes developing a written plan to inform others of what the individual does and does not want when unable to make personal decisions due to behavioral health crisis. This includes people who should be involved, acceptable medications and treatments, preferred treatment facilities, and how support persons will know the person is able to resume responsibility for his/her decisions.
BACKGROUND

This transportation plan describes how Manatee County shall support and facilitate access to the Designated Receiving System. This includes circumstances to guide selection of the most appropriate transportation method (i.e. law enforcement, emergency medical services, or mobile crisis); how transportation between participating facilities is handled (i.e. mental health transport services); and how respect for individual choice of service providers is prioritized (i.e. psychiatric advanced directives or crisis plans) for both voluntary and involuntary mental health examinations.

Prior to initial approval of the Manatee County Behavioral Health Transportation Plan of 2016, Florida statute required law enforcement to provide transportation of individuals of all ages to the nearest receiving facility for involuntary examination. For children, transfer to a facility with the capability to serve minors was then required, which results in unnecessary delays in the psychiatric examination, as well as increased secondary transfers.

Under the Federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) and Florida Statute 395, licensed hospitals are required to provide full medical screening and stabilization within the capability and capacity of the hospital, regardless of whether the facility has licensed psychiatric beds.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS AND OBJECTIVES:

The following objectives are met by establishing a Transportation Plan in Manatee County:

• Implements a coordinated system of transportation and access to emergency psychiatric examination services for children and adults for mental health and substance abuse health needs in Manatee County (F.S. 394.461(5)).
• In accordance with F.S. 394.462, assists law enforcement or any Manatee County-funded transportation with efficient transport of individuals in need of services to the most appropriate facility but limits police involvement with resources such as Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MRTs).
• Supports diversion from inpatient acute care through outpatient crisis intervention and mobile crisis stabilization, referral, linkage, and recovery support.
• Provides a dignified, humane, and streamlined method of transportation to and among acute care facilities, and for individuals in need of acute psychiatric care from nursing homes, assisted living facilities or other residential settings. Community education is provided when necessary.
• Describes methods of transportation to a facility within the designated receiving system for individuals subject to involuntary examination under F.S. 394.463 or involuntary admission under F.S. 397.6772, F.S. 397.679, F.S. 397.6798, or F.S. 397.6811.
• Provides specialized services to children and the elderly under a Baker Act.
• Enhances the ability to fully utilize the capacity of acute care services in the county and reduces the unnecessary delay of transfers between facilities.
• Diverts admissions to hospital emergency rooms and maintains updated policies on medical clearance.
• Provides an appropriate alternative to jail and the criminal justice system for persons with behavioral health (mental health and substance use) disorders.
• Assists law enforcement with Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training.
• Assists first responders with Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid (FMHFA/MHFA).
Ensures continuity and coordination of care among providers, including Care Coordination.
Prioritizes and promotes voluntary treatment over involuntary treatment, preserving civil rights, in all aspects of this plan.

The Manatee Transportation Plan endorses the authority of local law enforcement, emergency medical transport, or Mobile Crisis Response Teams, the County's privately subcontracted mental health transportation service, to transport adults in need of services who may not meet the criteria under the Baker Act or Marchman Act to the Central Receiving Facility for voluntary screening, assessment, triage, and linkage to care under the provisions of ss. 397.6772, 397.6795, 397.6822, and 397.697.

**THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOCUSES ON THE FOLLOWING POPULATIONS FOR BAKER ACTS:**

**Children and Adolescents Who Are Age 17 and Under**

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of children and adolescents under a Baker Act. Law enforcement agencies in Manatee County transport individuals age 17 and younger to Centerstone Behavioral Hospital and Addiction Center at 2020 26th Ave East in Bradenton—the designated children’s receiving facility. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Manatee County call the facility at 941-782-4600, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

**Adults Who Are Age 18-64**

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of adults that are age 18-64 under a Baker Act. Law enforcement agencies in Manatee County transport individuals that are age 18-64 to Centerstone Behavioral Hospital and Addiction Center at 2020 26th Ave East in Bradenton. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Manatee County call the facility at 941-782-4600, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that includes, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

**Individuals Who Are Age 65 and Older**

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of individuals who are age 65 and older under a Baker Act. Law enforcement agencies in Manatee County transport individuals 65 and older to Centerstone Behavioral Hospital and Addiction Center at 2020 26th Ave East in Bradenton. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Manatee County call the facility at 941-782-4600, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that should include, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

When possible, an individual who presents at either Baker Act Receiving Facility, to law enforcement, or an emergency care center should have a choice or the family should have a choice of which provider the individual receives services from in Manatee County. The individual’s preferred health insurance provider also guides this decision. If deemed to be in need of inpatient services, the individual is transported to the Manatee County receiving facility where his/her insurance benefits cover the cost of inpatient care, if requested by the individual or their family, when at all possible. Clinical and public safety circumstances are always assessed in the process.
Manatee County Behavioral Health Transportation Plan

**THIS PLAN FOCUSES ON THE FOLLOWING POPULATIONS FOR MARCHMAN ACTS:**

**Individuals who are age 18 and older**

The Transportation Plan addresses the needs of individuals who are 18 and older under a Marchman Act. Law enforcement agencies in Manatee County transport individuals under a Marchman Act to the Addictions Receiving Facility (ARF) at Centerstone of Florida, Inc. located at 2020 26th Ave East in Bradenton. In order to expedite the screening and assessment process, law enforcement agencies in Manatee County call the facility at **941-782-4150**, if possible, prior to arrival to provide personal information that should include, if known, name, age, birth date, social security number, apparent medical concerns, and any substance abuse concerns such as level of intoxication.

**Transportation**

Law enforcement agencies in Manatee County remain the responsible parties to transport those individuals in need of mental health services under the Baker Act or substance abuse services under the Marchman Act to the appropriate receiving facilities within Manatee County. However, in all instances possible, it is preferred that law enforcement provides transportation only when necessary and only when alternative options do not exist.

The appropriate facility within the designated receiving system must provide persons brought by law enforcement officers, a basic screening or triage sufficient to refer the person to the appropriate services.

When an individual has a medical issue that needs to be addressed or an intoxication level that is medically compromising, law enforcement or Emergency Medical Services transports the individual being detained under a Baker Act order to the nearest emergency care center for medical stabilization. When the individual has been stabilized, the emergency care center shall arrange for transportation to a more appropriate destination.

When any law enforcement officer has arrested a person for a **felony** and it appears that the person meets the statutory guidelines for involuntary examination or placement under this part, such person shall first be processed in the same manner as any other criminal suspect. The law enforcement agency shall thereafter immediately notify the nearest public receiving facility, which shall be responsible for promptly arranging for the examination and treatment of the person. A receiving facility is not required to admit a person charged with a crime for whom the facility determines and documents that it is unable to provide adequate security but shall provide mental health examination and treatment to the person where he or she is held.

When any law enforcement officer has custody of a person based on either **noncriminal or minor** criminal behavior that meets the statutory guidelines for involuntary examination under this part, the law enforcement officer shall transport the person to the nearest receiving facility for examination. The designated law enforcement agency may decline to transport to the centralized receiving facility if the law enforcement agency and the emergency medical transport service (i.e. emergency medical services, mental health transportation, or mobile crisis response team) agree that the continued presence of the law enforcement officer is not necessary for the safety of the person or others.
Once an individual is in a facility, there are occasions when that individual needs to be discharged from one facility and transferred to another facility. Transportation between facilities is coordinated by the transferring facility.

Upon completion of treatment for individuals who are designated “on hold” as a result of being booked prior to treatment, the receiving facility is required to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency to arrange for transportation to the Manatee County Jail.

If the individual being detained by a Marchman Act order is combative or uncooperative, law enforcement transports the individual directly to the Manatee County Jail.

If the ARF is at capacity, transport will be to the Manatee County Jail unless the individual is medically compromised which will require transport to the nearest hospital. When stabilized, the hospital will call the ARF to determine when a bed will be available.

COMMUNITY NEED AND SUPPORT:

The purpose of the Behavioral Health Acute Care Systems Taskforce is to discuss the operations of the Manatee County Transportation Plan. The Taskforce meets regularly to discuss grievances, public satisfaction, and assurance of patient rights as related to this plan.

The Acute Care Systems Taskforce is comprised of, but not limited to, representatives of the following agencies:

- Blake Hospital
- Bradenton Police Department, Bradenton Beach Police Department
- Centerstone of Florida, Inc.
- Central Florida Behavioral Health Network
- City of Holmes Beach Police Department
- City of Palmetto Police Department
- Coastal Behavioral Healthcare
- Department of Children and Families
- Doctors Hospital
- First Step of Sarasota
- Florida Highway Patrol
- Lakewood Ranch Medical Center
- Longboat Key Police Department
- Manatee County Neighborhood Services Department
- Manatee County Jail
- Manatee County Public Safety Department
- Manatee County Sheriff’s Office
- Manatee Memorial Health Systems
- NAMI of Sarasota and Manatee Counties
- Naphcare Correctional Health Services
- Sarasota Memorial Hospital
- Suncoast Behavioral Health Center
- Turning Points
INTERORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION:

Implementing an excellent Transportation Plan on behalf of persons in need of behavioral health services requires a significant amount of cooperation, commitment and collaboration from all parties involved. Besides having the strong support of law enforcement and the behavioral health providers, Manatee County hospitals have engaged in a public planning process which has strengthened the relationships between all parties responsible for implementing the Transportation Plan in Manatee County. The community support for this plan is evidenced by the attached letters.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

The ultimate accountability under the Plan lies with the State of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). The public official responsible for overseeing the Plan is the DCF Regional Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) Program Director. This Office retains the administrative authority to resolve issues concerning the Transportation Plan, approve interagency agreements, as well as coordinate other services needed for individuals beyond acute care services. The Regional DCF office also has a working relationship with the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) if issues arise beyond the department’s authority.

In Manatee County, the DCF Suncoast Region SAMH Program Office contracts with the Managing Entity (ME), Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (CFBHN) to oversee and manage the community-based behavioral health system with the most direct services contracted with non-profit behavioral health service providers. CFBHN has contracted with Centerstone of Florida, Inc. to operate the Central Receiving System (CRS) in partnership with Manatee’s community providers.

The DCF Suncoast Region SAMH Program Office, in collaboration with CFBHN, Manatee County Government, and the Acute Care Systems Taskforce, facilitates bi-monthly Task Force Meetings, and participates on time-limited or ongoing subcommittees, such as with components of the Transportation Plan. The public/private forum is used to oversee and coordinate the operational system. All members of the public are welcome to attend and bring acute care issues to the Task Force for resolution.

The DCF SAMH Office is responsible for the following, either directly or by delegation from Manatee County Acute Care Systems Taskforce for:

- Ongoing system oversight
- Safeguarding the rights of individuals in service delivery
- Regularly scheduled monitoring of the quality of services through contract review
- Designating and monitoring receiving facilities, treatment facilities, and receiving systems
- Assisting to resolve issues between providers or with the ME, if not resolved in Acute Care Systems Taskforce
- Participating in Subcommittees of the Acute Care Systems Taskforce
- Collecting data and reporting on the designated receiving system, including success in diverting individuals from acute care inpatient services, jails and forensic facilities
  - Using data not limited to the Acute Care Services Utilization Database

The Acute Care Systems Taskforce includes representatives from County and municipal law enforcement agencies, the Manatee County funded mental health transportation provider, the receiving facilities, hospitals, and funders. This Taskforce meets no less than quarterly to monitor and analyze data that will determine if individuals are moving through the acute care receiving system in a timely and patient-
centered manner. The Taskforce also evaluates the Plan to determine whether there has been an improvement in the acute care system.

In effort to resolve complaints, grievances, and disputes which may arise during implementation of the Plan, personnel from Centerstone Behavioral Hospital and Addiction Center and personnel from Suncoast Behavioral Health will meet regularly. The Acute Care Systems Taskforce will implement necessary actions in response to its ongoing review and any public or Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (CFBHN) or DCF review. The Suncoast Region DCF, SAMH Program Office, and CFBHN are responsible for providing oversight to the Transportation Plan.

**TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**Geographic Area**

This plan will include areas within Manatee County boundaries.

**Designated Receiving System**

Florida Statutes 394 and 397 outline the different ways persons may access acute care services through the designated receiving system.

Voluntary and Involuntary stabilization may be initiated by the following means:

- **Ex parte order issued by a circuit or county court.** In those cases, law enforcement shall take the person into protective custody and deliver him or her to the appropriate facility within the Designated Receiving System. In Manatee County, the Manatee County Sheriff’s Office is the designated Law Enforcement Agency to execute ex parte orders.

- **A mental health examination initiated by qualified professional that is conducted by a physician, psychiatrist or a physician’s assistant under chapter 458 or chapter 459; a psychologist (s. 490.003(7) or a professional licensed under chapter 491; or a psychiatric nurse (s. 394.455) may execute a professional certificate of emergency admission.**
  
  - Professionals who initiate a certificate for emergency admission under 397.679 must indicate whether the person requires transportation assistance for delivery for emergency admission and specify the type of assistance necessary.

- **Under 397.679, a parent, guardian, or legal custodian may initiate a request for involuntary assessment of a minor child by filing an application at a juvenile Addictions Receiving Facility. Manatee County does not have a juvenile Addictions Receiving Facility.**

- **Protective custody: A law enforcement officer may take a person who appears to meet criteria for involuntary examination or assessment for psychiatric or substance abuse into protective custody and provide transportation for him or her to the appropriate facility within the Designated Receiving System, executing a written report of the circumstances.**
Mental Health Evaluation OR Baker Act

Criteria:
A person may be taken to a receiving facility for involuntary examination if there is reason to believe that the person has a mental illness and due to their mental illness, the person refused examination after a conscientious explanation and disclosure of the purpose of the examination; the person is unable to determine for him/herself whether examination is necessary; or, without care or treatment, the person is likely to suffer from neglect or refuse to care for themselves such that it poses a real and present threat of substantial harm to their well-being.

For adults accessing services through s 394.4625 or 394.463, Centerstone is the DCF designated Public Receiving Facility, operating a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) to screen, assess, admit, or refer individuals in need of emergency and non-emergency psychiatric treatment and may initiate an involuntary Baker Act for patients in need of psychiatric treatment who are also involuntary.

❖ Centerstone Hospital and Addiction Center
2020 26th Ave East. Bradenton, Florida

The following Private Receiving Facilities also operate within Manatee County:

❖ Suncoast Behavioral Health Center
4480 51st St W, Bradenton, FL

Law enforcement will transport individuals under 18 years of age for whom an involuntary examination has been initiated to the designated receiving facility that serves minors that is closest to the location in which the child has been taken into protective custody. If a minor is transported to an adult facility in error, the adult facility is responsible for transferring the youth to an appropriate facility, in compliance with federal and state law.

Involuntary examinations may be initiated by one of the following means under the Baker Act as outlined in s. 394.436.

• A circuit or county court may enter an ex parte order stating that a person appears to meet the criteria for involuntary examination and specifying the findings on which that conclusion is based. The ex parte order for involuntary examination must be based on written or oral sworn testimony that includes specific facts that support the findings. If other less restrictive means are not available, such as voluntary appearance for outpatient evaluation, a law enforcement officer or other designated agent of the court, shall take the person into custody and deliver him or her to an appropriate, or the nearest facility within the designated receiving system pursuant to s. 394.462 for involuntary examination. The order shall be valid only until the person is delivered to the facility or for the period specified in the order itself, whichever comes first. If no time limit is specified in the order the order shall be valid for 7 days after the date that the order was signed.
• A law enforcement officer shall take a person who appears to meet the criteria for involuntary examination into custody and deliver the person or have the person delivered to an appropriate, or the nearest facility within the designated receiving system pursuant to s. 394.462 for examination.
• A physician, clinical psychologist, psychiatric nurse, mental health counselor, marriage and family therapist or clinical social worker may execute a certificate stating that he or she has
examined a person within the preceding 48 hours and find that the person appears to meet
the criteria for involuntary examination and stating the observations upon which the
conclusion was made. If other less restrictive means, such as voluntary appearance for
outpatient evaluation, are not available, a law enforcement officer shall take the person into
custody and deliver the person to the appropriate, or nearest, facility within the designated
receiving system pursuant to s. 394.462 for involuntary examination.

Mental Health Evaluation for Adults (18-64):
1. Centerstone Behavioral Health Hospital (941-782-4600)
2. Suncoast Behavioral Health Center (941-251-5000)
3. Centerstone will serve as the Centralized Receiving Facility when no preference is provided

Mental Health Evaluation for Seniors (64 +):
1. Suncoast Behavioral Health Center (941-251-5000)
2. Centerstone will serve as the Centralized Receiving Facility when no preference is provided

Children (17 and under):
1. Suncoast Behavioral Health Center (941-251-5000)
2. Centerstone Behavioral Health Hospital (941-782-4600)

Substance Use Evaluation OR Marchman Act

Criteria:
A person may be taken to an Addictions Receiving Facility if there is good faith to believe that they are
substance abuse impaired, and due to this impairment, the person has lost self-control with respect to
their substance use; and, has inflicted or threatened harm on themselves or others, or if not admitted,
poses the likelihood to inflict harm on themselves or others; or, the person needs substance abuse
services but due to their impairment, their judgement renders them incapable of appreciating the need
for receiving services.

Adults accessing substance use evaluation services through 397.675, Centerstone is the DCF designated
Addictions Receiving Facility, operating a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) to screen, assess, admit, or refer
individuals in need of emergency and non-emergency substance use treatment and may initiate an
involuntary Marchman Act for patients in need of substance use treatment who are also involuntary.

❖ Centerstone Hospital and Addiction Center
2020 26th Ave East. Bradenton, Florida

Involuntary examinations may be initiated by various means under the Marchman Act as outlined in s.
397.601; and s. 397.675, F.S.

• Marchman Act. Professionals who initiate a certificate for emergency admission under §
397.679, F.S., must indicate whether the person requires transportation assistance for
delivery for emergency admission to an Addictions Receiving Facility (ARF) and specify the
type of assistance necessary, as specified in § 397.6793(5), F.S.
• A physician, clinical psychologist, physician’s assistant, certified psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP), licensed mental health counselor, licensed clinical social worker, licensed marriage and family therapist, or for substance abuse services only, a master’s level certified addictions professional (CAP), may execute a professional certificate.

• Marchman Act. Under § 397.6798, F.S., a parent, guardian, or legal custodian may initiate a request for involuntary assessment of a minor child by filing an application at a Juvenile Addictions Receiving Facility (JARF).

• Protective custody: A law enforcement officer may take a person who appears to meet criteria for involuntary examination or assessment into custody and transport him or her to the appropriate facility within the Designated Receiving System, executing a written report of the circumstances. When the criterion involves substance abuse, § 397.6772(1)(b), F.S., allows law enforcement to detain adults in jail for their own protection, which is not considered an arrest. In Manatee County, the community standard is that jail is the option of last resort.

**Methods of Transportation:**

The Manatee County Sheriff’s Office (MSO) is designated by this plan as the Law Enforcement Agency within Manatee County to take a person into protective custody upon the entry of an ex parte order and to transport that person to the appropriate facility within the designated receiving system for examination.

While the Manatee County Sheriff’s Office is designated to transport individuals under The Mental Health Act, all law enforcement agencies within Manatee County may take a person within their jurisdiction into protective custody and transport that person to the appropriate facility within the designated receiving system for examination.

Law enforcement may decline to provide transportation only if the county has Mobile Crisis Response Teams in place or a private transport company for transportation of persons to receiving facilities at the sole cost to the county; and if law enforcement and the medical transportation service provider agree that the continued presence of law enforcement is not necessary for the safety of the person or others. Centerstone is contracted to provide both of these services.

As required under s 394.462, all other law enforcement agencies within Manatee County have established policies that reflect a single set of protocols for the safe and secure transportation and transfer of protective custody of a person subject to involuntary examination under s. 394.463. These policies are maintained by the Law Enforcement Agencies and have been submitted to the Managing Entity.

As part of this Transportation Plan, CFBHN has contracted with Centerstone to provide Mobile Crisis Response Teams for alternate, non-law enforcement transportation for persons experiencing a behavioral health crisis. The Manatee Board of County Commissioners has also contracted with Centerstone to provide Mental Health Transportation Services.

Centerstone is not responsible for transporting all individuals for involuntary examination under FS 394 or FS 397. Law Enforcement, along with Manatee County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) medical professionals and any involved clinicians, must make appropriate professional judgments based on the individual circumstances of each situation, to determine if the individual must be transported by law enforcement due to public safety concerns.
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Law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) have extensive experience in transporting individuals with behavioral health needs and will continue to exercise their professional judgment to provide transportation for individuals in need of emergency behavioral health care to the appropriate designated receiving facility in the safest and most respectful manner possible.

If a law enforcement officer takes an individual to a designated receiving facility contrary to this Transportation Plan, the individual will be accepted, assessed, and triaged as required by statute and may be transferred by the facility in accordance with state and federal laws.

**Mobile Crisis Response Teams:**

Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MRTs) improve behavioral health services by providing on-demand crisis intervention services in any setting in which a behavioral health crisis is occurring, including homes, schools, and emergency departments. MRTs are available 24/7 to provide on-site crisis intervention within 60 minutes, ensure timely access to supports and services, and resolve crises. Services include evaluation and assessment, development of safety or crisis plans, providing or facilitating stabilization services, supportive crisis counseling, education, development of coping skills, and linkage to appropriate resources. A primary goal of MRTs is to prevent unnecessary psychiatric hospitalizations. MRTs can also serve as a mechanism of jail diversion in reducing arrest of criminal offenders who have a mental health disorder, are experiencing serious emotional distress, and/or threatening self-harm.

MRT intervention during a developing mental health crisis can reduce over-reliance on law enforcement responses to less-urgent, non-life-threatening emergencies. MRTs are comprised of clinicians who have the formal training and know-how to effectively resolve mental health crises and potentially reduce use of the Baker or Marchman Act and law enforcement transport when an individual is experiencing a psychiatric crisis.

**Oversight and Monitoring:**

The SAMH Regional Director is the public official whose position is responsible for the continuing oversight and monitoring of the Plan’s implementation in compliance with the terms of the approval proposal. All Public and Private Baker Act Receiving Facilities are monitored by DCF/SAMH on a regular schedule. This monitoring involves contact with selected law enforcement agencies to confirm that receiving facilities are responding as required by law to persons presenting for involuntary examination. Regular input is further sought from providers, law enforcement, families, consumers, and government officials as part of the designation process.

The Acute Care Systems Taskforce will meet regularly, to receive and review standard reports related to this transportation plan. These reports include, but are not limited to:

1. Issues related to the Plan;
2. Grievances from consumers who receive emergency examination services;
3. Performance measurement, accountability, and enhancement plans;
4. Data provided by the Acute Care Services Utilization Database;
5. Utilization data (Mental Health/Substance Use Examinations and Admissions);
6. Criminal Justice Diversion;
7. Involuntary examination and in-patient admission reduction;
8. Mobile Crisis Response Team intervention;
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9. Peer Support/Coach Services;
10. Recovery Pod at Manatee County Jail;
11. Identification of high-need utilizers and contributing factors as identified by CRF and CFBHN;
12. Readmissions to acute care by fiscal year and average length of stay;
13. Referrals to higher levels of care by type (Number, Gender, Wait Time);
14. Overflow issues identified by the Rotation System; and
14. Successes of the Plan

SYSTEM CAPACITY

ADULTS

- Centerstone Hospital and Addiction Center, located at 2020 26th Ave East, Bradenton, Florida is a public receiving facility licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to operate 25 Crisis Stabilization Unit beds for adults and minors. Centerstone also operates a 30-bed licensed private psychiatric hospital consisting of 18 adult mental health beds and 12 adult substance abuse beds. At all times, Centerstone will maintain the current number of publicly funded beds serving the needs of Manatee County residents.
- Suncoast Behavioral Health Center, located at 4480 51st St W, Bradenton, FL is a private psychiatric hospital licensed by AHCA to operate 60 beds consisting of 40 adult mental health beds and 20 minor mental health beds.
- Blake Hospital, Manatee Memorial Hospital, Lakewood Ranch Medical Center, and Doctors Freestanding Emergency Department are not receiving facilities, but are responsible to evaluate, treat and transfer persons in need of mental health and addiction treatment as part of their emergency department. This is in accordance with federal (EMTALA) emergency care rules and the medical treatment aspect of the plan applies to Manatee Memorial Hospital, Blake Hospital and Lakewood Ranch Medical Center.
- The receiving facilities will notify the Acute Care Systems Taskforce of any changes in system bed capacity.

CHILDREN

- Centerstone Hospital and Addiction Center, located at 2020 26th Ave East, Bradenton, Florida is a public receiving facility licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to operate 25 Crisis Stabilization Unit beds for adults and minors. At all times, Centerstone will maintain the current number of publicly funded beds serving the needs of Manatee County residents.
- Suncoast Behavioral Health Center, located at 4480 51st St W, Bradenton, FL is a private psychiatric hospital licensed by AHCA to operate 60 beds including 20 minor mental health beds.
- Blake Hospital, Manatee Memorial Hospital and Lakewood Ranch Medical Center are not receiving facilities, but are responsible to evaluate, treat and transfer persons in need of mental health and addiction treatment as part of their emergency department. This is in accordance with federal (EMTALA) emergency care rules and the medical treatment aspect of the plan applies to Manatee Memorial Hospital, Blake Hospital and Lakewood Ranch Medical Center.
• The receiving facilities will notify the Acute Care Systems Taskforce of any changes in bed capacity.

MEDICAL CLEARANCE:

When necessary, law enforcement will request Emergency Medical Services to provide transportation of individuals to a hospital for physical health conditions that are beyond the safe management capability of law enforcement and the behavioral health receiving facilities.

As referenced in Florida Statute 394.462, any individual who needs immediate non-behavioral health emergency services will be transported to the nearest emergency department regardless of its capacity to address the behavioral health problem. Emergency Medical Services will at all times follow the current Manatee County EMS protocols. These facilities include Manatee Memorial Hospital, Blake Hospital, Lakewood Ranch Medical Center, or Doctors Freestanding Emergency Department.

Transportation between facilities will be arranged by the facility sending the individual to address the behavioral health crisis after the medical emergency has been resolved.

It is not possible for this Plan to outline every potential factor that may affect the decision on the method of transportation. However, in all cases the primary consideration is safety for the person in crisis and all others who are involved; and providing dignity, respect, and humane treatment for the individuals served.

Once the individual is “medically cleared” the medical facility will find the Receiving Facility that best suits that individual’s needs. Transportation from one facility to another will be coordinated and paid for by the transferring facility. A non-emergent medical transportation company may provide this service. Law Enforcement is not responsible to provide transportation from one facility to another.

Florida Statute 394.4685 affirms that a patient who has been admitted to a public receiving or public treatment facility and has requested, either personally or through his or her guardian or guardian advocate, and is able to pay for treatment in a private facility shall be transferred at the patient’s expense to a private facility upon acceptance of the patient by the private facility. Law enforcement is not responsible for transportation between facilities.

CONTINUING TREATMENT:

Further treatment, case management, recovery-oriented services and co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder services are coordinated with the following organizations that are an integral part of the Manatee County behavioral health service delivery system and includes those under contract with Central Florida Behavioral Health Network:

• Centerstone of Florida, Inc.
• Suncoast Behavioral Health Centers
• MCR Health Services – a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
• First Step of Sarasota
• Operation PAR
CHOICE:

Individual and family preference is a core tenant of this Plan. All persons will be provided an opportunity to voice their preference in where to receive mental health evaluation services. If a person presents to a facility or to law enforcement and a specific hospital within the county is preferred, the person may be transported directly to that facility under this Plan. If the person’s preference for examination is outside of the county, arrangements for transfer may be coordinated between the facilities however the County reserves no responsibilities with the transfer or transport for services provided outside of the county. The Centralized Receiving Facility serves as the centralized screening facility for persons in Manatee County without an emergency medical condition.

Voluntary Examination

The examination period must be for up to 72 hours. For a minor, the examination shall be initiated within 12 hours after the patient’s arrival at the facility. To optimize choice, and to reduce the dependency or potential misuse of the Baker Act’s involuntary admission, any individual in receipt of psychiatric emergency evaluation shall be provided the full extent of the examination period to optimize stabilization of crisis and/or voluntary admission to treatment services, provided the medical necessity of these services are necessary and the examination period is to expire. Within the 72-hour examination period, or if the examination period ends on a weekend or holiday, no later than the next working day thereafter, the individual:

1. Must be released, unless charged with a crime, for voluntary outpatient services;
2. Must be released, unless charged with a crime, and asked to give/express informed consent to voluntary admission;
3. Must be released, unless charged with a crime, in which case they are returned to the custody of law enforcement; or
4. A petition for involuntary services must be filled in the circuit or criminal court, as applicable, if inpatient admission is deemed necessary AND the individual is asked to give/express informed consent to voluntary admission AND the individual has declined the necessary services AND the full extent of the examination period is expired.

OVERFLOW PLAN:

A Rotation System for the transfer of individuals from the Central Intake Unit to other designated Baker Act receiving facilities when all CSU bed capacity was occupied. Centerstone will serve as the coordinator of this plan, and upon reaching capacity, direct the movement of indigent and paying patients among area designated receiving facilities. The DCF Suncoast Region SAMH Program Office monitors the Rotation System to ensure that individual rights are not violated and that there is capacity for both indigent and insured persons transferred among area receiving facilities.

As demand increased over the years, the rotation system gave way to an e-fax model to expedite service delivery. With this model, if a person does not have a preferred provider, the referral is e-faxed to the designated receiving facilities, and the individual is transferred to Centerstone. The Health Information Exchange (HIE) is the preferred e-fax method to ensure rapid communications and access to patient treatment history, to efficiently and effectively address acute medical and psychiatric needs.
OTHER RESOURCES TO OPTIMIZE FUNCTIONING OF THE PLAN

Crisis Intervention Training and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

The Manatee County Sheriff’s Office in collaboration with community behavioral health providers and persons and families receiving services has implemented a Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) program involving multiple law enforcement agencies in Manatee County. The training program is based on the Memphis Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), an evidence-based first responder program that has become nationally known as the “Memphis Model” of pre-arrest jail diversion for those in behavioral health crisis. The program provides law enforcement-based crisis intervention training for helping those individuals with behavioral health disorders. Officer involvement in CIT is voluntary and interested officers must apply to be considered for CIT training/team, as with any other law enforcement specialty. CIT works in partnership with those in behavioral health care to provide a system of services that is friendly to individuals with behavioral health disorders, family members, and the police officers. The CIT model includes 40 hours of training incorporating modules on: Voluntary mental health and substance use examination, Involuntary examination under the Baker Act and Marchman Act, Transportation Plan, signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance abuse impairment, how to intervene with persons in behavioral health crisis, de-escalation skills, utilization of Mobile Crisis Response Teams, centralized transportation to Central Intake Unit, when to request transportation from the County’s contracted transportation provider, person-served and family viewpoints and interaction, and other vital skills.

Crisis intervention teams are most successful when a significant majority of law enforcement officers have completed the 40-hour specialized training and when a CIT team or other specially trained team of law enforcement officers is designated to respond to mental health crises. CIT Teams include a licensed behavioral health clinician (i.e. Licensed Mental Health Counselor or a Licensed Clinical Social Worker).

No Wrong Door

Manatee County chose the Central Receiving System Model. The Central Receiving Facility (CRF) provides a comprehensive and efficient “no wrong door” to the Designated Receiving System for persons in crisis. Individuals and families, first responders, and law enforcement do not have to spend time determining the appropriate service agency or providing secondary transport if they choose the “wrong” facility. This model enables law enforcement officers to return to patrol more quickly. The CRF offers prompt access to screening and triage, and to crisis stabilization on an outpatient or inpatient basis (CSU or Detox). The CRF serves persons age 18 and over. Youths age 17 and under will continue to be transported to the most appropriate Baker Act or Marchman Act designated receiving facility. The CRF also provides Care Coordination for persons who meet criteria for high need/high utilization of acute care. For purposes of the Designated Receiving System, this is defined as three or more acute inpatient episodes of care or having stayed sixteen or more days in a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) or Addictions Receiving Facility (ARF), within a six-month period.

Care Coordination

Manatee County chose the Central Receiving System Model. Care Coordination among the CRFs and the Designated Receiving System as a whole is intended to enhance the delivery of treatment services and recovery supports and to improve outcomes among priority populations. Care Coordination implements deliberate and planned organizational relationships and service procedures that improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the behavioral health system by engaging in purposeful interactions with
individuals who are not yet effectively connected with services to ensure service linkage. These connections include behavioral health, primary care, peer and natural supports, housing, education, vocation, and the justice systems. Examples of Care Coordination include development of referral agreements, shared protocols, and procedures for information exchange. It is a time-limited resource with a heavy concentration on educating and empowering the person served and provides a single point of contact until a person is adequately connected to the care that meets their needs.

**Peer Coach/Support Services**

Since 2017, Designated Receiving Systems in Florida are assessed annually on their availability of treatment and recovery services that use recovery-oriented and peer-oriented approaches. Peer support programs employ peers who have lived experience of overcoming addiction as “recovery coaches” to assist individuals currently struggling with addiction in the recovery process. Given the human and other costs related to the opioid epidemic in Manatee County, the 2015-2020 Manatee Community Health Improvement Plan identified the decrease of substance use, overdoses, and co-occurring behavioral disorders as one of nine strategic issues. One recommendation to address this strategic issue was the establishment of a peer coach service. In partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families’ managing entity, CFBHN, First Step of Sarasota provides independent peer coach services.

Peer Support services are offered to each individual who encounters the CRF, to promote engagement, inspire recovery, provide advocacy for client-driven treatment, and to reduce unnecessary use of the Baker Act or Marchman Act for those who are in crisis.