

## **Connecticut is Failing to Provide Services Amidst Addiction Crisis Connecticut Valley Hospital, Blue Hills Hospital**

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Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH) and Blue Hills Hospital (BHH) are the only two hospitals in Connecticut that offer the highest level of medically managed inpatient treatment for addiction. Since 2020, CVH and BHH have been operating at less than 50% capacity, even as overdose deaths have increased by at least 25% from 2019 to 2021. District 1199 members are demanding the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) fill 400 vacancies this Summer so they can reopen addictions services to full capacity.

- Total capacity of DMHAS Addiction Services Division (ASD) is **152 patients**.
- Since 2020, total bed availability in the ASD at BHH and CVH has never been more than **50%** of total capacity.
- As of June 1, 2022, only 32% of the 152 beds are in use, while DMHAS reports 0 beds available for all ASD programs on the addictions services website. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ASD patients come from some of the most marginalized and impoverished communities in the state. They are disproportionately Black and Latino, and are often turned away from private providers due to lack of insurance or high acuity needs.
- There are over 350 vacant positions at CVH and another 165 could retire this year.
- In 2020 and 2021 there were only 6 hires made directly to ASD at CVH.
- Pre-pandemic, CVH operated 1 detox unit (4B) and 3 rehab units (2AB, 2DE, 3AB). CVH closed 4B Detox Unit and redeployed 4B staff to the previously vacant 3DE Unit to operate a COVID Isolation Unit for positive patients from across CVH. Unit 3DE remains operational as the hybrid ASD Admissions/Covid Isolation unit, while Detox 4B remains closed.
- At present, CVH-Middletown operates 2 units – an admissions/isolation unit that also serves as a COVID-isolation unit when cases spike, and 1 co-ed rehab unit. 2 fully functional units (4B, 2DE) remain offline.
- In April of 2020, CVH-Middletown shut down the women's only STAR program – the only program of its kind in the state - providing trauma informed addictions recovery to women.
- In January 2022, BHH adopted a strict COVID-19 quarantine protocol that greatly limits their ability to take in patients. This protocol is not only more stringent than the previous protocols in the height of the pandemic, it is also more stringent than protocols at other DMHAS facilities and other hospital settings.

**This capacity reduction comes as the opioid epidemic surges across the state, with access to proper care often making the difference between life or death.**

- BHH turns away on average 20 people per day in need of care.
- On nearly every day in April and May patients were denied care even as there were entire rooms available in which new patients could easily quarantine at BHH.
- Since at least the beginning of April, BHH has reported 0 beds available on the DMHAS bed availability website

**DMHAS exists and is funded by Connecticut taxpayers for the purpose of providing life-saving, accessible services to residents of our state who are often experiencing the most significant crisis of their lives. In the wealthiest state in the country, they should be getting nothing less than the highest quality of care. We demand:**

- The restoration of the ASD to full 152 patient capacity at BHH and CVH by **August 1st**.
- Hire **400** staff by **August 1st** to begin filling the 900 vacant positions in DMHAS.
- Develop a plan to expand capacity at CVH and BHH to meet growing demand for life-saving care.

### DMHAS Addiction Services Capacity Reduction

DATE	Program	City	Patient Capacity	Patient Capacity (DMHAS stated capacity)	# Patients	# Beds Available to the Public According to DMHAS Website	Notes
<b>Withdrawal Management (detox) - Medically managed withdrawal mgt</b>							
	<a href="#">CT Valley Hospital (CVH) - Blue Hills Hospital, Detox</a>	Hartford	21 (pre-pandemic) 6 (under quarantine policy)	6	5	0	empty rooms
	<a href="#">CT Valley Hospital (CVH) - Merritt Hall, Detox</a>	Middletown	20 (pre-pandemic)	closed	6	0	Unit is closed and converted to COVID unit when needed, despite two other empty units
<b>Intensive Residential Treatment (rehab)</b>							
<b>6/21/2022</b>	<a href="#">CT Valley Hospital (CVH) - Blue Hills Hospital, Intensive Residential</a>	Hartford	21 (pre-pandemic) 16 (under quarantine policy)	16	14	0	
	<a href="#">CT Valley Hospital (CVH) - Intensive Mens, Merritt Hall (men only)</a>	Middletown	30 (pre-pandemic) 24 (under quarantine policy)	24	21	0	
	<a href="#">CT Valley Hospital (CVH) - Intensive Mens, Merritt Hall (men only)</a>	Middletown	30 (pre-pandemic)	closed	0	0	
	<a href="#">CT Valley Hospital (CVH) - Intensive Womens, Merritt Hall (women only)</a>	Middletown	30 (pre-pandemic)	closed	0	0	Closed unit was former nationally recognized STAR program for women
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>152</b>	<b>46*</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: <https://www.ctaddictionervices.com/index.php>