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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL

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Commissioner

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September 4, 2019

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, New Hampshire Hospital to accept and expend Trust Funds in the amount of \$92,000 from the NH Hospital Trust Funds to replace deteriorated patient furnishings and further authorize the funds to be allocated as follows effective upon Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2020. 100% Other Funds.

05-95-94-940010-71180000-HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, DEPT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, HHS: NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL; GROUP A TRUST FUNDS.

Class/Object	Class Title	Current Authorized Budget	Increase (Decrease) Amount	Revised Budget
Revenue				
005-404109	Private Local Funds	\$184,493	\$92,000	\$276,493
Expenses				
054-500526	Trust Fund Expenditures	\$184,493	\$92,000	\$276,493

EXPLANATION

This request is for authorization to accept and expend an amount not to exceed \$92,000 to cover the cost of replacing patient furnishings on one unit within New Hampshire Hospital's Acute Psychiatric Facilities. Funds are available from various trust funds that were made expressly for the benefit of patients at the NH Hospital through numerous bequeathals. These resources, categorized as Private Purpose and Permanent Funds in the state Comprehensive Financial Audit Report, are legally restricted to the extent that principal and earnings may be used for purposes that benefit the patients in accordance with the bequests. Through conservative spending and prudent investment management, the trust portfolio is in a unique position to contribute to the patient experience in a positive and necessary manner.

The facility was originally furnished in 1989, much of which is still in use although far exceeding their useful life. The current conditions pose safety and environmental concerns to patient and staff. This initiative is part of a redesign of NHH to respond to the changing needs of care management, patient safety and regulatory requirements.

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Risks are inherent in the psychiatric health environment because of the unpredictable and often violent nature of the clientele. The furnishings in psychiatric facilities are under constant duress not present in traditional hospital settings. The best way to manage these risks is through a systematic approach that involves proactive evaluation of the harm that could occur. Beginning in March 2017, the Joint Commission began emphasizing assessment of ligature, suicide, and self-harm observations in psychiatric hospitals and inpatient psychiatric patient areas in general hospitals. Each observation of a ligature or self-harm risk will be considered a requirement for improvement (RFI). NHH is taking a proactive approach to comply with these requirements prior to the next Joint Commission review to mitigate the findings and improve the patient experience.

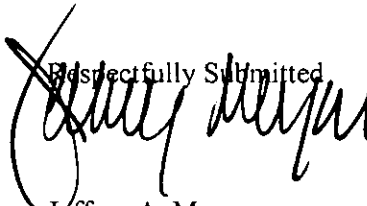
Additional concerns must be addressed when designing behavioral health facilities for child and adolescent patients, patients with medical care needs, geriatric patients, or some patients with dual diagnoses such as substance abuse and eating disorders. These furnishing will focus on the child and adolescent needs as well as geriatrics which represents a rapidly expanding and challenging population.

In anticipation of the questions "Why wasn't funding included in the agency's budget request?" and "Can portions of the funds be utilized for other purposes?" the Division offers the following information: Sufficient funding was included in the Department's pending FY 2020-2021 Operating Budget Proposal. And secondly, trust funds earnings may only be used for the express purposes as per the bequests.

Area served: Patients at Acute Psychiatric Facilities

Source of funds: 100% Other Funds

In the event that these Other Funds become no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey A. Meyers
Commissioner, DHHS