

Human Services Department Report to County Board May 2020

ADMINISTRATION (ADMIN)

Children's Mental Health Listening Session

Several team members from La Crosse County Human Services participated in a February 12th local listening session on children's mental health that was organized by the Wisconsin Office on Children's Mental Health. Attendees of this "invite-only" event which took place at English Lutheran Church included First Lady Mrs. Evers, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Secretary Emilie Amundson and Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health Director Linda Hall. It was an opportunity to share perspectives on the status of children's well-being in La Crosse County and offer thoughts on how State Government could support the many collaborative efforts underway in our community.

Staffing Assistance at Homeless Shelters

Beginning in March, the Human Service Department began providing staffing assistance to two homeless shelters in the city of La Crosse (currently located at the Salvation Army and within the Warming Center). Human Services is providing a supplemental staff person around the clock and seven days a week at each site through the end of May. We are also assisting with coordinated planning and service access related to finding housing for those currently residing within the shelters. This includes employees from our Aging and Disability Resource Center who are going onsite to the shelters in addition to the supplemental staffing.

This support has helped the homeless shelters maintain their operations as they have seen increased staff turnover and a decrease in volunteers. It also provides some stability while planning is done for the period following the expiration of the Governor's Safe at Home Order. Safely sheltering our homeless population is an important piece of keeping our overall community healthy and safe.

The Human Services supervisor who is coordinating staffing support for the homeless shelters, Julie Nuttleman, was recently featured in the La Crosse Tribune: https://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/la-crosse-county-employee-delays-retirement-to-help-house-the-homeless-during-covid-19/article_61e58f81-aff5-57cb-bd06-f9481f2555cf.html

Providing Services During COVID-19

La Crosse County Human Services has continued to stay "open" and serve our community during this challenging time. Our employees have adapted well to many new ways of providing service. Most of our employees are working from home and minimizing face-to-face contacts by using telephone and video conferencing. We are anxious to return to a more "normal" way of doing things yet will take forward some of the lessons we've learned to improve the way we connect and provide services.

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC)

Caregiver Support Roundtable Event

A caregiver roundtable discussion was held in La Crosse on Monday, March 9. The roundtable included Governor Evers, Department of Health Services Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm, area legislators, caregivers from around the region and representatives from the ADRC. Caregivers were given the opportunity to share their caregiving story along with any challenges faced when caring for their loved ones. The State wanted to learn firsthand how the State might be able to better support caregivers.

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S (FC)

Child Welfare Workload Time Study

WI Department of Children and Families (DCF) and WI County Human Service Association (WCHSA) are conducting a statewide child welfare staffing and workload evaluation to identify valuable, research-driven findings to support DCF's mission to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children and youth in Wisconsin. The overarching goals of the study are to:

- Establish a comprehensive picture of child welfare workload, case management, and staffing levels throughout the state;

- Recommend manageable workloads for local child welfare caseworkers, supervisors, case aids, and related staff; and
- Identify areas where there may be efficiencies that could decrease workload.

Our agency has been selected to participate in the time study portion of this effort. The time study will help the study team address the amount of time spent on the various services, tasks, and other work and non-work activities that are required to comply with law, policy, and regulations and to provide critical client outcomes across the State of Wisconsin. It is a critical component of the workload study that informs the way work is currently performed. The time study was originally scheduled to take place from March 1-31, 2020, but has been delayed due to the COVID-19 emergency. The entire Family & Children's Services section will participate in this once it gets back underway.

INTEGRATED SUPPORT & RECOVERY SERVICES (ISRS)

Triage/Intake Process for the ISRS Section

The ISRS Section has restructured triage/intake for consumers to access programs and services. The new process was started as of March 1, 2020, although it has now been delayed due to the COVID-19 emergency. The ISRS section will meet with internal and community partners to share the new process and answer questions they may have. We are also exploring adding information to our Human Services/ISRS website. Stay tuned as we will be sharing the new process with the Health & Human Services Board in the upcoming months. Currently, we are working on a modified intake plan that can go in effect concurrently with Phase 1 of Governor Evers "Badger Bounceback" plan.

Crisis Unit

The Collaborative Crisis Intervention Services to Youth Grant (CCISY) has unexpectedly been extended for an additional year. The grant period is from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. The ISRS Section will be looking to use collaborative services funded through this grant to reach children and youth within La Crosse County school districts that we currently serve through our Crisis program.