

# Office of the Child Advocate

## Report to

# Oversight Commission on

# Children's Services

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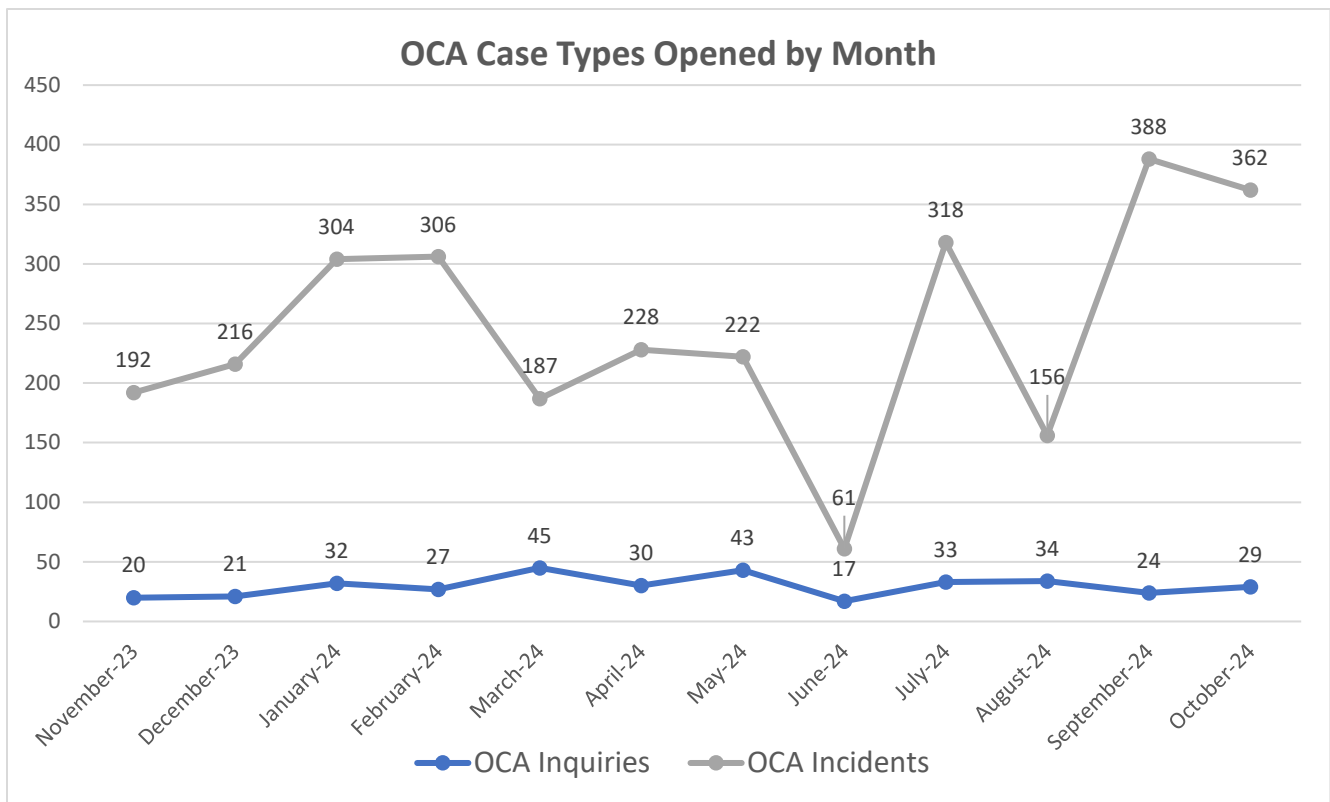
Child Advocate, Cassandra Sanchez

November 15, 2024

## Total OCA Cases (Inquiries & Incidents)

Rolling 12 Month: 11/01/23 – 10/31/24

Month	OCA Inquiries	OCA Incidents
November-23	20	192
December-23	21	216
January-24	32	304
February-24	27	306
March-24	45	187
April-24	30	228
May-24	43	222
June-24	17	61
July-24	33	318
August-24	34	156
September-24	24	388
October-24	29	362
<b>Total Inquiries:</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>2940</b>
<b>Total Cases:</b>	<b>3295</b>	

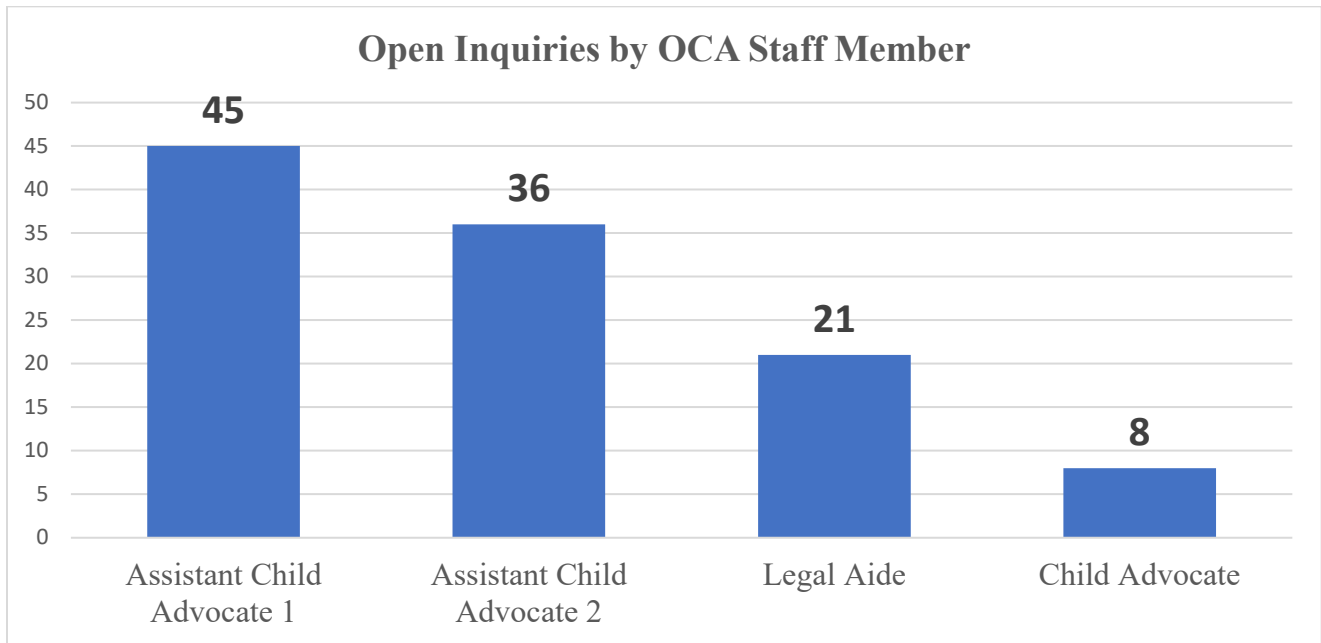


### OCA Case Explanation

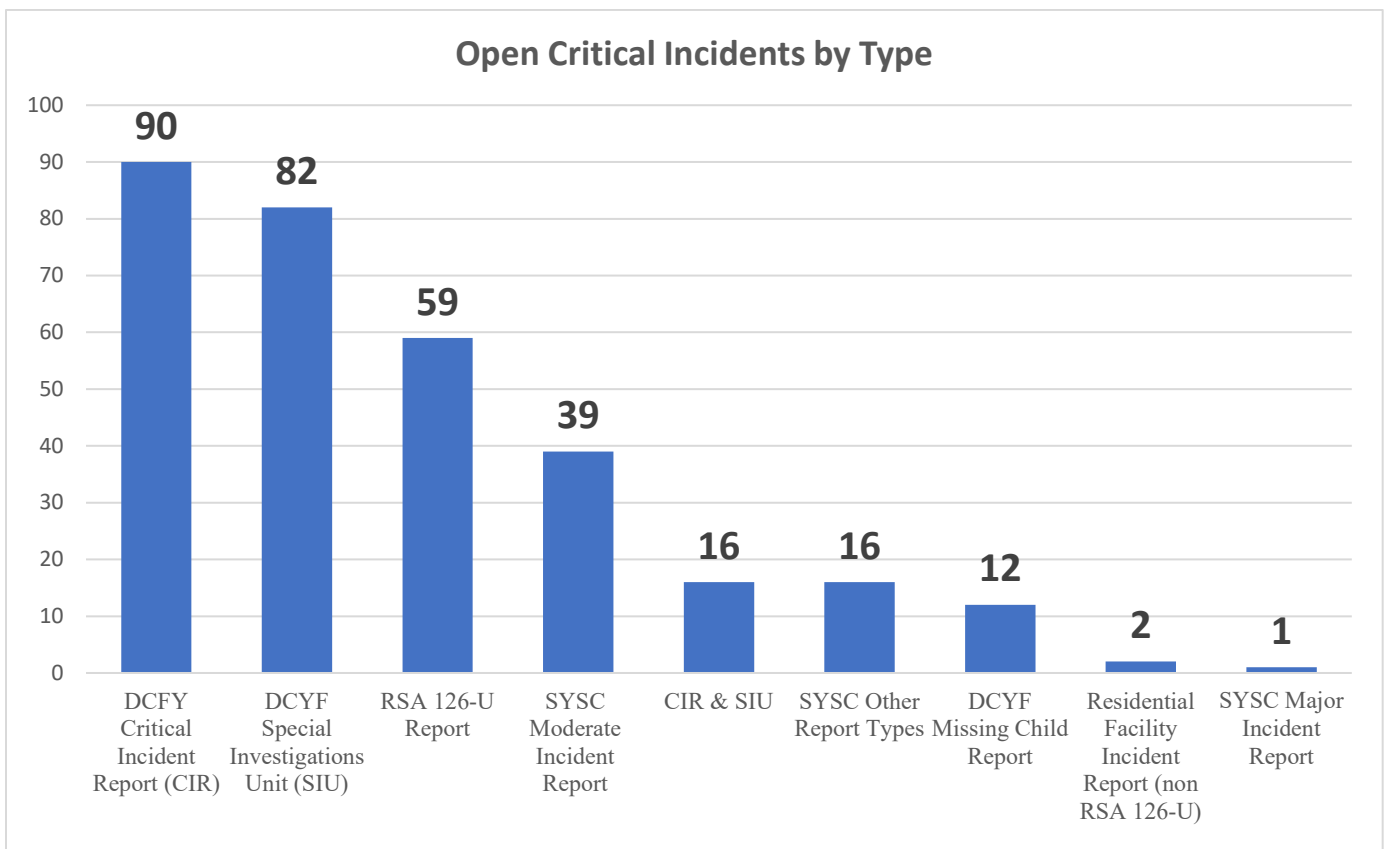
- Inquiries to the OCA include phone calls, emails, and cases opened from in-person meetings with children, caregivers, providers, and stakeholders.
- Incidents include all critical incident reports from DCYF (serious injury to children, child fatalities, parent fatalities, media coverage of DCYF involvement, etc.) and incidents documented by residential programs and SYSC, including restraints and seclusion, and missing children.

**Current OCA Caseload**  
As of 11/08/2024

**Total Open OCA Inquiries: 110**



**Total Open OCA Critical Incidents: 317**



### Facility/Child visits

10/22/24 – The Cottage - *visit with specific child*  
11/8/24 – NH Hospital - *visit with specific young adult*  
11/13/24 – Nashua Children’s Home – *visit with specific children*  
11/14/24 – visit to child who returned from out-of-state placement

### OCA Outreach/ DCYF District Office visits

10/1 – 10/29/24 – Attend Permanency Planning Team (PPT) meetings @ Manchester District Office  
10/21/24 – OCA presentation to UNH Social Work class, Durham  
10/24/24 – OCA presentation at St. Anselm’s College  
10/25/24 – Seacoast District Office Staff meeting  
11/1 – 11/30/24 – Attend Permanency Planning Team (PPT) meetings @ Southern District Office  
11/4/24 – OCA presentation at Waypoint Board Retreat

### Conferences/Events Attended

10/22/24 – Champions for Mental Health Awards, Concord  
10/24/24 – Safe and Affirming Data Collection about Justice-Involved LGBTQ2S+ Youth, webinar  
10/24/24 – *New Futures Annual Awards Celebration, Concord*  
11/14/24 – CADY Parent Shout Out, Plymouth

### Upcoming Visits & Events

11/18-11/19/24 – Presenting New Ombuds Training at US Ombudsman Association Annual Conference, Oceanside, CA  
11/20-11/22/24 – Attending and presenting at US Ombudsman Association Annual Conference, Oceanside, CA

### Other Work

10/25 & 11/8/24 – Model Court meetings relating to updating Court forms with new language from SB 417/RSA 169-F  
10/29/24 – meeting with Caregiver Coordinator Unit team regarding placement search data tracking  
10/31/24 – *published a Blog with Children’s System of Care regarding Halloween for all.*  
11/1/24 – Children’s System of Care (SOC) Assessment Advisory Group Kick-off meeting  
11/13/24 – Children’s SOC Advisory Committee  
Ongoing: YDC Steering Committee  
Ongoing: Commission to Study Community Impacts of the Secured Development Center & Subcommittee on Safety  
Ongoing: Regular meetings with DCYF Human & Sex Trafficking Specialist  
Ongoing: SYSC PREA meetings  
Ongoing: Monthly meetings with DCYF leadership  
Ongoing: Monthly meeting with Clinical Director at SYSC  
Ongoing: DCYF Systems Review meetings  
Ongoing: US Ombudsman Association (USOA), Children & Family Chapter meetings  
Ongoing: USOA Conference Planning Committee  
Ongoing: Magnifying Voices Planning Committee  
Ongoing: Model Court/CIP Executive Committee Meetings



Ongoing: Family Treatment Court (FTC) Oversight Team meetings  
Ongoing: Child Fatality Review Committee meetings  
Ongoing: Monthly meetings with management team at Hampstead Hospital  
Ongoing: Monthly meetings with BCBH leadership  
Ongoing: Children's System of Care Advisory Committee  
Ongoing: Monthly meeting with Attorney General's Office  
Ongoing: Quarterly Community Collaboration Meetings regarding Justice-Involved LGBTQ2S+ Youth  
Ongoing: NH Queer Consortium monthly meetings

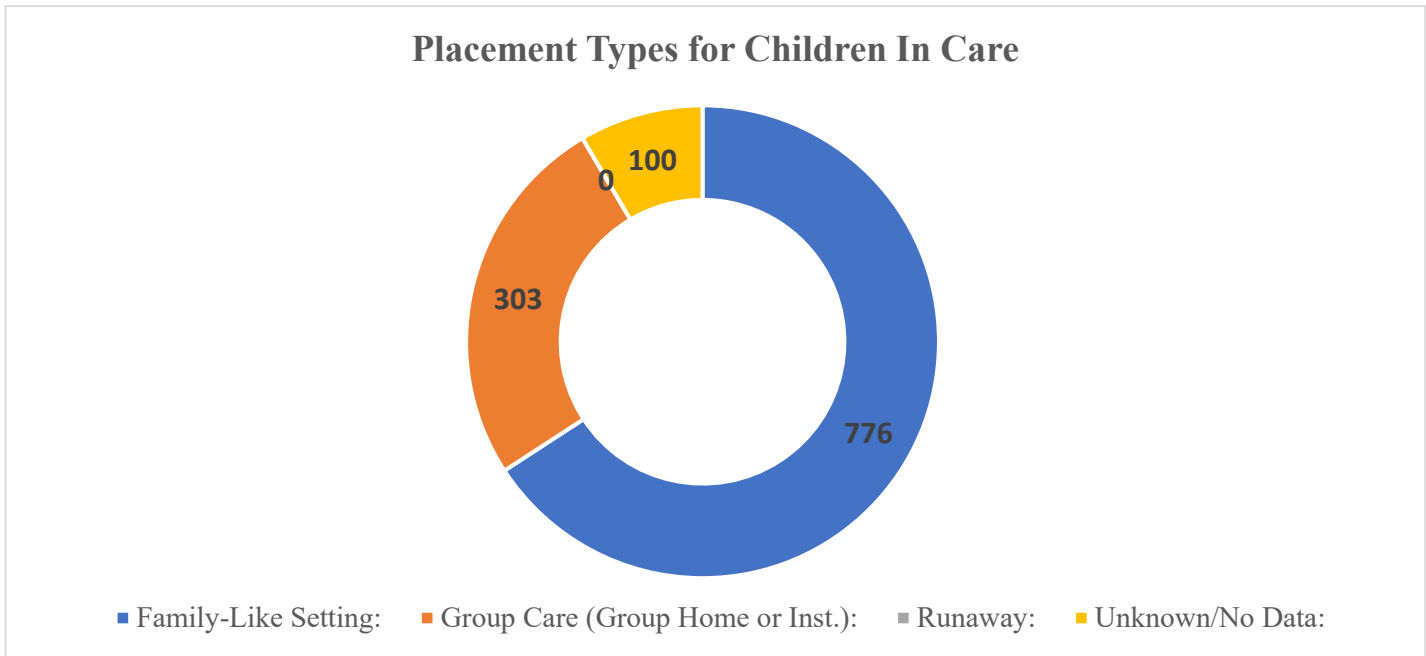
### **Other Issues**

- DHHS quarterly report on HB1573 (10/1/24)
- BCBH certification process, education/oversight of facilities, and follow up on identified issues still inadequate
  - OCA recommendation: BCBH to make information publicly available on their website – list of all facilities certified and/or contracted, site review reports, last site visit date, certification date/renewal date, and number of children placed
  - Escorts not being logged as restraint at many facilities – 126-U language
  - Pine Haven seclusion/case specific issue
    - Met with BCBH on 10/23/24 about escorts & concerns with Pine Haven
    - BCBH has followed up directly with Pine Haven and will provide updates to OCA at our next meeting
- OCA concern for DCYF unethical actions/misrepresentations to the Court
  - OCA continues to hold concern for DCYF lack of action to correct the record on 2 cases where judges have now made orders based on inaccurate information
- Institutional Abuse & neglect (SB 459)
  - Changes to RSA 169-C have been agreed upon by OCA and DCYF
  - New definition provided for “trauma-informed care”
  - Removal of institutional child abuse additions that were previously proposed
- DCYF Central Intake
  - 27.61% of calls (or 4,170 call) to central intake between 4/1/24 - 10/1/24 were abandoned
    - I have asked for detailed monthly breakdown – DCYF noted staffing as a primary issue over the summer, but noted a number of positions were to be filled late summer/early fall
- Continued concerns for the Caregiver Coordinator Unit (CCU)
  - Lack of written violations for foster parents who are abusing/neglecting the children in their care, or otherwise not following the foster parent agreement and/or foster care licensing regulations
  - Not calling certain foster homes for placements, and refusing to consider waivers for foster homes in order to keep siblings together or nearby, or a child in their home community
  - Continued separation of siblings, even when it does not appear necessary
- DCYF culture
  - Caseloads are at an all-time low, but OCA continues to receive a high number of complaints about DCYF not following policies, procedures, and best practice

## New Hampshire Children in Care

As of 10/31/24

Placement Types	Total Children	%	Involvement Type		
			CPS	JJS	DUAL
Family-Like Setting:	776	66%	656	5	115
Group Care (Group Home or Inst.):	303	26%	127	45	131
Runaway:	0	0%	0	0	0
Unknown/No Data:	100	8%	88	1	11
<b>Total Children in Care:</b>	<b>1179</b>		<b>854</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>257</b>



#### Family-Like Settings:

Type	Total Children	%
Foster Home:	410	53%
Relative Foster Home:	318	41%
Supervised Independent Living:	48	6%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>776</b>	

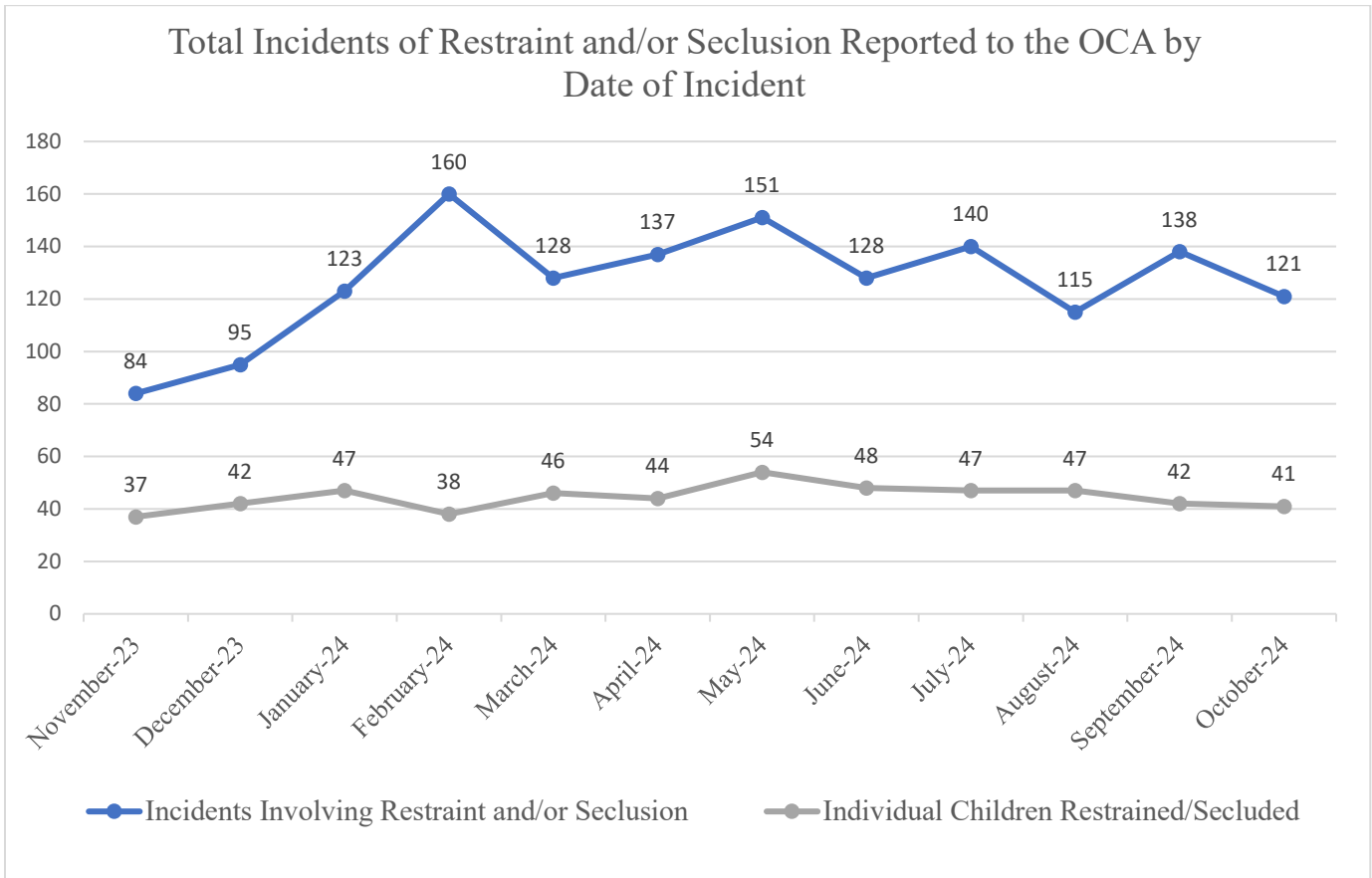
#### Group Care (Group Home or Institution) Locations:

Location	Total Children	%	Children Outside New England
New Hampshire:	240	79%	Alabama 1
New England (Outside NH):	52	17%	Arkansas 1
Outside of New England:	11	4%	Florida 8
<b>Total:</b>	<b>303</b>		Oklahoma 1
			<b>Total: 11</b>

## Restraints & Seclusion Incidents Reported to the OCA from Residential Facilities

Rolling 12 Month: 11/01/23 – 10/31/24

Month	Incidents Reported to OCA Involving:			Total Incidents	Number of Children
	Restraints	Seclusions	Restraints & Seclusions		
November-23	80	1	3	<b>84</b>	37
December-23	85	3	7	<b>95</b>	42
January-24	112	6	5	<b>123</b>	47
February-24	142	5	13	<b>160</b>	38
March-24	108	7	13	<b>128</b>	46
April-24	130	2	5	<b>137</b>	44
May-24	142	4	5	<b>151</b>	54
June-24	118	5	5	<b>128</b>	48
July-24	130	3	7	<b>140</b>	47
August-24	102	7	6	<b>115</b>	47
September-24	115	7	16	<b>138</b>	42
October-24	106	5	10	<b>121</b>	41
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>1370</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>1520</b>	



### Restraint & Seclusion Explanation

- This data includes all residential facilities which the OCA receives restraint and seclusion reports from.
- The OCA only receives restraint and seclusion reports from contracted facilities; we do not receive them for certified-only facilities, including many of the out-of-state facilities beyond the New England region.

## SYSC Incidents Reported to the OCA

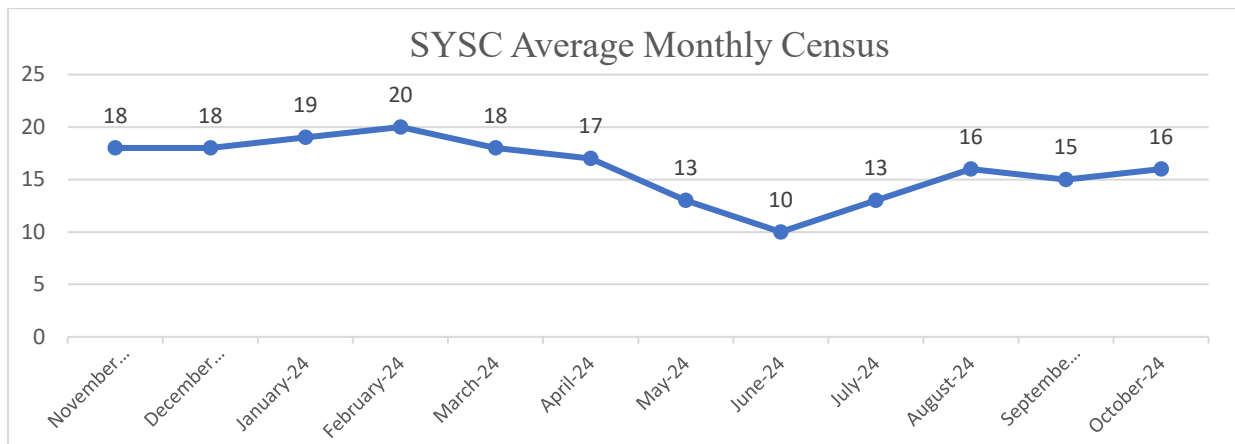
Rolling 12 Month: 11/01/23 – 10/31/24

Month	Major Incidents	Mod Incidents	Minor Incidents	Other Incidents	Total
November-23	34	22	7	18	81
December-23	65	18	6	25	114
January-24	68	16	6	34	124
February-24	56	13	9	26	104
March-24	39	16	4	24	83
April-24	55	30	8	9	102
May-24	57	18	7	18	100
June-24	22	4	1	7	34
July-24	45	9	2	13	69
August-24	56	27	5	22	110
September-24	36	30	3	42	111
October-24	41	21	3	23	88
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>1120</b>

## SYSC Incidents Involving Restraints or Seclusions by Month

11/01/23 – 10/31/24

Month	Incidents Inv. Restraint or Seclusion	Individual Children
November-23	3	3
December-23	15	7
January-24	9	7
February-24	13	7
March-24	5	4
April-24	10	7
May-24	13	6
June-24	10	9
July-24	24	8
August-24	18	10
September-24	13	6
October-24	11	4
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>144</b>	

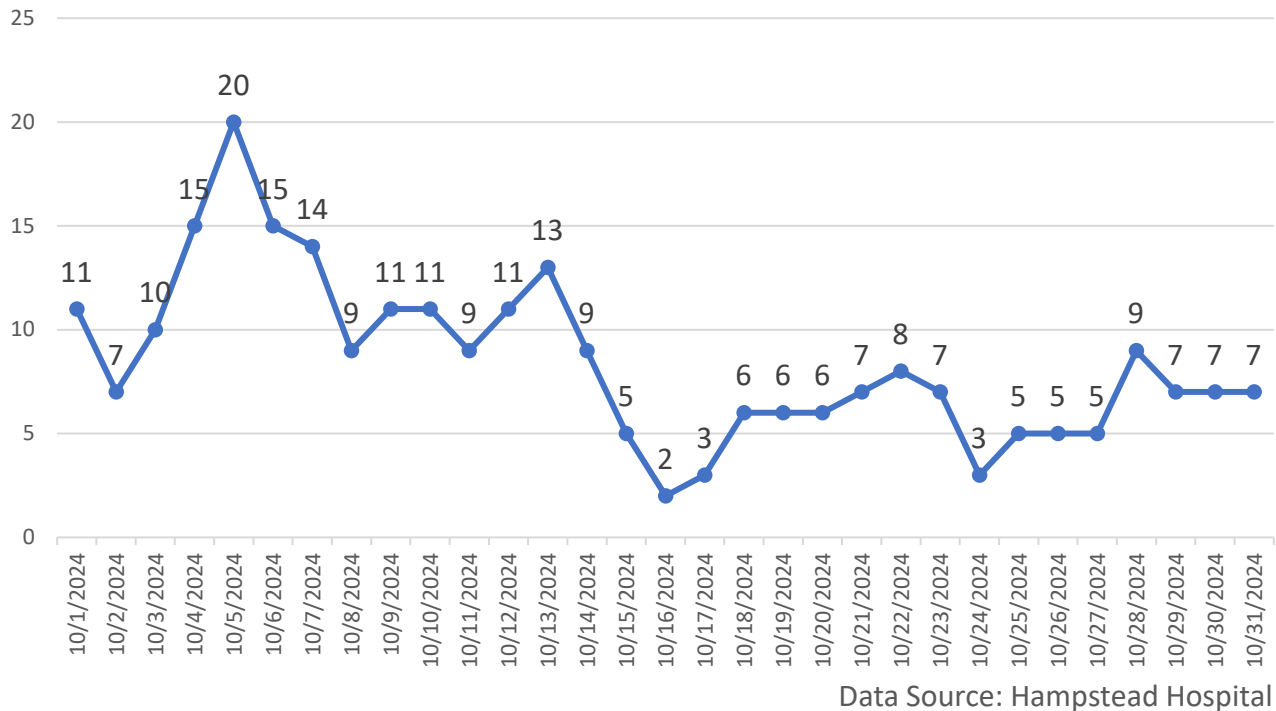


### SYSC Explanation

- Although the census at SYSC can fluctuate day to day, the average monthly census data has been added to this report for additional context.



## Hampstead Hospital Inpatient HHRTF Waitlist for Minors October 2024 (Children who have been accepted but are waiting for a bed to open)

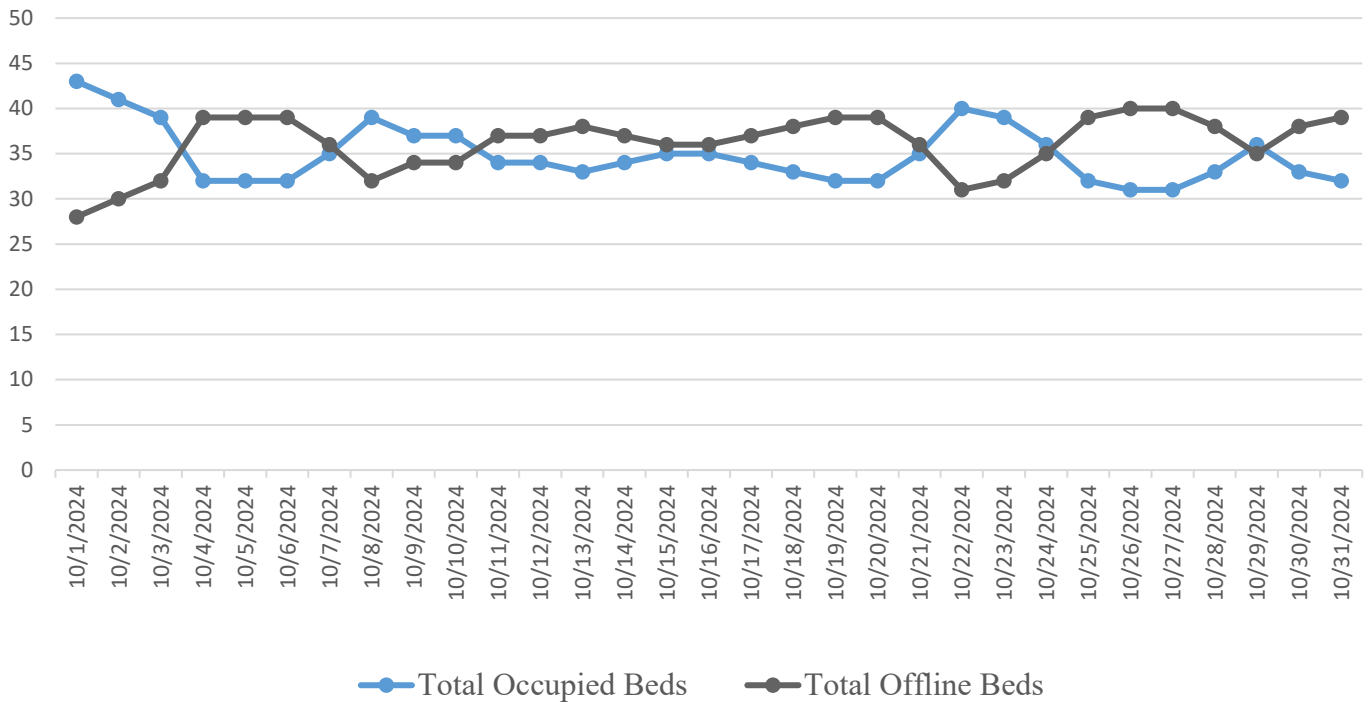


<b>October 2024 Inpatient (HHRTF) Disposition Data for Hampstead Hospital (Minors)</b>			
Data source: Hampstead Hospital			
Disposition	# of Dispositions	% of Total Dispositions	% of Accepted Dispositions
<b>Total Dispositions in October:</b>	<b>138</b>		
<b>Not Accepted</b> (went home before acceptance, placed elsewhere before acceptance, deferred/denied)	<b>17</b>	12%	
<b>Accepted:</b>	<b>121</b>	88%	
Accepted but went home before a bed opened	<b>21</b>	15%	17%
Accepted but placed elsewhere before a bed opened	<b>26</b>	19%	21%
Admitted	<b>74</b>	54%	61%

### Hampstead Hospital & East Acres Explanation

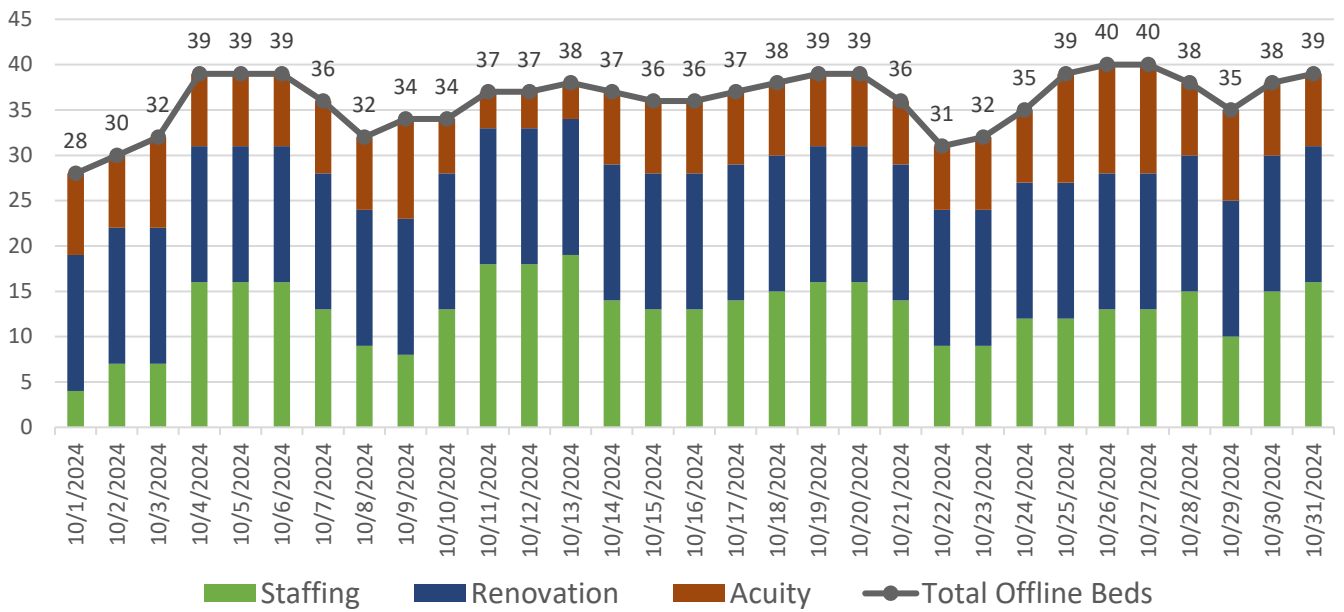
- Above is a graph with Hampstead Hospital waitlist data that is shared publicly by DHHS (for DHHS data, see: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/about-dhhs/locations-facilities/state-run-and-designated-acute-psychiatric-bed-data>).
- Below you will see new graphs focusing on the number of occupied and offline beds. The 3 reasons for beds being offline as provided by Hampstead Hospital are staffing, renovation, and acuity.

### Hampstead Hospital Inpatient HHRTF Occupied & Offline Beds October 2024



Data Source: Hampstead Hospital

### Hampstead Hospital Inpatient HHRTF Offline Beds October 2024



Data Source: Hampstead Hospital