



## **Human Services Annual Report 2009**

The Department of Human Services welcomes the opportunity to submit our annual report for the year of 2009. We remain hopeful and encouraged in our ability to provide quality services despite the ongoing challenges with budget shortfalls. The economic climate continues to create more stressors for our community members much like it has all over the country. Consequently, job loss is far too familiar with many folks in Waushara County and increased need for services increasing.

Like many communities in this state and across the United States, Waushara County has not been immune to the additional challenges of more people having greater need for assistance. This has translated into trends demonstrating increased work loads and referrals to most programs for services in our department. We are proud and pleased to report that our staff continues to meet the challenges despite having fewer resources. It should also be noted that 6 positions in 2009 were eliminated due to funding challenges and through attrition.

This year also marks the one year anniversary of Family Care with our collaboration with Care Wisconsin as the MCO for Waushara County. Family Care continues to progress well serving more long term care consumers and helping to eliminate the waiting list for Long Term Care. There have been several success stories this first year and minimal concerns raised regarding the change to Family Care. We expect this trend to continue and appreciate the hard work the staff and administration of Care Wisconsin provides for our members here in Waushara County.

Once again we are thankful for the support of our DHS board, Deb Behringer's office and other departments of the county for their support of our efforts. We welcome you to take a moment to read the annual reports from each unit in our Department for the year 2009.

### **CSP YEAR END REPORT**

The Community Support Program (CSP), which provides ongoing case management services to persons with severe, persistent, and disabling mental health issues, began the year with 28 clients in January and ended with 31 in December. We had five admissions into the program and two discharges, with one of the persons moving to another county and one transferring to another program within the county system. Our clients hold a Coffee Club group, where up to 7 persons get together to socialize on a weekly basis. A walking group to promote healthy living was started and 3-4 consumers consistently met weekly, with occasionally one or two more attending. During inclement weather, the Crossroads Family Church was gracious enough to allow our walkers to use their gymnasium. Our summer picnic at Kusel Lake was again a hit with consumers as was the holiday party at the WWII building. Several consumers attended this year that had never attended in the past, and reported having a great time! Local businesses in Wautoma donated gift certificates for the holiday party, which were greatly appreciated.

Our Supported Employment Specialist left in June, which left a gap of employment assistance for our clientele. For 2010, we will be contracting again with Diverse Options for this position but on a more limited basis. Three persons continue to hold competitive jobs in the community and two were assisted with pursuing educational goals. We presently have two full-time case managers who work with both CSP and CCS as well as one 80% case manager. A third full-time case manager will be hired to replace one who left late this year.

### **COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) began 2009 with 14 consumers and at the end of December, there were 21. We had 15 admissions into CCS and 8 discharges for the year. There are nine adults and twelve children receiving services through CCS. We continue to work with families with more than one member of the family required their own service team. Consumers continue to utilize our Birth to 3 program, supported employment services, in-home monitoring for transitioning living, mentoring, and in-home family therapy services for children and families. Presently, we have 19 staff members who provide the variety of services in this program.

### **CLINICAL SERVICES**

Clinical Services served 761 Waushara County citizens in 2009. Approximately 460 of these were served through our contract with All Area Counseling Services. We provide Psychiatric, Psychological, Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Professional Mentoring services adults and children who meet the following criteria:

1. No insurance, underinsured, and too poor to go elsewhere
2. Insured, but hardship due to transportation problems or a legitimate reason for being unable to travel regularly to out-of-county providers
3. Children and families for whom our involvement reduces negative fiscal impact on our county budget.

Our services are aimed at ameliorating the conditions of not only the "Identified Client", but of the family as a whole. Helping the parents and the siblings prevents future "breakouts" for everyone and greatly enhances the chances for success.

Our Professional Mentoring program is a large part of this success. The Mentors see families in their home, work with the schools during crises, and respond to after-hours concerns. We have also had great success by having a mental health counselor in the schools once a week. Providing counseling in the schools has had a dramatic effect in allowing troubled youth to get interventions earlier and without the barrier of travel.

Our county was awarded a 3-year grant of approximately \$45,000 per year to help sustain our professional mentoring program. Part of the expectation of these grant funds is that we assist two neighboring counties, Adams and Marquette, in developing their Mentoring Programs.

Sufficient access to Psychiatric care for children remains a problem, particularly in view of the economic times and subsequent stresses on families. We are studying this problem with the goal of better meeting the medication needs of our clientele in the year ahead.

We provided counseling for 22 new teen-aged AODA clients and counseled approximately 25 ongoing clients from 2008. 55% of the new clients were male and 45% female. Most had a family history of

Substance Abuse and most were either self-referred or referred by the school, Human Services or a family member or friend. Most had substance abuse problems, with about half being related primarily to alcohol, and the other half related to illegal or prescription drug addiction. Heroin has resurfaced and we had our first clients with a heroin addiction in many years.

68 youth and adults exchanged ideas the FACTS (Families and Community Town Supper) in 2008. Forty-two youth with drinking convictions took the Underage Drinking classes in Waushara County in 2009. 133 OWI Assessments were done in 2009, down from 161 in 2008. We are working with the state Dept. of Transportation to use new software to send in the OWI paperwork in 2010 which will streamline the paperwork and save time and money.

### **LONG TERM CARE UNIT**

The Long Term Care Unit continues to provide a variety of services to a variety of clients. Our three paraprofessionals, Laura Araiza, Lori Johnson and Bev Daye, provide case management services to those clients still on waiting lists for family care. In addition, they provide contracted services, such as Rep Payee, Daily Living Skills and Supportive Home Care, for Care Wisconsin.

We are also providing case management for the Homeless Prevention Grant that went into effect this past September. Thru this grant, renters who are in danger of eviction or utility disconnects, can access funds to prevent homelessness. The clients are provided with case management services and financial counseling, in addition to the funding, until they are able to get back on their feet and become financially more stable. The clients must be agreeable to financial counseling and must demonstrate motivation in becoming financially stable.

We have a full time social worker, Melissa Anderson, who works on state mandated tasks such as guardianships and WATTS reviews for those clients on family care. In addition, Melissa is also doing case management for several young clients on the Children's Waiver Program. Peggy Bott and Irene Warwick both work with the ADRC providing options counseling, enrollment counseling, short term case management and assisting with nursing home relocations.

Our contract with Care Wisconsin to provide county social workers as care managers has expired. One of the case managers was agreeable to being hired by Care Wisconsin and the other social worker has transferred into a different county position. In addition, our Medical Assistance Personal Care Program has been absorbed by Care Wisconsin. We continue to transition clients over to family care on a monthly basis as well as assessing client eligibility for family care.

### **CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Juvenile Justice Referrals	92	<b>(18% decrease from 2008)</b>
Child Abuse and Neglect Referrals	356	<b>(9% increase from 2008)</b>

Substitute Care:

16 children were placed in Waushara County foster homes in 2009 **(34% decrease from 2008)**

- 1 child was reunified with parents
- 1 child aged out of foster care and went to Job Corp
- 3 children were permanently placed with their foster parents under guardianships
- 2 children had their parents' rights terminated and were adopted by their foster parents
- 2 children are placed with a relative
- 7 children remained in Waushara County foster home placements as of 12/31/09

23 children were placed with relatives (**77% increases from 2008**)

- 5 children were reunified with parents
- 3 children were permanently placed with their relatives under guardianships
- 4 children were placed in Waushara County foster homes (and are counted above)
- 1 child's case was transferred to another county
- 10 children remained in relative placements as of 12/31/09

1 child was in a contracted placement in 2009 (**84% decrease from 2008**)—this child aged out of treatment foster care

Juvenile Corrections: **No juveniles were placed in correction in 2009**

A total of 36 children were placed out of their homes by Waushara County Department of Human Services in 2009 (**17% decrease from 2008**)

Juvenile Detention: 150 days of secure detention were utilized (**35% decrease from 2008**)

- 127 days under Sheriff Department's contract with Portage County Secure Detention facility
- 23 days "over contract" paid by DHS (**67% decrease from 2008**). This was primarily due to people with serious problems moving into the county.

Licensed Foster Homes, as of 12/31/09: 14

**Child and Family Services Staff Roster:** Supervisor, Dawn Buchholz

**Child Protection Services:** Carolann Yeska, Nancy Abel, Trisha Wicinsky, Michelle Carpenter, Susan Younger and Colleen Rogalski.

**Juvenile Justice:** Supervisor Lindsay Campbell, Rachel Frederick, Kevin Keith, Tanya Schoenberger, Kelly Hendricks and Angie Konieczki.

Wow, 2009 is gone already! It went by so fast, and as we reflect upon the year, it is amazing what this team has achieved.

First of all, we welcomed a new child protection services (CPS) social worker, Trisha Wicinsky. Trisha comes with a long term support background that is serving her and her team well. We were, however, sad to see Laurie Del Rosario and Lynda Taylor leave our team. Laurie took a management position in another county and Lynda retired after 21 years of service to Waushara County.

After seeing a 45% decrease in juvenile justice referrals in 2008, the juvenile justice team (with the help of other agency staff, schools and the community) was again able to see a significant decrease in minors facing

criminal charges. This is wonderful for Waushara County as it reflects a reduction in juvenile crime and a renewed commitment to our youth. Unfortunately, CPS continues to experience a steady increase in child maltreatment referrals. This has been a trend for many years now. Some reasons for this increase may be that the community is better at recognizing and reporting potential child abuse and the Department is better at properly documenting these referrals. Another reason could be the economic recession that has swept the country. Despite this increase in referrals, our CPS team was the only one in the State to maintain the federal mandates regarding face-to-face contacts with children in out of home care.

In addition, our own Carolann Yeska was awarded the Inaugural Secretary's Caring for Kids Award for her work, and the work of our Department, in helping a very troubled family become a successful part of the community. These are great kudos to our team and it is very rewarding to get recognized at the state level for our accomplishments.

Probably the most striking examples of the success of our team are the out of home care statistics (see above). Due to our staff's hard work and ability to engage with families to prevent child maltreatment and reduce family conflicts, we were able to reduce the number of children placed out of their homes. In addition, we were able to place only one child in a contracted placement and had no juvenile correctional placements! This is so important as contracted placements are extremely costly to tax payers, limit our ability to do preventative work for Waushara County families and aren't nearly as effective as us directly serving our own families. It truly is a "win-win" situation when we can serve children and families within Waushara County, and we will continue to strive for this in 2010. We have also utilized more extended family members for out of home placements. Although this practice brings about a new set of challenges, research has shown that children fair better when they are able to stay placed within their own families.

### **FINANCIAL UNIT**

The year 2009 was a year of transition. Pat Boquist retired in January and John Timmerman retired in September. Pat's job duties were distributed among several staff in the unit. John spent several months training his assistant and eventual replacement, Brenda Ruby. Then in October, Michele Marks was hired to be the new Financial Assistant.

The balance of the financial unit has much longevity and consists of Paula Speilman, Charlotte Huff, and Barbara Standke. The year brought about many new learning experiences and challenges for the entire unit. But in spite of this, the transition went smoothly and the unit pulled together as a team to get the job done. Much credit needs to be extended to the staff for their diligence, effort, and support. It was indeed a very busy year!

We have been the fiscal agent for the ADRC consortium (Green Lake, Marquette, & Waushara). The accurate time reporting has resulted in claiming additional revenue for those activities in all three counties. In the latter part of 2009, we spent many hours working and meeting, to improve our fiscal reporting procedures to more accurately distinguish between contracts vs. federal expenditures. This new process, although time consuming, will be very helpful and will benefit all three counties. We very much appreciate the efforts and the support of the Directors and staff of Green Lake County, Marquette County, Waushara County DHS, and Waushara County Dept of Aging.

We look forward to 2010 and the new financial challenges to be encountered. The transitioning and new learning experiences will continue to be an on-going process for this unit.

## **ECONOMIC SUPPORT**

The Economic Support Team administers eligibility for Medicaid/BadgerCare, FoodShare, Childcare (Wisconsin Shares), Family Planning Waiver, Caretaker Supplement, and various Emergency Assistance programs including Salvation Army (funds from the local Kettle Campaign).

On June 15, 2009, the State of Wisconsin began taking applications for the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan for adults without dependent children. The BadgerCare Plus Core Plan is a limited plan that covers basic health care services, including primary and preventive care as well as generic drugs. As a result of an extraordinary number of applications, on October 9, 2009 at 12:00 PM, the State instituted a waiting list for eligible applicants.

In addition to the State of Wisconsin taking applications for BadgerCare Plus Core, the State also became the access point for applications for FoodShare and Family Planning Waiver for adults with no dependent children.

As a result of the numerous applications the State received, counties were asked to provide assistance in processing applications. Waushara County Department of Human Services staff assisted the State from November 1 – December 31, 2009. Five different staff worked a total of 436.84 hours of overtime for this project.

The Economic Support Team experienced a change in leadership in 2009. Maralyn Trayler, Economic Support Manager retired in March 2009. Kate Surprise assumed her duties. Previously, Kate had worked in Long Term Support for 19 years. The Team also experienced the retirement of Pat Mankowski, Economic Support Specialist in July 2009.

Pat's replacement is Liz Johnson. Liz came to the Team with a number of years of business expertise in the private sector. Liz was the first of our Economic Support staff to take initial Economic Support training on-line. Liz's area of specialty is working with elderly, blind, and disabled customers.

In 2009, the unit handled an ongoing average of 2033 cases each month. This is an increase of 18% from 2008. Team members include: Manager Kate Surprise; Economic Support Specialists Candice Lux, Libby Mertens, Liz Johnson, Mary Lou Samaniego, Rose Siwula and Roxann Binkowski; and Front Office Staff Elisa Zuniga and Tammy Wartzluft.

## **CRISIS INTERVENTION** **&** **ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

In the Annual Report submitted by The Waushara County Department of Human Services Crisis/APS unit for 2008, we predicted that based on the last few weeks of 2008, 2009 was going to be a very busy year. Our projection was correct as the unit took a total of 788 calls for Mental Health, Adult Protective Services and after hours Juvenile and Child Protective Service intakes. Our main referral source continues to be the Waushara County Sheriff's Department with the ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) a close second. Not only did the number of calls increase from the 606 total from 2008 but the time necessary to effectively handle each respective call appears to have increased as well. Much of this is believed due to the more stringent pre-admissions information exchange from the Institutes (WMHI/MMHI) as well as the private facilities this county uses for our Chpt 51, Chpt 55, EPP and Move to More Restrictive admits. A

good deal of staff time beyond our initial assessment procedures is being taken up with finding available beds as the increase in detentions and the like is not unique to this county.

Of the 787 responses, 81 were involving Juveniles, 23 children and adolescents with the balance of 683 adult intakes for both mental health and vulnerable adult/elder issues.

The latter not broken down as very often an adult intake crosses both the abuse and mental health areas. We continue to see that the Department's effective Mentor and CSP/CCS programs as integral to keeping current cases from moving in to crisis mode.

In 2009 the unit visit North Central/Aspirus in Wausau and we have begun using this facility. The reason twofold, we have increased the availability of beds for our residents and have a facility with a philosophy of working on discharge at admission – cutting down on unnecessary, costly inpatient days. We have also begun very seriously investigating broadening the use of stabilization or diversion for our mental health population. In fact, we have found that we have better results and less recidivism at a fraction of the cost of conventional inpatient mental health treatment.

The unit was fully staffed over 2009 and we all participated in training that allows us to remain credentialed as a certified unit. The crisis unit continues to be thankful for the opportunity to work with and for Waushara County Government.

**In Closing:**

We would like to thank our Board Supervisors for their contribution and support each year for the services our Department provides in the community. We give special thanks to our hard working staff and managers who dedicate their life's work to serving others in Waushara County. Finally, we do welcome any donations individuals, families, or others would wish to make for the noble work we do in this community. Thank you!

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