

# 2024

**FINAL REPORT  
OF THE SOUTH  
CENTRAL REGIONAL PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL  
ADVISORY PANEL**

**September 30, 2024**

Prepared for



**South Central Regional  
Psychiatric Hospital**

Prepared by  
**The Learning Tree Institute at Greenbush  
Research & Evaluation Department**

**ADVISORY PANEL UPDATES JANUARY THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2024**

The following pages provide a final report of the Advisory Panel charged with the Planning, Design, and Construction of a Regional Psychiatric Hospital in South Central Kansas established through Executive Order 23-05. The complete Interim Report, dated January 8, 2024, can be found [here](#).

**RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY**

**Catchment Area**

- *KDADS* defines the catchment area as Sedgwick, Butler, Cowley, Harvey, and Sumner Counties, reflecting the current crisis partnership.

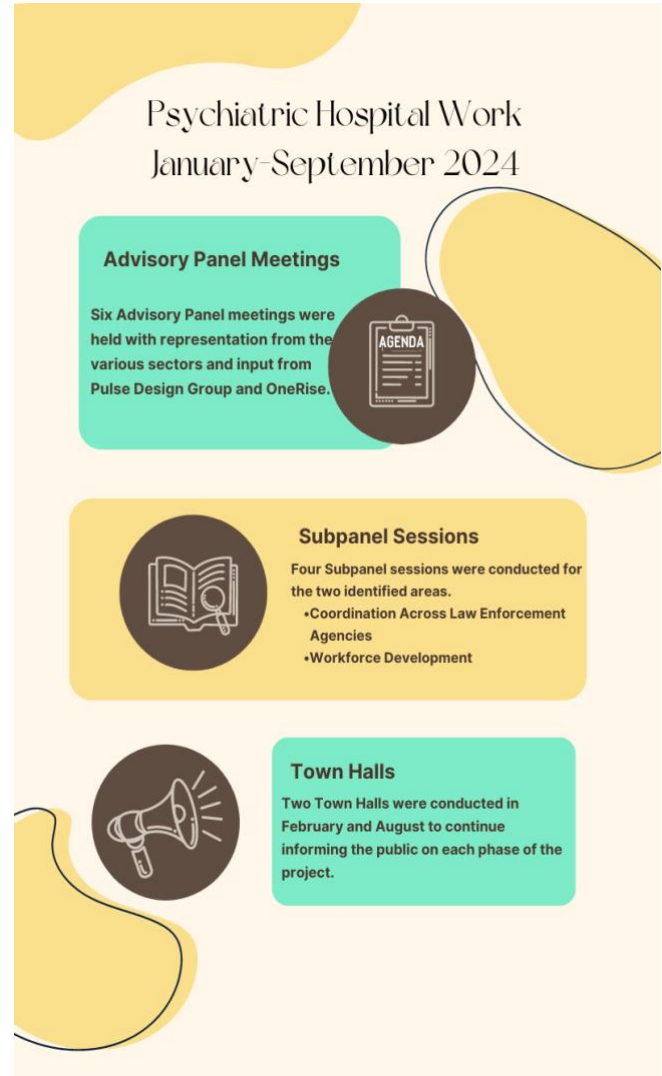
**Workforce Development**

- *KDADS* requests the FY2026 budget to include four full years of training for three new psychiatry residency slots for state hospitals through the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita program.
- *Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence* provides educational incentive recommendations to promote the mental health and behavioral health workforce pipeline to ensure adequate workforce coverage for the hospital project and the South Central Kansas region as a whole for presentation to the Legislature (2025).

- *Legislature (2025)* establish a fund for student loan forgiveness, scholarships, and grant programs to fund training programs for behavioral health careers.
- *Legislature (2025)* expands Licensed Mental Health Technician (LMHT) training programs and financial support for clinical placements in FY2026.
- *KDADS* collaborates with relevant licensing authorities and community partners for alternative recruitment options.

**Legislative Recommendations**

- *The Governor or Legislature (2025)* recommends that the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council or the Judicial Council review the Care and Treatment Act for Mentally Ill Persons statutes (K.S.A. 59-2945 through 59-2986) and propose changes to the involuntary commitment statutes for the 2027 Legislative Session.



**Psychiatric Hospital Work  
January-September 2024**

**Advisory Panel Meetings**  
Six Advisory Panel meetings were held with representation from the various sectors and input from Pulse Design Group and OneRise.

**Subpanel Sessions**  
Four Subpanel sessions were conducted for the two identified areas.  
•Coordination Across Law Enforcement Agencies  
•Workforce Development

**Town Halls**  
Two Town Halls were conducted in February and August to continue informing the public on each phase of the project.

- *The Governor or Legislature (2025)* recommends that the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) establish a Behavioral Health or Counseling and Mental Health Services Pathway to add to the Human Services Cluster in 2025.

***Privatization***

- *The Governor and KDADS* operate the regional state psychiatric hospital as a state hospital with a state employee leadership team and in key administrative and clinical roles.

***Coordination with Existing Services***

- *KDADS* establishes a formal intergovernmental agreement among law enforcement, emergency services, fire services, regional behavioral health providers, and *KDADS*.
- *KDADS* provides a report on the agency's efforts and programs for youth in a behavioral health crisis.
- *KDADS* recommends increases in funding or new programs to address gaps in services for justice-involved youth and youth in crisis.
- *KDADS* enters a Memorandum of Understanding with the WSU/KU Biomedical campus to identify clinical, educational, and research opportunities before the facility opens in 2027.
- *KDADS* creates a nonprofit foundation to support the mission of the regional psychiatric hospital.
- *KDADS* creates a Citizens Advisory Group of community members, service providers from the region, law enforcement, elected officials, and patient or family advocates to support the regional hospital administration.

***Budget Recommendations***

- *The Governor and Legislature (2025)* review changes needed to improve reimbursement mechanisms for telepsychiatry and other supporting services in FY2026.
- *KDADS* include in the FY2026 budget enhancement a plan to increase funding for regional case management and behavioral health providers.

Complete recommendations can be found in Appendix A.

**MEETING SEVEN – February 23, 2024**

The Advisory Panel met to discuss updates since the January 8, 2024, meeting, and the issuance of the Interim Report to the Governor's Office. The Advisory Panel was provided an update from Tania Cole, Assistant Sedgwick County Manager, regarding the design phase, which began on February 15, 2024, with contractors Pulse Design Group and GLMV (Gossen Livingston Associates and McCluggage Van Sickle & Perry) Architecture (Now Tessere). The schematic design layout had begun, and on-site planning and design would be completed in the coming weeks. The Design Team toured Osawatomie State Hospital (February 2, 2024) and Larned State Hospital (February 27, 2024). Town Hall II was scheduled for February 26, 2024.

Workforce Development presentations were provided by Lynn Loveland, Dean of Health Sciences WSU Tech; Dr. William Gabrielli and Dr. Angela Mayorga May, University of Kansas School of

Medicine; Julianna Rieschick, Chief Nursing Officer Providence Medical Center; and Dr. Janka Lincoln and Mark Parmley, University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita.

Individual Advisory Panel members were solicited to serve on one or more Subpanel Groups to meet in April 2024 and provide recommendations to the entire panel in May and June 2024.

Additional individuals expressing interest in participating were solicited from a list maintained by the Learning Tree Institute at Greenbush (LTI), Sedgwick County’s distribution list, and Advisory Panel recommendations.

| SUBPANELS  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Coordination Across Law Enforcement Agencies:</b> | To focus on catchment areas and coordination/logistics/interagency agreements among the judicial and mental health systems.  |
| <b>Workforce Development:</b>                        | To focus on the necessary workforce capacity, the benefits of state employees vs. outsourcing to a private company, and regional recruitment/retention best practices. |

**TOWN HALL – February 26, 2024**

A Town Hall meeting was held at Wichita South High School on February 26, 2024. Participants were provided information regarding the [Mental Health Hospital Space Needs Study](#), the Request for Proposal process, the evaluation and final site selection process, and the final selection of the Architect and Engineering Team contractors. A Data Report was prepared based on information provided during the Town Hall meeting, a final list of questions submitted by the audience attending the Town Hall, and a separate survey for non-attending residents. A complete Data Report for the Town Hall can be found [here](#).



**MEETING EIGHT – March 22, 2024**

The Advisory Panel met and was provided an update on the land and design phases of the project. The County worked with Lange Real Estate on zoning changes, and the plan would go before the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission on April 11, 2024. From there, it would move to the City Council District Advisory Board for review in early May 2024 and before the City Council on May 14, 2024. The zoning changes requested would rezone the project site from general commercial to limited industrial and change the lot boundaries to accommodate the proposed hospital facility.

The preliminary design is a partial two-story build. Two stories will be utilized for efficiency, with administrative offices on the second floor. A draft floor plan was available after the initial discussion regarding projected costs and the overall schematic design, and a motion was carried

out to recommend to the Governor and Legislature to build a 104-bed facility versus a 50-bed facility.

Presentations were provided on the [API Privatization Feasibility Study prepared for the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services](#) by Ted Lutterman, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute, as well as Dr. Brian Hepburn and Wendy Morris, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. Tim Keck, former KDADS Secretary and current President of Ancillary Services VitalCore Health Strategies, provided a perspective on efforts to privatize Osawatomie State Hospital.

#### **SUBPANEL WORK – April 12, 2024, April 25, 2024, and April 26, 2024**

The two Subpanels, *Law Enforcement* and *Workforce Development*, met virtually to discuss potential areas of need and to provide recommendations to the full Advisory Panel for consideration. Background information was provided for [Law Enforcement](#) and [Workforce](#) Subpanel members. Recommendations were drafted for presentation to the full Advisory Panel in May. Subpanel members included representatives from the Advisory Panel and volunteer members from the community.

#### **MEETING NINE – May 17, 2024**

The Advisory Panel was notified that the project had passed all phases of zoning approval, and an environmental survey was to be conducted over the next several weeks. The purchase agreement between the land owner, Lange Real Estate, and the County was under review for presentation to the Board of County Commissioners. A design update was provided by Basil Sherman, Principal, Pulse Design Group, and it was indicated that the design phase was 50% complete. Chairperson Brunner indicated that \$26.5 million for the facility had been added to the final appropriation bill, and the facility was approved to include 104 beds. Executive Order 23-05 was amended with the final report to the Governor and Legislature due September 30, 2024 (this report). The modification was approved in Executive Order 24-04<sup>1</sup>. An updated Data Report was provided to the Advisory Panel after soliciting further input from the community in April and May 2024. This Data Report is available [here](#).

The Learning Tree Institute presented Subpanel preliminary recommendations for consideration for [Law Enforcement](#) and [Workforce Development](#). A third Town Hall was recommended to provide the public with an update on the project.

The Advisory Panel initiated a discussion regarding the facility's catchment area. Information was shared regarding the County's current usage from the two existing state hospitals ([Larned](#) and [Osawatomie](#)). The preliminary catchment area may include Reno, Harvey, Butler, Sumner, Cowley, and Kingman (as discussed by the Law Enforcement Subpanel).

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Order 24-04 can be accessed [here](#).



**MEETING TEN – June 21, 2024**

The Advisory Panel was provided with an update regarding the finalization of the land agreement, and a video was shared, providing a flyover view of the hospital facility and site. Geo-Tech and environmental studies were completed, and no groundwater contamination was found at the site. Chairperson Brunner notified the Advisory Panel that KDADS has been given authority to award bonuses to current state hospital employees up to \$10,000. The authorization in the approved budget raises the total amount per employee from the statutory cap of \$3,500 per year, only for reasons other than exceptional service. KDADS staff and a special committee proposed other bonuses for state hospital employees, including sign-on and referral bonuses, other retention ideas, and pick-up shift bonuses. This bonus program would be piloted to determine if it is a good model for future recruitment for a psychiatric hospital workforce.

The Advisory Panel heard several presentations on the topic of privatization. Current state hospital campuses have some services privatized, such as food service, contract nursing, agency staff, lab services, and other medical services. There is a limit on privatizing services (K.S.A. 75-3373<sup>2</sup>), which limits Larned and Osawatomie State Hospitals from contracting operations or facilities without the legislature's authorization.

- | <b>Potential Privatization Options</b>  |
|---|
| 1. Privatize the whole hospital.  |
| 2. Privatize only non-clinic services such as maintenance, food, and environmental.   |
| 3. Privatize the clinical operations, medical team, psychiatry team, and nursing lab. |
| 4. Privatize by dividing the facility between forensic and patient treatment areas.   |

[Documentation](#) on developing a privatization Request for Information (RFI) was provided to the Advisory Panel. Discussion occurred around utilizing a current RFI from potential vendors to explore several options regarding privatization. If this work moves forward, KDADS suggested the release of an RFI in August, with responses due in September. Chairperson Brunner noted that state employees would still oversee admissions and discharges regardless of what is ultimately privatized.

The Advisory Panel further discussed the catchment area, and it was a consensus that there should be a regional approach for admissions that includes contiguous counties surrounding Sedgwick. The Advisory Panel would need to recommend adding this catchment area to the existing statute to create this hospital facility (K.S.A 75-3373).

**MEETING ELEVEN – July 19, 2024**

The design phase with Pulse Design Group was slated for approval by KDADS the week following this Advisory Panel meeting. The targeted date for the construction Request for Proposal is

<sup>2</sup> Full text of the statute can be found [here](#).

October 2024, with the award announced in November, the contract finalized in December, and construction to begin in January 2025.

Chairperson Brunner reported that he and Secretary Howard had met with the Governor, who expressed that it was not in the state’s best interest to privatize the whole operation or turn over facility management to a contractor. The Governor would prefer to approach this hospital’s management like the existing state hospitals. Based on the Governor's direction, KDADS will not seek additional information about privatization options for the operation of the entire hospital.

The Advisory Panel further discussed the catchment area, and to match the catchment area for the regional behavioral health crisis services, a recommendation would be to define the catchment area as consisting of Sedgwick, Butler, Cowley, Harvey, and Sumner Counties.



**TOWN HALL – August 1, 2024**

A Town Hall meeting was held at Campus High School on August 1, 2024. Participants were provided an update from Tania Cole, Sedgwick County Assistant County Manager, regarding the MacArthur and Meridian Site and the Design and Construction Timeline.

Chairperson Brunner, KDADS Deputy Secretary-Hospitals and Facilities, provided an overview of the patient profile, why Sedgwick County was selected for a regional psychiatric hospital, secured and potential funding, and Advisory Panel progress.

Basil Sherman, Pulse Design Group Principal, presented updated site and floor plans and renderings for the exterior, entry/waiting room rendering, patient wings, patient rooms, day rooms, and corridors.

OneRise’s Health Campus Director of Strategic Initiatives, Matthew Tannehill, presented a vision for additional land adjacent to the hospital.

The documentation presented can be found [here](#). A Data Report summarizing the Town Hall can be found [here](#).

### **MEETING TWELVE – August 16, 2024**

Chairperson Brunner, Sedgwick County Assistant County Manager Tania Cole, and Basil Sherman, Pulse Design Group Principal, provided project updates. The City of Wichita waived the letter of credit requirement for infrastructure, the development for the build-out of the property, and a reserve for the retention pond area. If the City later requires a letter of credit, Sedgwick County would have to pay up to \$180,680 compensation to Lange Real Estate if the facility does not open as expected. Other presentations included a report on the August Town Hall by Dr. Ryan Vaughn, Project Manager, Learning Tree Institute, and Taylor Bremer, Assistant Behavioral Health Commissioner, KDADS, on the National Association of State Health Policy Behavioral Health Workforce Policy Academy, and Michelle Ponce, Associate Director, Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, on the Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence. During a question and answer period, Panel members recommended adding Cowley County to the catchment area, developing a Citizens Advisory Group, and creating a nonprofit foundation to support the mission of the regional psychiatric hospital.

### **MEETING THIRTEEN – September 20, 2024**

The Advisory Panel met to discuss KDADS budgetary submissions to the Legislature for FY2025 and to finalize this report. Claudio Ferraro, Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph President, provided an update on physician and psychiatrist coverage in the region, sharing concerns about difficulties with recruitment and retention. Encouraged focus on growing the talent pipeline while the psychiatric hospital is under construction. Future meetings will occur between September 30, 2024 and the expiration of Executive Order 24-04 on March 31, 2025 as needed.

### **CONCLUSION**

This report concludes the final report as requested by the Governor of Kansas in Executive Order No. 23-05, amended in Executive Order No. 24-04, establishing the South Central Regional Psychiatric Hospital Advisory Panel. The initial charge for the Advisory Panel was to meet monthly to engage stakeholders in soliciting feedback on the needs and location of a regional psychiatric hospital. The following tasks were completed.

- ✓ Public input on the needs and location of a regional psychiatric hospital was solicited through social media, surveys, three Town Hall meetings, Subpanels, and other forms of communication in partnership with Sedgwick County representatives.
- ✓ Recommendations on workforce development were provided for training programs, talent pipelines, and recruitment and retention strategies. These recommendations were completed with input from Subpanel members, including Advisory Panel members and community volunteers.



- ✓ Recommendations on the operating model for a regional psychiatric hospital regarding integrating existing mental health services in Sedgwick County, the other state hospitals, and acute health care services.
- ✓ Recommendations for statutory changes needed to operate a new state hospital, including changes to catchment areas, scope of practice, and cooperation with other service providers.
- ✓ Advisory Panel meetings were recorded, and minutes documented the progress.

The Advisory Panel acknowledges the contributions of the following entities to accomplish the charge to establish a South Central Regional Psychiatric Hospital.

- Ancillary Services VitalCore Health Strategies
- Area Chiefs Association
- Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph
- Citizens who attended town halls, answered surveys
- COMCARE
- Downtown Wichita
- Four County Mental Health
- Haysville USD 261
- HumanKind Ministries
- Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence
- Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services
- Kansas Senator and Representative Offices
- KSN News 3
- KU Medical Center Wichita
- Learning Tree Institute at Greenbush
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition
- Mental Health America of South Central Kansas
- National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
- National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute
- OneRise Health Campus
- Providence Medical Center
- Pulse Design Group
- Sedgwick County Administration
- Sedgwick County Sheriff's Department
- Tessere
- The Greater Wichita Partnership
- University of Kansas Health Systems
- University of Kansas School of Medicine
- Wichita Police Department
- Wichita State University
- Wichita USD 259
- Workforce Alliance of SCKS
- WSU Tech



Thanks to the Advisory Panel Members for their hard work and dedication to this project.

**Scott Brunner**, Chairperson and Deputy Secretary of Hospitals and Facilities, KDADS  
**Sarah Lopez**, Sedgwick County Commissioner, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
**Senator Usha Reddi**, 22<sup>nd</sup> District  
**Representative Will Carpenter**, 75<sup>th</sup> District  
**Representative Henry Helgerson**, 83<sup>rd</sup> District  
**Representative KC Ohaebosim**, 89<sup>th</sup> District  
**Marc Bennett**, District Attorney, Sedgwick County  
**Jeff Easter**, Sheriff, Sedgwick County  
**Claudio Ferraro**, President, Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph  
**Jason Gregory**, Agent, InSite Real Estate Group  
**Mary Jones**, President and CEO, Mental Health America of South Central Kansas  
**LaTasha St. Arnault**, President and CEO, HumanKind Ministries  
**Tom Stolz**, County Manager, Sedgwick County  
**Joan Tammany**, Director, COMCARE

An additional thanks to the following KDADS staff who supported this effort.

**Melinda Gaul**, Special Projects Manager, State Hospital Commission, KDADS  
**Iryna Yeromenko**, Acting Superintendent, Regional Psychiatric Hospital in Sedgwick County, KDADS

## APPENDIX A – RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Catchment Area*

The Advisory Panel recommends that the state hospital being constructed should be a resource to serve the South Central Kansas region including patients and defendants from counties surrounding Sedgwick County. The Panel recommends KDADS identify the catchment area for the regional psychiatric hospital include at least Sedgwick, Butler, Harvey, Cowley and Sumner Counties to reflect the current crisis partnership between those counties. The Panel recommends flexibility in determination of the catchment area, allowing time for admissions data review, while also looking to provide balance within the state hospital system.

### *Workforce Development*

The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS request funding in the FY 2026 budget for four full years of training for three new/additional psychiatry residency slots for the state hospitals through the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita program in FY 2026. This can be accomplished through partnership with the Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence or other funding partners.

The Advisory Panel recommends that the 2025 Legislature create a series of educational incentives to promote the mental health and behavioral health workforce pipeline in partnership with the Behavioral Health Center of Excellence. This should include, but is not limited to:

- a. a system of student loan forgiveness for varying levels of community-based behavioral health licensed positions based on working in state hospitals or community mental health centers based on working in those settings for a specified amount of time.
- b. A fund for scholarships for varying levels of licensed behavioral health positions in FY 2026 for students committing to those academic programs in mental health, psychology, psychiatry, social work, counseling, substance abuse or addiction, nursing, and other supporting licensure types.
- c. KDADS establishes a grant program to fund training programs for behavioral health careers through career and technical education institutions and create educational agreements between behavioral health providers and academic training programs in FY 2026.
- d. KDADS establishes a grant program to expand Licensed Mental Health Technician (LMHT) training programs for eligible provider groups and nursing education programs to support scholarships for LMHT students and help fund training sites

and nurses to oversee students in FY 2026. This could include registered apprenticeship programs that are eligible to apply for grant funding through the Department of Commerce's Office of Registered Apprenticeship.

- e. establish a grant program to provide financial support for clinical placements to support students, clinical supervisors, and clinical training sites to increase opportunities for training in behavioral and mental health services in FY 2026.

The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS collaborate with relevant licensing authorities and community partners to explore alternative recruitment options, such as international behavioral health professionals, retired behavioral health professionals, and military families while ensuring appropriate compliance and best practices for patient and staff safety.

### *Legislative Recommendations*

The Advisory Panel recommends the Governor or Legislature request the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council or the Judicial Council initiate a thorough review of the Care and Treatment Act for Mentally Ill Persons statutes (K.S.A. 59-2945 through 59-2986) and propose changes to the involuntary commitment statutes for the 2027 Legislative Session. The review should include identifying processes to prioritize individuals in crisis screened for involuntary care and treatment to ease the strain on law enforcement resources and any best practices identified by reviewing other states' involuntary commitment statutes.

Recommend that the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) establishes a Behavioral Health or Counseling and Mental Health Services Pathway to add to the Human Services Cluster in 2025.

Recommend the Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence develop a plan to provide educational incentives and expand the pipeline of employees in the mental health and behavioral health workforce. Health Center of Excellence provides educational incentive recommendations to promote the pipeline to ensure adequate workforce coverage for the hospital project and the South Central Kansas region as a whole for presentation to the Legislature (2025).

KDADS will continue to cultivate workforce development particularly in the South Central region with the Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence and other interested parties, with consideration of replicating efforts statewide. This will involve KDADS incorporating workforce improvement strategies and finding from its participation in the two-year NASHP Behavioral Health Workforce Policy Academy.

### *Privatization*

The Advisory Panel recommends that the Governor and KDADS should operate the regional state psychiatric hospital with as a state hospital with a state employee leadership team and in the key administrative and clinical roles. The state should be responsible for all admission and discharge decisions and design the therapeutic treatment model. KDADS and the hospital leadership could choose to contract for services needed at the hospital such as food service, laundry, maintenance, supplemental staffing, or medical services.

### *Coordination with Existing Services*

The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS establish a formal intergovernmental agreement among law enforcement entities, emergency services, fire services, regional behavioral health providers, and KDADS to ensure effective communication processes, clear expectations for processes, and mutual obligations to support the operations of the South Central Regional State Psychiatric Hospital.

The Advisory Panel requests KDADS provide a report about agency efforts and programs for youth in a behavioral health crisis, including involvement with law enforcement. Within that report, KDADS will share an assessment of needs for acute, inpatient, and residential options for justice-involved youth and those in mental health crises. The Panel may further recommend increases in funding or new programs to address gaps in services for justice-involved youth and youth in crisis. The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the WSU/KU Biomedical campus to identify clinical, educational, and research opportunities at the South Central Regional Psychiatric Hospital that can benefit training and research programs at the Biomedical Campus. This agreement should be in place before the South Central Hospital opens in 2027.

The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS create a nonprofit foundation to support the mission of the regional psychiatric hospital. The foundation should be authorized to collect donations and apply for grants or other fundraising to support resident wellbeing and activities, staff appreciation, and workforce training activities.

The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS create a Citizens Advisory Group made up of community members, service providers from the region, law enforcement, elected officials, and patient or family advocates to provide ongoing support to the regional hospital administration. The organization should follow the structure of the Citizens Advisory Groups at the other state hospitals.

### *Budget Recommendations*

The Advisory Panel recommends that KDADS include a budget enhancement in its FY 2026 budget submission to increase funding for regional case management and behavioral health providers to provide wraparound behavioral health services to decrease the need for continued law

enforcement intervention and address the ongoing needs of individuals that are high utilizers of services.

Recommend that the Governor and 2025 Legislature review changes needed to improve reimbursement mechanisms for telepsychiatry and other supporting services provided in the state hospital to improve clinical gaps in FY 2026.