

**FOLLOW-UP: 2000 MENTAL  
HEALTH PERFORMANCE AUDIT**  
Full Report 01-7, [click here](#)  
**BRIEFING REPORT 01-7**

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**DIGEST**  
JUNE 27, 2001

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STATE OF WASHINGTON  
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**FOLLOW-UP: 2000 MENTAL HEALTH PERFORMANCE  
AUDIT**

**Background:** The 1999 Legislature mandated a broad performance audit of Washington's public mental health system to include the roles and responsibilities of the different organizations involved, the cost and outcomes of mental health services, and the allocation of funding to the 14 county-operated Regional Support Networks (RSNs). JLARC completed its mandated performance audit of the mental health system in 2000 and made 14 recommendations geared to improving the performance of our mental health system.

JLARC will periodically follow-up with the Department of Social and Health Services, Mental Health Division (MHD), about their progress in implementing these recommendations. On June 27, 2001, the Mental Health Division presented their progress to JLARC on the following—

- Their implementation of recommendations 1-8
- Their progress on implementing the other recommendations (9-14); and
- Any problems they have encountered in implementation to date.

Overall the Division has begun a number of initiatives that begin to address implementation of recommendations 1-8 which were due to be implemented by June 2001. *The Division will need to continue these efforts over the next several months to ensure their approaches translate into improvements in system efficiency and effectiveness.*

An area of concern is the Division's efforts to implement Recommendation 4. This recommendation follows a 1995 legislative mandate to improve system efficiency and measure outcomes. Formal coordination with the federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) is not scheduled until mid-July 2001, and the Division reports that HCFA appears to be increasing its process-oriented accountability requirements. The MHD will need to be assertive in working with the federal government so that the state's objectives can be met.

The Mental Health Division's June 27, 2001 status report of their progress to date on these recommendations follows. Appendix 1 includes the digest of the December 2000 JLARC report and a listing of the 14 JLARC recommendations. JLARC staff will continue to work with the Mental Health Division over the next several months as they continue their activities. They will provide another status report to JLARC in December 2001.