

RESTRICTIVE HOUSING REFORM FOR INMATES WITH SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS

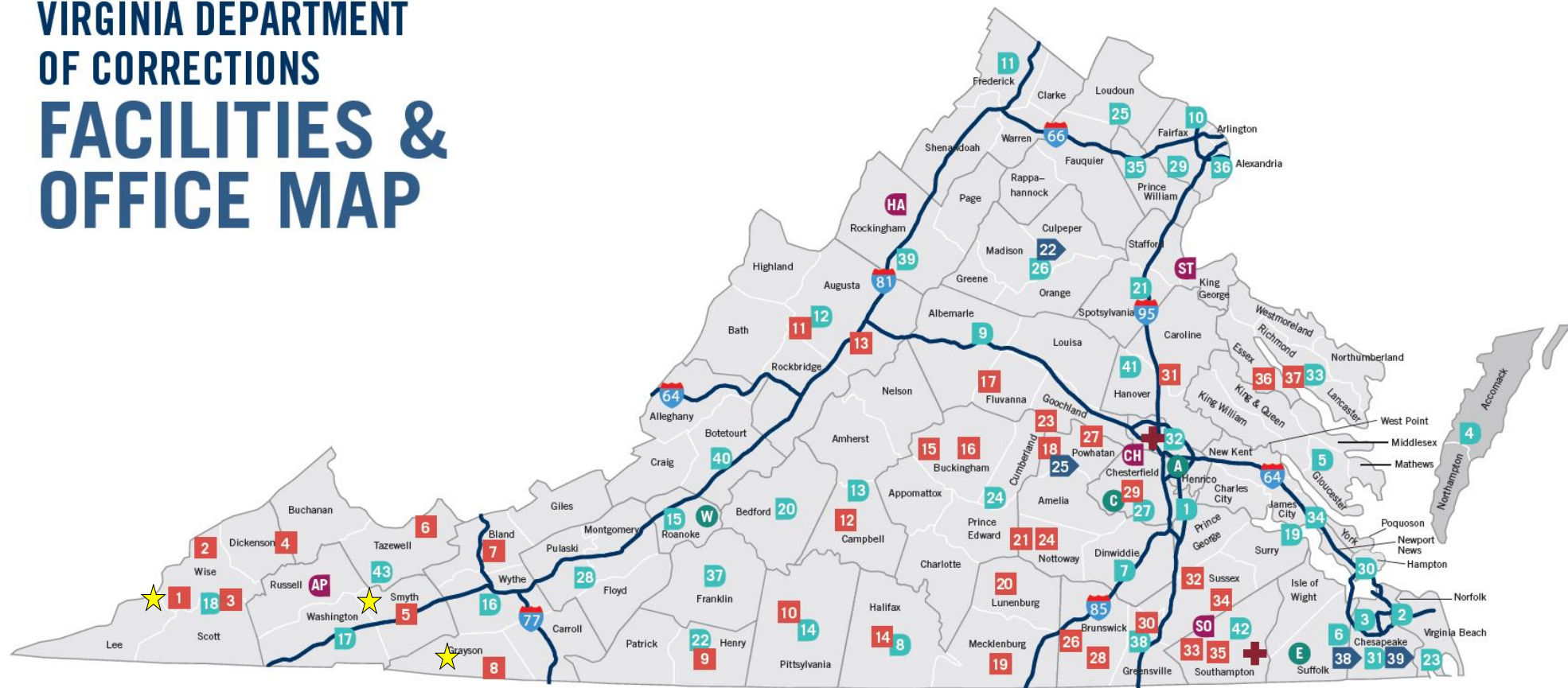
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Melvin Davis, Warden – Wallens Ridge State Prison
Virginia Department of Corrections

Tuesday July 13, 2021

Southern Legislative Conference – STAR Finalist Presentation



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FACILITIES & OFFICE MAP



43 Facilities
23,897 Inmates in Custody

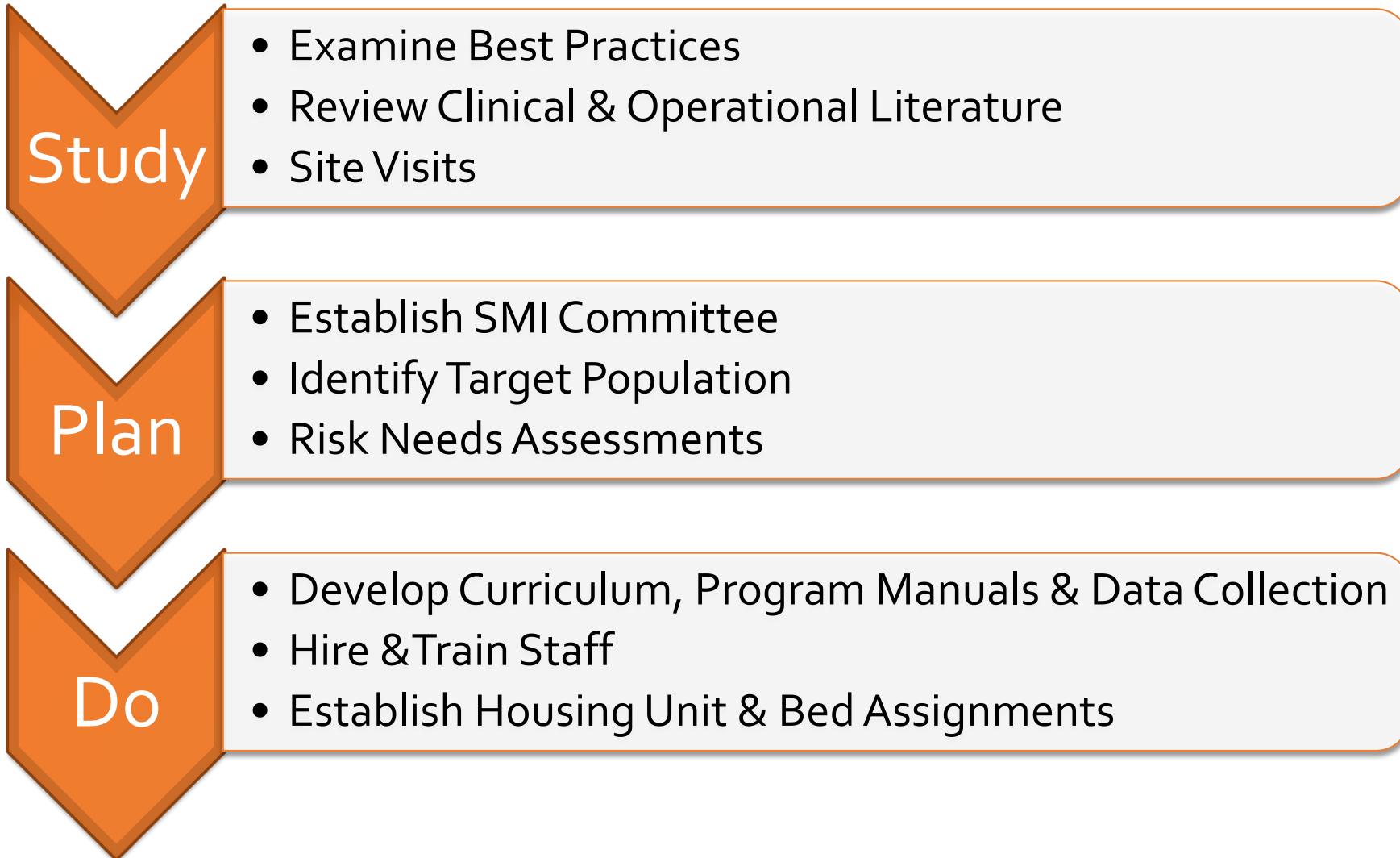
43 Probation & Parole Offices
66,462 Inmates on Supervision

Mental Health in Corrections

- US citizens that suffer from mental illness are more likely to be incarcerated than receive treatment in the community.
- US psychiatric beds fell from 559,000 in 1955 to 35,000 in 2017 while the number of prison beds rose by 600% during the same time period.
- Correctional facilities are now the primary mental health institutions in the country yet were never designed to manage this population.

Operations
Safety
Programming
Training
Budget

Development of Secure Diversionary Treatment Program



Secure Diversionary Treatment Program Goals

- Reduce the number of inmates with a SMI managed in a **Restrictive Housing** environment
- Reduce the number of **serious and minor disciplinary infractions** involving SMI inmates
- Reduce the number of **emergency transports** for SMI inmates
- Reduce the number of **serious incidents** involving an SMI inmate
- Improve **pro-social metrics** including resiliency, social relationships, stress management and communication



Safety & Security

Program Overview

Intensive – 17 Beds
Inmates with the most
critical mental health needs

High Security – 22 Beds
Inmates with the most
security supervision needs

Diversionary – 80 Beds
Less serious risks and needs,
more stable MH history



Program Components

Phase 1: Intake/Orientation

Rapport Building & Motivation

Phase 2: Active Treatment

Structured & Unstructured Time

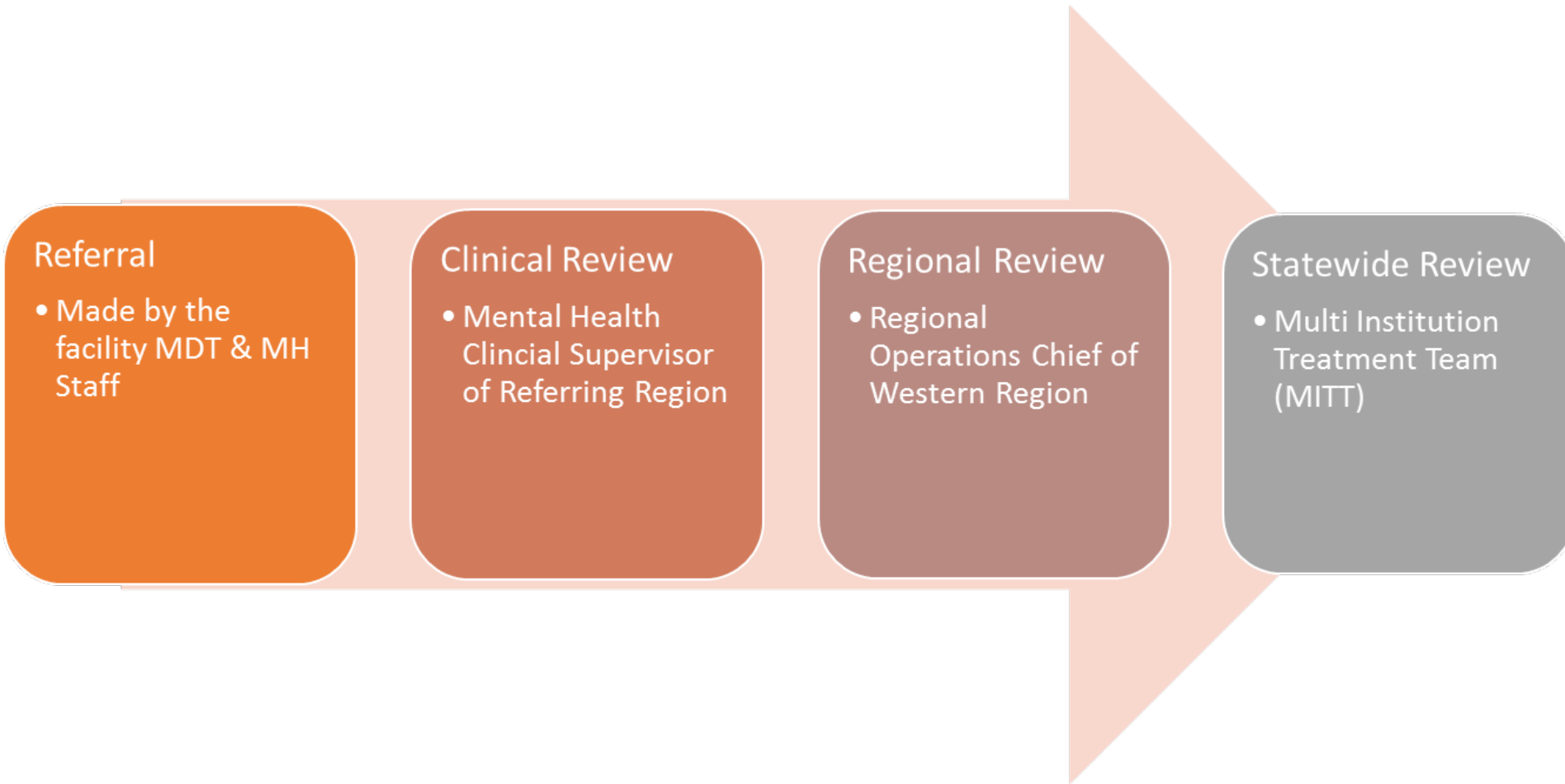
Phase 3: Maintenance

Enhanced Privileges

Phase 4: Transition

Progress & Pathway

Referral Process



Program Costs & Equipment

	Personnel Services	Equipment and Supplies	
River North/Diversionsary	\$963,607.00	\$15,000.00	
Wallens Ridge/High Security	\$212,508.05	\$15,839.40	
Marion/Intensive	\$315,696.13	\$9,995.76	
SDTP Overall Totals	\$1,491,811.18	\$40,835.16	Grand Total \$1,532,646.34

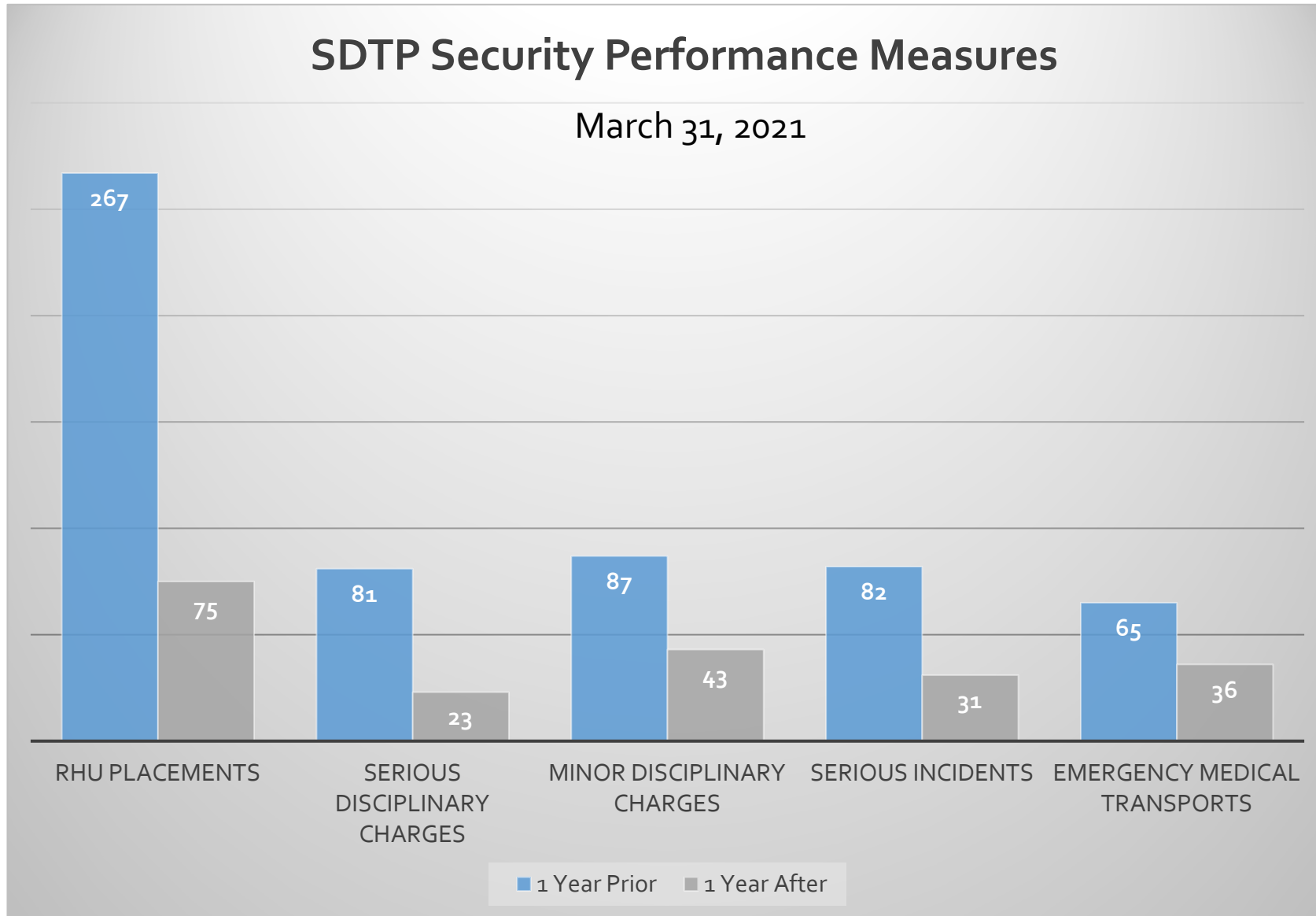
Program Staffing

Casework Counselors
Psychology Associate
Treatment Officers
Security Officers

SDTP Security Performance Measures

March 31, 2021

IMPACT



Progressive Change in Virginia

- VADOC has a **23.9% recidivism rate**, routinely one of the lowest in the country
- Virginia is ahead of the curve – as many states are now passing laws mandating diversion of SMI inmates from Restrictive Housing settings
- Initiated change in **January 2020** on a pathway to eliminate Restrictive Housing

Restrictive Housing to Restorative Housing 

How does SDTP Translate?

- Threats to Public Safety applies to any local, state or federal system
- Goal to help treat and support individuals with mental illness crosses all platforms = **reduced recidivism**
- Diverting SMI inmates from a Restrictive Housing environment has shown to be an **effective solution** to successfully manage a challenging inmate population
- Keys for Successful Implementation
 - Establish a Shared Vision
 - Investment from Leadership & Line Staff
 - Valid Classification & Risk Assessment Tools
 - Training Staff
 - Dedicate a Separate Housing Unit
 - Maintain Program Fidelity
 - Involve Inmates

We are in the
business of
helping people be
better!

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