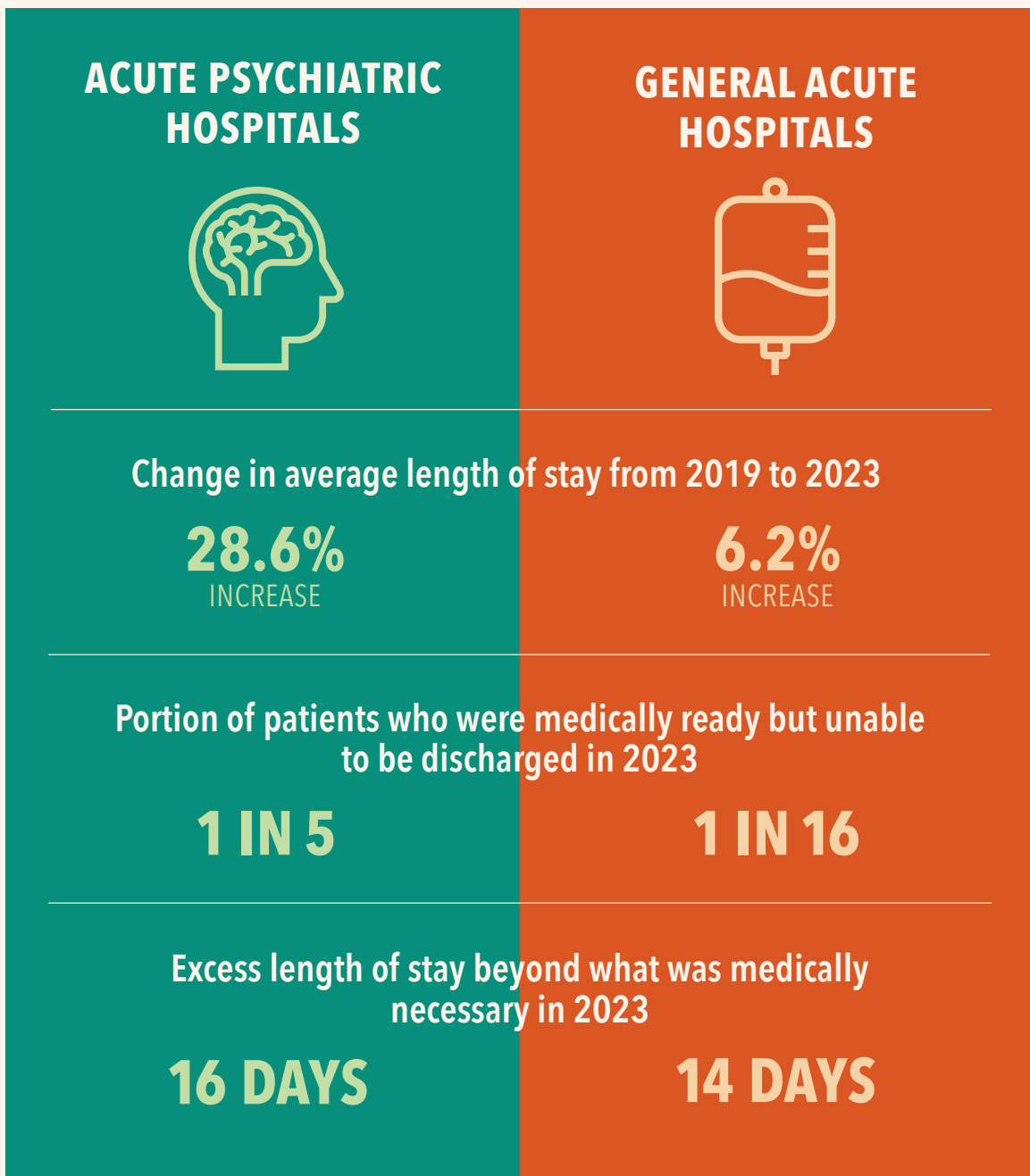










# DELAYED DISCHARGES

## Impacts of Prolonged Hospital Stays

A prolonged hospital stay that isn't medically necessary puts patients at higher risk of complications, infections, and postponement of their recovery, and isn't the best use of limited and costly hospital capacity. Average length of stay at California hospitals increased as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and has not returned to prepandemic levels.



## Common barriers to timely discharge

-   Postacute facility denies admission
-   Patient's insurance does not cover the requested service
-  Postacute facility cites inadequate reimbursement
-  Health insurance plan delays or denies authorization
-  Patient needs exceed post-acute provider capabilities
-  Provider network lacks facilities with available placements

A majority of patients experiencing delayed discharges in acute psychiatric hospitals and a plurality in general acute hospitals are covered by Medi-Cal. Many barriers to timely discharge can be addressed through new services and programs in CalAIM (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal), the state's multiyear plan to transform the Medi-Cal program.

For more information about promising practices for complex discharges, see CHCF's recent publication [\*Playbook for Complex Discharges\*](#).