

# SB 418 Study: Legislative Mental Health Investments

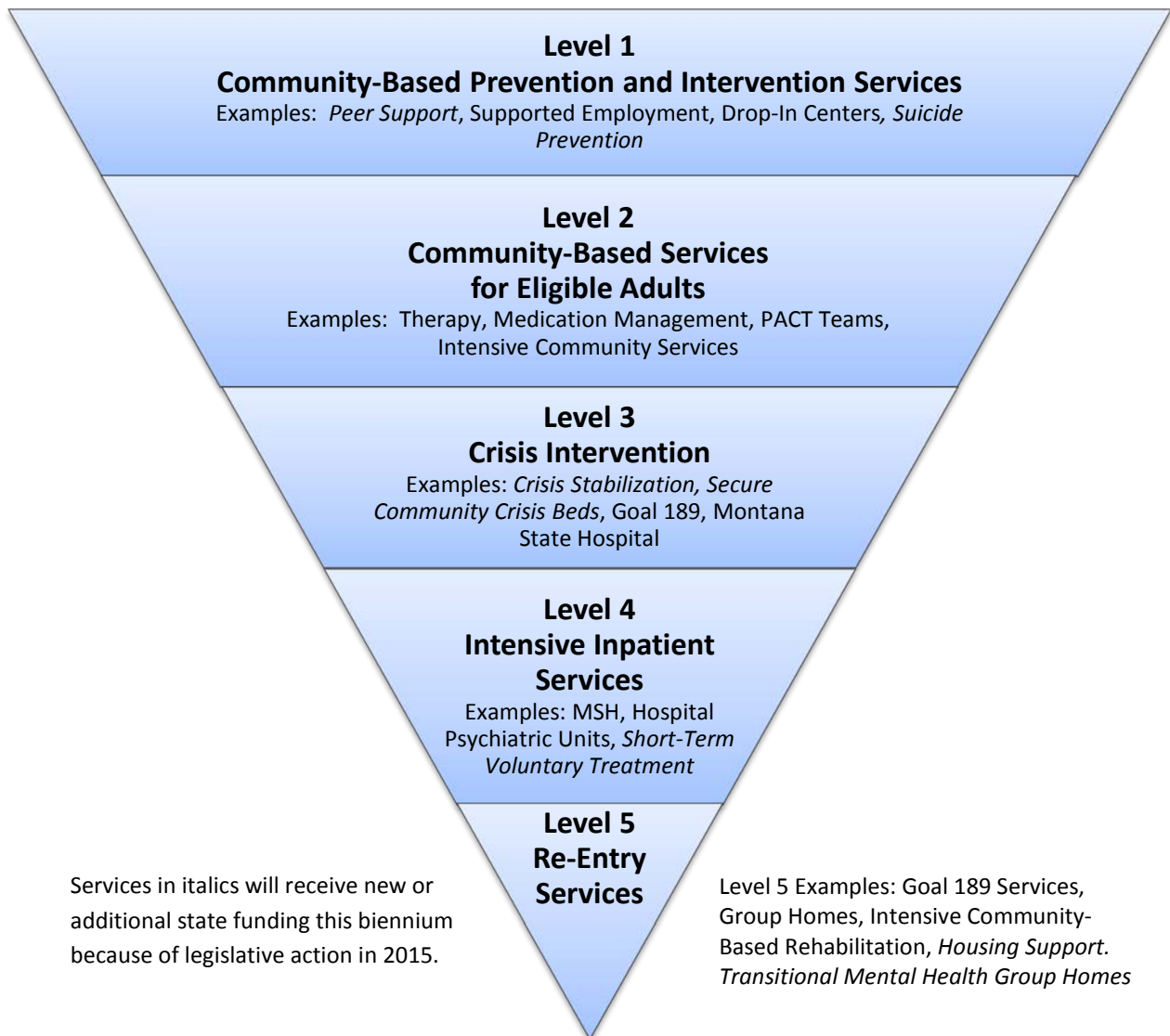
## Continuum of Mental Health Services

Prepared for the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee  
August 2015

### Background

Montana's publicly funded mental health system serves about 22,000 adults, with services that range from outpatient programs provided in the community to intensive inpatient treatment at the Montana State Hospital for people who have been involuntarily committed because they pose a danger to themselves or others.

The inverted pyramid below provides a general overview of the continuum of mental health services and – for purposes of this briefing paper only – describes “levels” of services. Level 1 and Level 2 services are provided in the least restrictive setting possible. As services go up in the level of intensity, the number of people receiving the services decreases and the services are provided in more restrictive settings. The levels are described in more detail on P. 2.



### Eligibility for Community Mental Health Services

Most community-based mental health services are provided to individuals who qualify for either:

- the Montana Medicaid program, because they meet income and other eligibility guidelines. Currently, people generally must be blind, disabled, 65 years of age or older, pregnant, or have dependent children to qualify. When Medicaid expansion goes into effect as authorized by Senate Bill 405, all adults who are 19 to 64 years of age will qualify if they meet the income standard.
- the Mental Health Services Plan (MHSP), because they are ineligible for Medicaid but have an income at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level and also have a Severe Disabling Mental Illness. This diagnosis requires that a person have one of several specific mental disorders and must have experienced at least two out of five specific functional difficulties for at least six months.

A few services are provided to any uninsured or underinsured Montanans who need them – primarily crisis intervention, crisis stabilization, and jail diversion. These services are offered through contracts with community providers and through programs developed by counties that have received state grants to develop specific jail diversion or crisis intervention programs.

### About the Levels of Services

This briefing paper divides the continuum of services into five general levels. Following is a brief description of the levels and an indication of where the new mental health money approved by the 2015 Legislature fits within the continuum.

- Level 1 includes a range of evidence-based programs provided in the community to people with a serious mental illness regardless of eligibility for Medicaid or MHSP. Services include drop-in centers, peer support, and supported employment. The new House Bill 2 funding for peer support and youth suicide prevention fits within this level.
- Level 2 includes community-based treatment services for individuals enrolled in Medicaid or MHSP. Services range from individual and group therapy to medication management to more intensive services, such as Program for Assertive Community Treatment teams and psychiatric rehabilitation services. HB 2 funding for home and community-based waiver slots falls into this level.
- Level 3 includes intensive treatment for people who are in crisis. These services often are provided in a secure setting to individuals who are under an emergency detention or court-ordered detention or who may be in danger of being involuntarily committed to MSH. Services include crisis stabilization, secure community-based treatment, emergency detention at MSH, intensive services to prevent re-admission to MSH, and Crisis Intervention Team training for law enforcement officers. HBs 33, 34, and 35 and HB funding for 72-hour presumptive eligibility and county grants fall into this level.
- Level 4 includes intensive inpatient services for people who pose a danger to themselves or others. Treatment could occur at the Montana State Hospital or a hospital psychiatric unit. HB 35 funding for voluntary short-term inpatient treatment falls into this level.
- Level 5 includes intensive outpatient services or supports provided to help people successfully return to the community after inpatient treatment and avoid readmission to the MSH. Services range from short-term support for housing or medication expenses to therapeutic group homes and intensive rehabilitation beds. HB 2 money for housing support and transitional mental health group homes falls into this category. CI0425 5229soxa.docx