

# 2025

# Impact Report

## LA CROSSE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES



**Jason Witt, Human Services  
Department Director**



LA CROSSE COUNTY

# Serving our Community

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



As Director of La Crosse County Human Services, it is a pleasure to highlight several key achievements from 2025. This past year once again brought unique challenges. Our team worked diligently to keep pace with federal changes while also navigating a temporary government shutdown. Even amidst that uncertainty, our focus remained squarely on serving individuals and families in the best way possible.

What follows are just a few examples of the remarkable accomplishments of the Human Services team in 2025.

### **Food Drive**

Human Services staff went above and beyond by organizing a food drive to support those facing disruptions in federal FoodShare benefits during the government shutdown. The drive collected 1,365 pounds of food, all of which was donated to the Hunger Task Force of La Crosse.

### **Housing the Homeless**

The City-County Homelessness Plan (Pathways Home) continued to deliver significant results. Human Services team members and community partners have housed more than 300 individuals since the project began, with a 90% housing retention rate. People are being housed more quickly thanks to expanded housing and support options created by our team's efforts. Among the new options are ten apartments at the Human Services-led Park Lane Studios, which welcomed its first residents this year.

### **Reopening Youth Shelter**

A reimagining of service delivery led to the reopening of the La Crosse County youth shelter on the fourth floor of the Health and Human Services Building. The shelter had been closed for more than two years due to staffing shortages, removing an important service option for local youth. Through a carefully coordinated plan led by Human Services team members, the shelter reopened in August with an exciting vision for its future.

### **Speaker's Elder Services Task Force**

In November, ADRC team members testified before the Wisconsin State Assembly's Speaker's Elder Services Task Force. Roughly a quarter century ago, La Crosse County Human Services played a key role in Wisconsin's long-term care redesign as one of the first counties to pilot the ADRC and Family Care models. In speaking to the task force, our team highlighted the innovative work underway in La Crosse County and offered bold proposals to help Wisconsin meet the needs of a rapidly growing senior population.

All of these efforts demonstrate the strength of our county-based human services system — a strength made possible by a dedicated and skilled workforce attuned to the community's unique needs. We value the partnerships and support that make our success possible, and we look forward to what's ahead in 2026.

With warmest regards,

**Jason Witt, Human Services Director**

[jwitt@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:jwitt@lacrossecounty.org)

# 2025 Department Overview

- **Answered 22,518 calls** from clients and community members through our Administrative staff. This is an increase of 13% from the previous year.
- **Served 4,674 customers through ADRC Professionals**, totaling 12,137 direct contacts—ensuring individuals and families could access critical information and support when they needed it most.
- **Provided 11,730 rides through ADRC Transportation services**, covering 153,051 miles—helping people stay connected to medical care, nutrition, and community, reducing isolation and promoting independence.



- **Served 53,194 meals through ADRC Senior Nutrition Program**, supported by 142 volunteers contributing nearly 7,000 hours—providing not just nourishment, but social connection and health.
- **Strengthened ADRC Dementia Care initiatives**, including 200+ attendees at the Hope & Light Dementia Conference, 101 new Dementia Friends, and 4 new Dementia-Friendly businesses trained—building a more inclusive community where people living with dementia are understood and supported.
- **Received 595 referrals to Adult Protective Services**, an 8% increase from 2024, with self-neglect and financial exploitation as leading concerns—safeguarding vulnerable adults and ensuring dignity and safety for those at risk of harm.
- **Maintained a 0.67% FoodShare error rate in FY25**, protecting critical federal funding and demonstrating strong program accuracy across the WREA consortium.
- **Served an average of 56,542 individuals monthly** across the eight-county WREA consortium, including 20,098 La Crosse County residents, ensuring continued access to health care, nutrition, and financial supports.
- **Issued an average of \$1.6 million in Food Share benefits** each month in La Crosse County, supporting approximately 10,027 recipients and strengthening household and local economic stability.
- **Supported working families** through Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance, serving an average of 185 families (268 children) monthly and issuing \$192,916 in childcare benefits per month.
- **Exited 44 children from out-of-home care.** Of those 44 children, 20 achieved permanencies through reunification with a parent, 14 through a guardianship and 3 children aged out of care. There were also 6 terminations of parental rights hearings that involved 7 children total, who will reach permanency through adoption.
- **Served over three times as many youths** on an average day in WRAS compared to the previous year, expanding access to critical resources for short-term care and rehabilitation.

- **Responded to over 5,500 crisis calls**, with expanded deflection and co-response services.
- **Achieved record CLTS youth enrollments**, serving more than 700 youth countywide.
- **Maintained high quality and satisfaction** during a year of staffing transitions and program growth.
- **Launched Wisconsin's first fully online Level 1 Alternative Education Group Dynamics course** for individuals convicted of a first-time OWI. This new option increases equitable access for those facing barriers such as transportation, childcare or physical or mental health limitations. Since its launch, 50 participants have enrolled, achieving a 100% completion rate, demonstrating strong engagement and success.
- We launched new funding sources for Pathways including the **Medicaid Supportive Housing program (1915i)** and a deflection grant from the State of Wisconsin.
- 193 households were placed into housing in 2025 with a **90% housing retention rate**.
- A **Specialized Housing Plan** was released defining the specialized housing we need to reach functional zero. In 2025, we added 50+ specialized housing units added including Park Lane Studios, the Collective on 4th & ARPA-funded housing capacity.
- **Provided housing case management** in partnership with Pathways Home and REACH Center to 24% of the 202 families served by La Crosse Area Family Collaborative who were experiencing homelessness at intake.
- **Opened Park Lane Studios**, expanding supportive housing capacity and strengthening Pathways to Housing efforts.

# Employee Spotlights

## RYAN ROSS, ISAAC HOFFMAN AND KRISTI MATZ

Ryan Ross, Isaac Hoffman, and Kristi Matz have played central leadership roles in testing how housing navigation services can be implemented across Human Services programs to better support consumers while building a clearer understanding of housing-related need and funding opportunities.

Together, they helped design and launch a coordinated pilot between two business units. The first is the CCS Specialized Unit, which serves individuals who are unsheltered and likely appropriate for CCS programming. This unit began testing housing navigation services as part of its engagement with some of our most complex consumers in July 2025. The second is a newly formed Housing Support Services (HSS) Unit, created to explore how similar services could be offered to consumers enrolled in other Human Services programs outside of CCS beginning in February 2025.

Rather than operating in silos, these units worked in close partnership. Ryan, Isaac, and Kristi collaborated across sections to define referral processes, shared workflows, and intentional data capture, ensuring the work supports consumers while also generating reliable information about the level of need and the portion that may be eligible for 1915(i) MA reimbursement.

This effort depended heavily on the dedication of their teams. Staff stepped into a period of experimentation and learning—often without complete answers—while continuing to support consumers. Their flexibility, problem-solving, and willingness to test new approaches were essential to making the pilot viable. Throughout 2026, this testing phase will continue. Importantly, the work has remained resource-neutral, relying on existing staff rather than adding positions prematurely. By capturing real-world data first, Human Services is positioning itself to make informed decisions about future service delivery, staffing, and budget investments.



This collaboration is a strong illustration of HS Reimagined in action—aligning people, processes, and purpose to achieve meaningful and sustainable impact.

## **DAWN AYLSWORTH AND KRISTI HEROLD**

While service teams began testing housing navigation delivery, Dawn Aylsworth and Kristi Herold have led the critical systems and integrity work necessary to ensure the effort is compliant, sustainable, and ready for advancement.

Dawn and her fiscal team are responsible for ensuring that Housing Support Services align with Medicaid (MA) reimbursement requirements, including the complex rules associated with 1915(i). As part of this work, the team is processing multiple prior authorizations, preparing them for advancement to the state for final approval. This work requires precision, deep policy knowledge, and close coordination with service units to ensure documentation, service definitions, and timelines are accurate.

Partnering closely with fiscal, Kristi Herold and the Quality Assurance team play a key role in safeguarding program integrity. Together, Dawn and Kristi ensure that emerging workflows meet regulatory expectations and that data being captured during this testing phase can withstand audit and review. Their collaboration helps protect both consumers and the organization as Human Services explores innovative service models.

Much of this work happens behind the scenes, yet it is essential. Without strong fiscal oversight, QA partnership, and compliance infrastructure, testing new service approaches would carry significant risk. Dawn and Kristi's leadership along with their team's dedication allows the department to experiment responsibly balancing innovation with accountability.

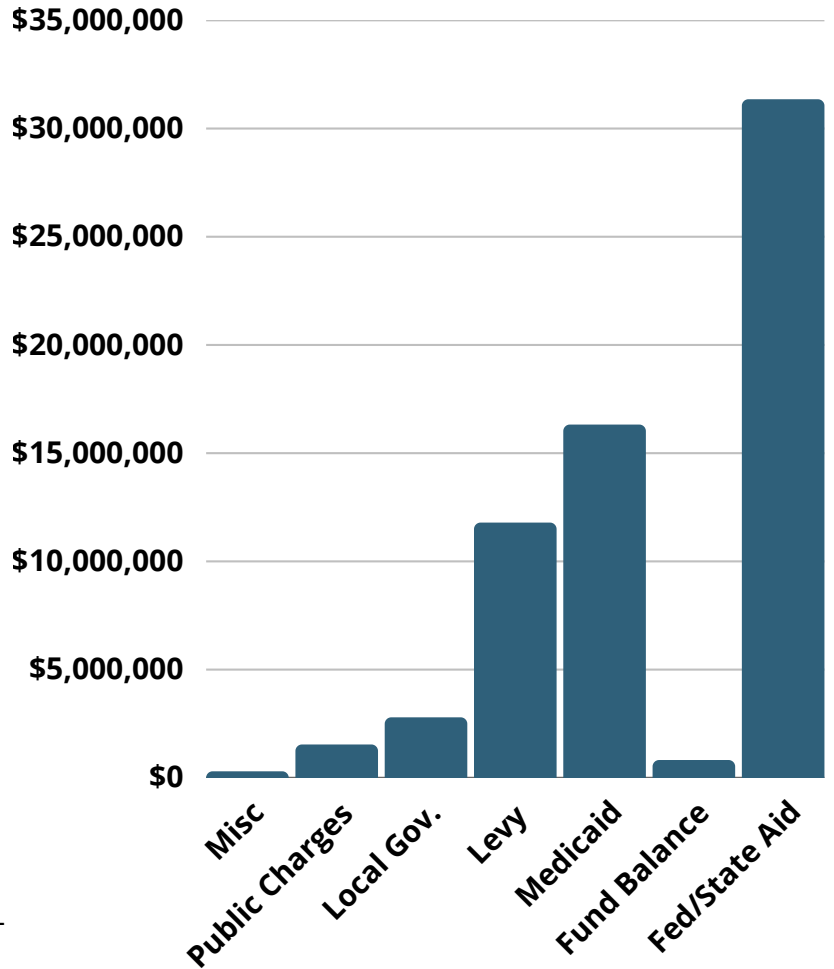
As Housing Support Services continue to evolve throughout 2026, the foundation built by fiscal and QA ensures that lessons learned can translate into sustainable, reimbursable services in the future. Their work exemplifies another core element of HS Reimagined: building systems that enable staff to serve consumers effectively while strengthening the department's long-term financial and operational health.

# 2025 Finances

## REVENUE & EXPENSES

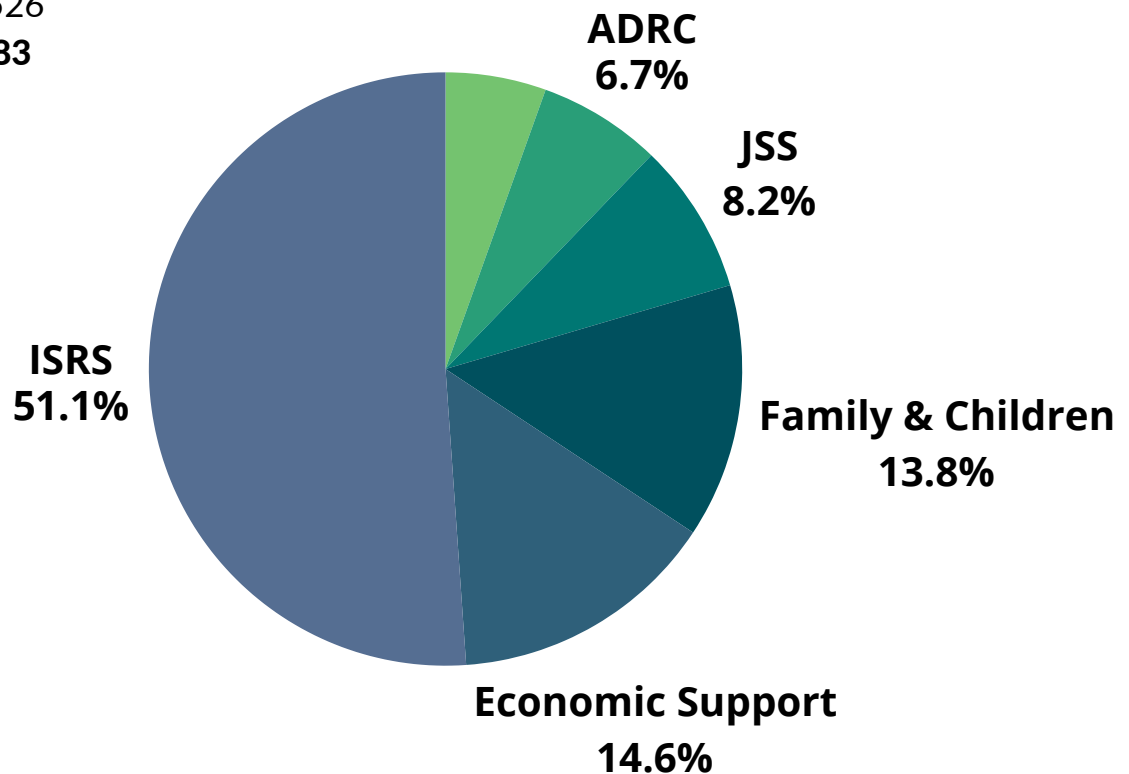
### REVENUE

- Miscellaneous Revenues: \$300,154
- Public Charges for Services: \$1,539,910
- Local Governmental Payments: \$2,794,490
- Levy: \$11,792,723
- Medicaid Revenue: \$16,321,745
- Federal/State Aid: \$31,353,082
- Fund Balance: \$822,379
- **TOTAL: \$64,924,483**



### EXPENSES

- HS Operations: \$3,558,159
- ADRC & Aging: \$4,361,192
- Justice Support Services: \$5,349,371
- Family and Children: \$8,994,556
- Economic Support: \$9,480,679
- Integrated Support and Recovery Services: \$33,180,526
- **TOTAL: \$64,924,483**



# Pathways Home



Jim Drees - La Crosse County  
Homelessness Response  
System Manager

**What I do:** Pathways Home is the joint homelessness response initiative of La Crosse County and the City of La Crosse, launched in 2024. Working with community partners, the program coordinates services to make the system faster, smarter, and more effective. Its goal is to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring – known as functional zero – by helping people return to stable housing quickly and sustainably.

## 2025 Overview:

Pathways' second year focused on strengthening system capacity to support progress toward achieving functional zero by 2029. Key accomplishments include:

- **193 households housed with a 90% retention rate.** Thanks to strong community partnerships, Pathways placed 193 households into housing while maintaining high housing stability. A new tracking process now identifies early indicators of housing loss, enabling timely prevention – the most effective and lowest-cost way to reduce homelessness inflow.
- **Over 50 specialized housing units added**, including Park Lane Studios, the Collective on 4th, and ARPA-funded capacity. The Collective on 4th created 13 dedicated units for Pathways, offering a model for future development partnerships. Park Lane Studios, operated by the County, provides transitional housing with wraparound supports for residents exiting homelessness.
- **Specialized Housing Plan released.** This roadmap outlines the types and number of low-barrier housing units needed to reach functional zero, based on the current unhoused population and projected inflow over the next three years.
- **Three peer support specialists hired into the County Specialized Unit.** Their lived experience strengthens trust and engagement with people the program serves.
- La Crosse County became a statewide leader in **implementing the new Medicaid Supportive Housing program (1915i)**. More than 60 individuals are approved for services, which reimburse staffing for up to 150 hours of navigation support, 150 hours of retention support, and up to \$2,000 in relocation assistance.
- A **\$350,000 State deflection grant** funded an assertive case management social worker to assist individuals cycling between homelessness and the criminal justice system.
- Community awareness expanded through an October 14 screening of **Beyond the Bridge: A Solution to Homelessness** at the Weber Center, drawing over 400 attendees and highlighting proven pathways to functional zero.

# 193

Households housed in 2025.

# 60

Individuals approved for  
\$2,000 in relocation  
assistance.

# 90%

Housing retention rate for  
people housed through  
Pathways Home.

# Integrated Support Recovery Services



Anneliese Skoda - Integrated Support and Recovery Services Manager

**What we do:** Provide comprehensive services for adults and children with mental health needs, substance use challenges, and intellectual or physical disabilities. Grounded in recovery-oriented, person-centered approaches, ISRS supports individuals to remain safely housed, engaged in care, and connected to their communities. Staff bring compassion, flexibility, and collaboration to some of the most complex needs in La Crosse County.

## Housing and Homelessness-Related Services

A major milestone was the opening of Park Lane Studios on the Hillview Campus, which reached full capacity with 10 residents—each previously unsheltered—shortly after opening in December. Staff across ISRS supported

site preparation, on-site services, and continuing coordination. The Pathways Specialized Team assisted more than 280 individuals experiencing homelessness. The team launched a Medicaid-funded Housing Support Services program, enrolling 50 individuals within five months, and expanded peer support capacity. Pathways staff were also instrumental in developing and staffing Park Lane Studios.

## Crisis Response and Behavioral Health Services

Crisis Services expanded in 2025 with the addition of a deflection social worker, increased support to Western Regional Adolescent Services (WRAS) and supportive housing sites, and preparation for overnight crisis coverage. The team responded to 5,530 crisis calls, completed 773 co-responses, and facilitated 266 emergency detentions.

The Outpatient Clinic funded 1,975 days of residential treatment for 77 individuals, assisted 86 in sober or transitional housing, and provided treatment for 34 individuals, including those in jail. The nursing team completed more than 2,000 contacts and mentored four interns. Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioners (APNPs) maintained average caseloads of 127 individuals, and the Alcohol and Other Drug Assessment (AODA) team served 154 across three staff. Clinicians also supported mental health recovery through assessments and interventions for individuals in the jail and community.

Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) supported 236 individuals, maintaining uninterrupted services during extended staff absences and strengthening psychiatric capacity.

## Youth and Family Services

CLTS (Children's Long-Term Support) and Youth Services reached a record high enrollment of 203 youth in 2025, serving more than 750 cumulatively. Staff sustained continuity of services despite multiple extended absences, demonstrating strong teamwork and commitment to families navigating complex needs.

## Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance ensured compliance and accountability across programs and contracted providers while serving as a primary point of contact for individuals and families seeking services. In 2025, the team met with 579 people, facilitating access to appropriate supports and maintaining program integrity.

# Economic Support



Lorie Graff - Western  
Region Economic  
Assistance Manager

**What we do:** The WREA Consortium (Western Region for Economic Assistance) determines eligibility for public assistance programs, including FoodShare, Medicaid, BadgerCare, Wisconsin Shares Childcare Assistance, and the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP).

**2025 Overview:** The Western Region for Economic Assistance (WREA) determines eligibility for public assistance programs including FoodShare, Medicaid, BadgerCare, Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance, and the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP). In 2025, WREA continued providing timely, reliable access to these programs for residents of La Crosse County and the surrounding eight-county region.

The year brought significant **federal policy discussions**—budget negotiations, Marketplace premium affordability changes, and concerns about possible government shutdowns. These developments generated increased customer inquiries and heightened public anxiety, with many residents worried their FoodShare or healthcare benefits could be reduced or terminated. Economic Support staff responded by prioritizing consistent eligibility processing, clear communication, and dependable service access to ensure continuity despite the broader uncertainty. Staff closely monitored call volume and application trends and remained committed to timely, accurate eligibility determinations.

**Community-based Economic Support Specialists (ESS)** deepened their presence in La Crosse County, particularly through an expanded partnership with Pathways Home. ESS staff participated regularly in coordinated outreach efforts and became an integrated part of the Pathways team. Their consistent engagement has strengthened trust with individuals experiencing housing instability, improved early identification of eligibility needs, and enhanced connections to supportive services.

WREA also maintained strong program integrity and fiscal stewardship. In FY25, the consortium achieved a **0.67 percent FoodShare active error rate**—well below federal thresholds—protecting critical funding and ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements.

Across the region, WREA **served an average of 56,542 individuals each month**, including 20,098 La Crosse County residents. In La Crosse County, approximately 10,027 individuals received FoodShare monthly, with an average of \$1.6 million issued to support household stability and the local economy.

Wisconsin Shares Child Care Assistance supported an average of **185 families (268 children)** per month, issuing about \$192,916 in monthly benefits to help working families remain employed.

Through WHEAP, **3,870 households applied for energy assistance** and 3,190 received payments; 749 households received crisis assistance to prevent disconnection.

Through steady operations, strong partnerships, and careful fiscal oversight, Economic Support remained a stabilizing force for households and the broader community during a year marked by policy change and public uncertainty.

# Justice Support Services



Tonya Van Tol - Justice  
Support Services  
Manager

**What we do:** Justice Support Services (JSS) strengthens community safety by providing prevention, early intervention, and supportive services for youth and adults involved in, or at risk of entering, the justice system. Through the La Crosse Area Family Collaborative (LAFC) and the Children and Youth System of Care (SOC), staff work upstream to address behavioral concerns, school-based incidents, housing instability, and family stressors—helping families avoid deeper involvement in Youth Justice (YJ) and Child Protective Services. JSS balances accountability with opportunity by connecting individuals and families to services that promote stability and positive outcomes.

## **2025 Overview:**

### **Adult Justice Support Services**

Adult JSS advanced community-based alternatives to incarceration in 2025. Staff supported 303 individuals during the pretrial process, helping participants meet court requirements while accessing housing, substance use and mental health treatment, and other critical resources. The Drug and OWI Treatment Courts admitted 77 new participants, with 37 graduates completing the program. The Diversion program continued serving as a key pathway to reduce deeper system involvement, supporting 98 individuals through Pre-Charge Diversion and 164 through Post-Charge Diversion. JSS Social Workers also completed 439 Intoxicated Driver Program assessments to help individuals meet driver's license reinstatement requirements. To strengthen effectiveness, Adult JSS conducted internal process reviews focused on improving participant outcomes, program fidelity, and consistency with evidence-based practices.

### **Youth Justice and System of Care**

Youth Justice received 264 referrals in 2025, representing 131 unique youth. Social workers collaborated closely with youth and families to reinforce family supports, address underlying needs, and promote accountability and positive development.

The Youth System of Care (SOC) supported 203 youth, continuing efforts to respond to youth behaviors in lieu of tickets or YJ referrals. Among youth discharged in 2025, 77% successfully completed programming or improved school attendance, up from 74 percent in 2024. SOC also expanded targeted group interventions, including a mothers' support group, independent living groups for high school students, a boys leadership group, and summer programming to strengthen skill development, peer support, and engagement.

### **Prevention and Family Support**

The La Crosse Area Family Collaborative (LAFC) and Community Response (CR) teams advanced their shared mission to prevent child welfare involvement and strengthen family stability. CR social workers responded to 852 screened-out CPS reports; 134 families accepted voluntary services, including support with housing, transportation, parenting, employment, and mental health navigation. Four neighborhood-based LAFC social workers served 202 families and addressed more than 80 percent of identified needs, providing timely, accessible support embedded directly in the community.

# Family and Children's Services



Tracy Puent -  
Family and Children's  
Manager

**What we do:** We provide Child Protective Services (CPS) and Child Welfare Services to ensure child safety and strengthen families. We also administer foster care and kinship care programs. In addition, Western Regional Adolescent Services (WRAS) offers shelter care and secure detention, supporting safety, accountability, and growth for youth.

**2025 Overview:** CPS prioritized workforce development through a back-to-basics approach, ensuring all staff were grounded in core competencies and equipped to deliver confident, consistent, high-quality services. CPS received **1,849 reports of abuse or requests for services** and supported 78 families (151 children) at home using state wraparound funding. Among children requiring out-of-home care, 33 percent were

placed with relatives or like-kin, and an average of 67 children were in out-of-home care each month. Placement costs remain a challenge due to the complex needs of many youths; on average, 6 youth were placed in Residential Care Centers and 3 in Group Homes, with daily costs ranging from \$390 to \$895.

Housing instability continued to affect families. Through the Thriving Families program, **7 CPS-involved families (18 children) secured housing**, preventing foster care placements and supporting reunification.

WRAS achieved major milestones in 2025. In August, the **Shelter Care facility reopened**, restoring a critical local resource for short-term placement, respite, and crisis stabilization. Staffing shortages required prioritizing La Crosse County youth, accepting out-of-county placements only when capacity allowed. In the fourth quarter, the secure detention program reached full capacity with eight youth, providing comprehensive treatment and placements of up to 365 days. WRAS also invested significantly in hiring, training, and supporting staff to rebuild a skilled team following earlier turnover.

Looking ahead, WRAS is focused on strengthening its foundation by upgrading facilities, improving operational processes, and stabilizing its workforce. These efforts will **sustain innovative services** that provide safety, opportunity, and accountability for youth, while keeping WRAS a trusted resource for families and the community.



# Aging and Disability Resource Center



Carissa Pagel-Smith - Aging & Disability Resource Center Manager

**What we do:** The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of La Crosse County provides unbiased information and support to help older adults and people with disabilities remain independent, healthy, and connected. Along with information and assistance, we offer nutrition services, caregiver support, and a range of programs that strengthen health and well-being. In 2025, guided by our new tagline—“Your Bridge to Support”—we continued helping community members navigate complex systems with clarity and compassion.

**Empowering Healthy Aging:** We advanced priorities in the 2025–2027 Aging Plan, shaped by community input. A key focus was expanding opportunities for older adults to stay active and socially

connected. We partnered with local organizations to broaden access to StrongBodies, an evidence-based strength-training program that supports balance, flexibility, and long-term independence. Efforts included training six new facilitators and providing start-up equipment to increase class availability countywide. We also elevated aging-related policy issues by hosting an in-district legislative meeting and participating in the Speaker’s Task Force on Elder Services, where we shared impact data and recommendations to strengthen statewide aging services.

## Building Community and Connection

Nutrition and social engagement remained central to our mission. In June, the Onalaska Nutrition Site moved “home” to the new Dash Center, offering a welcoming environment for meals and fellowship. We also hosted major events, including the Hope & Light Dementia Conference—a statewide gathering held locally—and the Cheers to the Years picnic celebrating National Senior Citizens Day. Additionally, the ADRC played a key role in developing the Hillview Life Center, a new space for dementia-friendly and intergenerational programming.

## Protecting and Supporting Vulnerable Adults

We strengthened safety and support systems by updating the 85.21 Specialized Transportation Program to preserve access for those most in need. Changes included returning to needs-based eligibility, assigning individual ride authorizations, and implementing a no-show policy. To address rising financial exploitation, Adult Protective Services launched the Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) in April, bringing multidisciplinary partners together to improve prevention and response.



# Administrative Support



Jennifer Buchholtz -  
Human Services Office  
Supervisor

**What we do:** The Administrative Support team is the foundation of La Crosse County Human Services, ensuring that every interaction and process runs smoothly. We handle client communications with care and professionalism, manage scheduling, maintain accurate and confidential records, and keep information flowing between staff and clients. By creating an organized and welcoming environment, we enable our Human Services teams to focus on what matters most—delivering meaningful support to individuals and families in our community.

**2025 Overview:** We remained focused on delivering exceptional customer service and creating a welcoming environment where every visitor and caller felt heard and respected. As the first point of contact for clients and guests, we managed front desk and phone operations with professionalism and care.

- Our team **supported departmental meetings** by reserving rooms, tracking agenda items, preparing agendas, sending notices, taking minutes, and maintaining rosters and contact information.
- We **transcribed reports, forms, correspondence**, and medical documentation, while also scanning and managing electronic records for accurate filing.
- We **tracked and processed licensing**, reporting, and personnel-related requirements for agency staff, as well as monitored compliance with state and federal regulations.
- To end the year, we facilitated a collaborative effort with the Health Department and other Human Services sections, to coordinate a County Employee Food Drive that brought in **1,365 pounds of food**. This food was donated to the La Crosse Hunger Task Force during the shutdown of the federal government.

## Fiscal Section



Kate Summers - Business  
Strategy and Analysis  
Manager

**What we do:** The Fiscal Section play a vital role in ensuring that La Crosse County Human Services operates effectively, transparently, and sustainably for the people of La Crosse County. Our team **stewards an annual budget of almost \$70 million**, supporting every program in the department by developing the annual budget, monitoring revenues and expenditures, managing grants, and ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. We oversee financial reporting, Medicaid and WIMCR claims, consumer financial reviews, billing, procurement, vendor payments, and audit coordination while our Contract Specialists ensure that agreements with community providers are compliant, cost-effective, and aligned with service needs.

Our work strengthens every corner of Human Services. We **safeguard grant funds** to reduce reliance on local taxes, monitor expenses to protect taxpayer dollars, identify efficiencies that can be reinvested into community priorities, and provide the financial analysis needed to support new initiatives and long-term planning. As strategic partners to program areas, we help launch new services, sustain operations, and ensure public resources are used with integrity. Our commitment to transparency and strong fiscal stewardship builds trust, supports stability, and helps ensure the community receives the services it relies on.

# Looking Forward

## 2026 KEY INITIATIVES

- Launch **Pathways Held lease and Mission Held lease** programs to grow housing options and capacity and help people build a solid rental history.
- Strengthen our **prevention services** to reduce the inflow to homelessness.
- **Support implementation of 1915(i) housing-related services screening** across program areas to strengthen early identification of housing instability.
- **Develop and implement a trauma-informed guide** to help consumers feel supported when contacting Human Services.
- **Launch Hillview Life Center adult programming** as a new community resource for individuals with mild cognitive impairment and early-stage dementia, in partnership with YWCA and University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.
- **Expand dementia-friendly dining under the 2025–2027 Aging Plan** by beginning enhancements at the Holmen congregate dining site, including staff and volunteer training and site modifications.
- **Expand ADRC's footprint in West Salem** through pop-up congregate dining events, exploring space for regular programming, celebrating Older Americans Month with the first Community Peers picnic in May, and bringing back Tai Chi—starting March at the West Salem Library.
- **Promote early Medicaid screening and reduce eligibility gaps** through continued coordination between Economic Support and Human Services programs serving vulnerable residents.
- **Maintain FoodShare accuracy** below the federal threshold (6%) to protect federal funding and avoid cost shifts to the state and participating counties.
- **Prepare for implementation of new federal Medicaid work participation requirements** effective January 1, 2027, by assessing operational impacts, developing compliance processes, and strengthening community partnerships to minimize coverage disruptions.
- **Complete the 2026 Capital Improvement Project** to remodel and expand the Family Interaction Room, creating a more welcoming and functional space for families.
- **Expand out-of-home care capacity** to create more placement resources for children and families when care outside the home is needed, prioritizing community-based options and reducing reliance on congregate care settings.
- **Leverage findings from our Mental Health Services Needs Assessment** to expand therapeutic capacity, strengthen support for individuals with complex and co-occurring needs.
- **Strengthen Financial Sustainability of Behavioral Health Services:** We will complete a formal assessment of our revenue-generating programs and implement strategies to ensure long-term financial stability while expanding access to high-quality, evidence-based treatment and recovery supports.
- **Continue to expand our services of coordinated system of care that supports individuals with complex and persistent behavioral health needs** through intensive, community-based treatment, recovery, and stabilization supports.
- **Partner with the La Crosse County Jail to launch a new Reentry Social Worker position** focused on supporting individuals prior to release and during their transition back into the community. This position will coordinate discharge planning, connect individuals to housing, treatment, employment, and other critical community resources, and help remove barriers that often leads to reincarceration. By strengthening reentry planning and continuity of care, this collaboration aims to reduce recidivism, improve long-term stability, and enhance overall community safety.



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