Recommendation
Explore the Center for START Services (CSS) model opportunities, costs

Summary
Investigate the potential to implement the START model in the City and County of Denver to serve Denver residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities that have a dual diagnosis in mental health

Goal/Outcome
Develop a program that serves Denver residents with I/DD and other mental health diagnoses while investing in long-term systems change in Denver community mental health services and supports for people with I/DD

Improve mental health services outcomes, including reducing potential overmedication in individual cases and decreasing ER visits and hospitalizations due to mental and behavioral health

Background
- The State of Colorado launched a START pilot in Grand Junction and Fort Collins from October 2017 to March 2019. The pilot was discontinued by the State and is currently being funded by Foothills Gateway in Fort Collins.
- This recommendation is the result of preliminary investigation from the Mill Levy Advisory Council beginning in May 2019. This recommendation was made to DHS October 17, 2019.
- DHS conducted an initial investigatory call with Center for START Services representatives on Tuesday, January 21, 2020, with several follow up communications between DHS and the Center for START Services.

Model
The START (Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources, and Treatment) tertiary care model is a systems linkage approach to effective services and supports for people diagnosed with I/DD and co-occurring behavioral health conditions.

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<th>Program size</th>
<th>Projected costs</th>
<th>Projected impact</th>
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<td>Ideally, Denver would assemble a team consisting of a Program Director, FT Clinical Director (psychologist), 4 START coordinators, and 4 therapeutic coaches. The program, which would serve ages 6+, integrates positive psychology assessment, observation, and therapeutic coaching. This level of staffing lends itself to a 24/7 service model, ensuring support for afterhours crises that result in a reduction of ER visits and hospitalizations over time. CSS includes Clinical Education Forums for training the community at large, and practices services through a cultural competency lens.</td>
<td>Contract with Center for Start Services is $200,000/year for the first 3 years, at which point the Denver program would be START certified. Estimated $1.8M per year in program development costs, executed in a separate contract with a community provider over the first 3 years. In years 4+, the budget may change depending on services, efficiencies, and potential for reimbursement through other funding streams. At this point, their contract would also include $45,000 per year for CSS network access and training support. DHS estimates a commitment of $6M over the next 3 years.</td>
<td>Potential to serve 120-150 people a year, at about $15,000 per individual (this has the potential to reduce down to $7,800 per individual per year as the program develops – this took 6 years to achieve in other sites) Estimated 400 persons over 4 years Reduces ER visits and hospitalizations (1 year of START can equal 1 week in hospitalization costs) After 6 years, 73% were able to maintain themselves at home. Of the 27% that did not, another 30% returned home after the ER visit.</td>
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Program outline

This comprehensive, evidence-informed model requires oversight from the Center for START Services for the first 3 years until the program is certified. Driven by a person-centered approach in the context of the system of support, the START model offers proactive and clinically based consultation services nationally:

Comprehensive Systems & Services Evaluation

The first step in accessing START services is to undergo a comprehensive systems and services evaluation. Led by experts on the START model, evaluations provide a comprehensive overview of the systems of care in a region or state and illustrate where efficiencies, linkages, community involvement, and resources may be enhanced to strengthen service outcomes for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families.

Training & Consultation

Expert training and consultation is offered through the Center for START Services in a variety of ways to START projects across the nation. From online meetings and trainings to in-person consultation, experts in the intellectual/developmental disability field lead trainings and consultation sessions to build capacity and strengthen systems of care for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families.

Technical Support & Clinical Expertise

Driven by a person’s needs, the Center for START Services offers clinically based technical support and expertise that focuses on the systemic, therapeutic, assessment, resources, and treatment options for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families.

Research Evaluation & Outcomes Analysis

The Center for START Services is currently working to develop world-class research projects to provide valuable data and outcomes analysis that will benefit the important work being conducted in the dual-diagnosis and intellectual/developmental disabilities fields.

Resources

- START overview video featuring Joan Beasley, PhD (1.5 hours)  
  https://www.centerforstartservices.org/start-overview-video
- Exploration of other state pilots, including Colorado’s Final Report from the Center for START Services  
- Synopsis of program from the Center for START Services (see attached)
- “Positive psychology is the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play”  
  https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/