



**LA CROSSE COUNTY**  
Exceptional services. Extraordinary place.

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**Memo To: La Crosse County Board of Supervisors**  
**From: Steve O'Malley, County Administrator**  
**Date: January 8, 2018**

**Re: January Monthly Report to the County Board**

Attached is the January Monthly Report to the County Board, providing monitoring information about department activities to the full County Board instead of reporting only to governing committees.

**REMINDER** Monthly Reporting by roughly half the organization every other month. While you will should receive this report each month, the reports do not cover every department each time.

February, April, June, August, Oct. & Dec.

Planning, Resources & Development  
Public Works & Infrastructure  
Judiciary & Law Enforcement  
Corp Counsel & Child Support

January, March, May, July, September, November

Health & Human Services  
Veterans, Aging & Long Term Care  
County Clerk, Finance, IT,  
Personnel, Treasurer

**"OF INTEREST"**

**County Board Planning Meeting Monday January 8, 2018**

The planning agenda includes:

- Community Development Update: Neighborhood Revitalization, La Crosse Promise and Downtown La Crosse
- Presentation on Multi-County Litigation Regarding Opioids

# MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

## Aging & Long Term Care January 2018

### Veterans Service Office

This year has been one of our busier years assisting veterans. In March we hosted our second Veterans Benefit Bonanza that drew in over 400 veterans and family members. This was an increase from our 2016 event. Already, we are gearing up to host our 2018 event which we hope to draw more vendors along with veterans to better inform them of services in the area.

Through some of this outreach, we have been contacted by community members to be a part of their fairs. Also, several community organizations have stepped forward to provide assistance, food cards / gas cards / Christmas gift cards, to veterans in need in La Crosse. Other organizations provided free opportunities for veterans to attend different events throughout the year. These donations were greatly appreciated by the veterans.

Due to some of these opportunities, our office has seen an increase in veterans coming through our doors checking in on benefits that they may be eligible. This year we have seen over 2400 veterans / family members. With that increase, we saw over \$1.5 million federal dollars awarded to the veterans of the greater La Crosse area.

Veterans needing assistance in rent / mortgage and / or utilities did see a decrease this year through the La Crosse County Veterans Commission. In 2016 we provided about \$17,700.00 in assistance while in 2017 it dropped to \$12,300.00. While it was good to see that dip in requests, we did have more veterans stop by the office to ask for food cards or gas cards to get to VA medical appointments. At one point we did send out a letter to all the veteran organizations in the greater La Crosse who responded with \$1,300.00 in order for us to purchase more cards for veterans in need.

*Adam Flood*

*La Crosse County Veterans Service Officer*

### Lakeview Health Center & Assisted Living

- Census on January 1, 2018 for the Lakeview campus is:
  - Lakeview Health Center
    - Census: 50
    - Licensed Beds 50
  - Ravenwood
    - Census: 5
    - Licensed Beds: 10
  - Maplewood
    - Census: 15
    - Licensed Beds: 15
  - Neshonoc Manor
    - Census: 14

- Licensed Beds: 15
- Monarch Manor
  - Census: 8
  - Licensed Beds: 8
- Regent Manor
  - Census: 4
  - Licensed Beds: 4

Ravenwood State-only facility has seen some recent turnover due to residents stabilizing and moving to a less restrictive setting such as the Lakeview Health Center or other area nursings homes or assisted living.

- Emergency Preparedness: As part of the federal nursing home requirements, Lakeview Health Center has formalized a Facility Wide Resource Assessment. Working in conjunction with an interdisciplinary team and getting input from other County departments, residents and families, this plan details the services provided, residents served and includes emergency preparedness.

## **Hillview Health Care Center & Assisted Living Campus**

- Census on January 1, 2018 for the Hillview campus is
  - Hillview Health Care Center
    - Census: 160
    - Licensed Beds: 175
  - Carroll Heights
    - Census: 53
    - Licensed Beds: 55
  - Hillview Terrace
    - Census: 26
    - Licensed Beds: 30

In analyzing the Hillview Health Care census trends, admissions across payor types remain fairly stable except for the Medicare Advantage plans. Medicare Advantage plans are private insurance which replace the Medicare A & Medicare B plans and may offer additional services. There has been a decrease in the average length of stay for residents with this payor source.

Hillview Terrace remains a lower cost assisted living alternative in the LaCrosse community. With an "a la carte" menu of services to choose from, tenants pay for services they need, when they need them. This has proven to be a popular option for the community & has resulted in a consistently high census.

Emergency Preparedness: Hillview Health Care Center has also developed their Facility Wide Resource Assessment in compliance with federal regulation. This plan includes policies & procedures related to resident care and outlines staff competencies required to provide such care.

If you have any questions about these initiatives, please call me.

Submitted by:

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# MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

## Health & Human Services January 2018

### Human Services Department

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

##### Legislative Advocacy

Audra Martine has been appointed to the Wisconsin Attorney General's Task Force on Elder Abuse. The group has met once so far and has created two broad categories of focus, one being financial exploitation and the other strengthening the criminal justice response across systems. There are several sub-goals that may (1) strengthen the protection of rights for seniors who have caregivers, (2) improve access to services and training for staff of banks, attorneys, caregivers, law enforcement, judges, etc., and (3) create penalty enhancements for crimes against the elderly and disabled.

#### **AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC)**

##### Caregiver Support

November was National Caregiver Month and, to celebrate, the ADRC in partnership with the Causeway Caregivers of La Crosse County kicked off the Peer Caregiver Support Program. This new program, funded by a Dementia Crisis Grant awarded earlier this year, connects "Volun-Peer" mentors with caregivers to offer ongoing support and encouragement that promotes hope, courage and confidence through phone, electronic communication, or home visits.

##### Caregiver Support

Nearly 70 local caregivers and their loved ones attended the ADRC's annual Caregiver Holiday Luncheon held December 5, 2017 at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse. Individuals in attendance had the opportunity to network, obtain resource information, and most importantly, take a brief break from their caregiving responsibilities.

#### **ECONOMIC SUPPORT (ES)**

##### Changes to Health Traditions BadgerCare Plus HMO

Calls to the Western Region for Economic Assistance (WREA) Call Center have increased recently as notices went out to Badger Care recipients currently enrolled in the Health Traditions HMO. The notice informs recipients that they will soon receive an HMO enrollment packet in the mail to help them choose a new HMO, and that this must be done by 12/29/17 since the Health Traditions HMO will no longer be available 1/1/18. While the notices direct the recipient to call the State Enrollment Specialists toll-free number if they have questions, customers often choose to call their Income Maintenance Consortia with any questions related to eligibility or program services.

#### **FAMILY & CHILDREN'S (FC)**

##### Legislative Advocacy

On November 29, a media event was held in the County Administrative Center to announce outcomes from the Foster Care Task Force that previously had held a public hearing in our county. Several bill proposals were announced that will benefit the youth foster care system; these proposals are expected to go before the legislature in the spring session. See attached Foster Care Task Force Legislative Package.

## **INTEGRATED SUPPORT & RECOVERY SERVICES (ISRS)**

### Children's Long Term Support Program Expansion

The approved state budget includes the elimination of at least the current wait list for Children's Long Term Support services. The state is slated to cover the cost of expansion without additional county contribution. La Crosse expansion began in October of 2017 and approximately 20 of the approximately 180 families waiting have now been enrolled.

### Children's Crisis Stabilization Facility Development in Wisconsin

The approved budget includes state funding to develop a new type of children's crisis stabilization facility that is intended to reduce the number of children served at local and/or state hospitals. The first step is to draft a new administrative code. Matt Strittmater has been appointed as one of the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA) representatives to work with the Department of Health Services on this project. Local hope is to eventually have this type of service available within the region to enhance our continuum of care and help prevent unnecessary hospitalizations.

## **JUSTICE SUPPORT SERVICES (JSS)**

### Training Opportunities

The Juvenile Justice Unit was awarded technical assistance funding from the Wisconsin Department of Justice to bring in Carey Guide and BITS (Brief Intervention Tools) training on December 11-12. Invitations to fill this training were extended to the La Crosse School District alternative school sites, Adult JSS, Juvenile Detention, System of Care and community service providers to provide a common cognitive behavioral intervention with youth served within our community. Additionally, the Perception Institute was on site Tuesday, December 19, for cross-system stakeholder training on implicit bias, mind sciences, race and identity differences.

### Pretrial Pilot Site Work

La Crosse continues to work diligently with the Wisconsin Department of Justice and other EBDM (Evidence Based Decision Making) Counties on a Pretrial Pilot lead by the state. This pilot intends to standardize the foundation of pretrial work in Wisconsin.

*Jason Witt*

*Director of Human Services*



## **FOSTER CARE TASK FORCE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE**

### **PREVENTION EFFORTS**

#### Attorneys for Biological Parents

- This bill would provide all parents with a right to counsel in a child in need of protection or services (CHIPS) proceeding and create a pilot program in Brown, Outagamie, Racine, Kenosha, and Winnebago counties to provide indigent parents with an attorney from the State Public Defender's office.
- Ensuring that parents involved in this process have legal representation has been proven to help them better comply with the conditions of the CHIPS order. (LRB 4645)

#### 211 Wisconsin

- This proposal would restore funding to 211 Wisconsin's statewide community services information and referral resource or "warm line."
- The 211 Wisconsin "warm line" provides families with supports that may reduce the number and severity of their contacts with child protective services. (LRB 4576)

#### Prevention Innovation Grant Program

- This bill would create a competitive child abuse and neglect prevention grant program to allow counties, nonprofits and tribes to develop innovative programs to help families stay out of the child welfare system.
- Creating innovative programs to help strengthen families and ensure that homes remain safe for children will help keep families from being involved in child protective services down the line. (LRB 4925)

### **IMPROVING THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

#### Caseload Study Committee

- This proposal would create a committee to determine effective standards for caseload sizes for social workers and ratios of social workers to supervisors, and the funding needed to implement those standards.
- By reducing the number of cases, social workers will be able to spend more time with each family and will be less likely to burn out – which both lead to better outcomes for children. (LRB 4767)

#### CASA Expansion

- This bill would increase funding for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs, where trained and supervised volunteers are appointed by judges to be their eyes and ears outside of the courtroom.
- Children served by a CASA volunteer spend on average less time in foster care and their families are likely to have better outcomes overall. (LRB 4850)

#### Foster Home Licensing

- This bill would allow a foster family's license to be transferred in the event that a child welfare agency loses or surrenders their license. It would also allow cross-county foster home licenses to be general instead of child-specific.
- These changes were proposed by counties and the Department of Children and Families as technical changes to current licensing practice. (LRB 4468)

#### Termination of Parental Rights updates

- This proposal do two things; first, it would eliminate the current requirement that the court must prove that the parent is substantially likely to fail to meet the conditions for the safe return of their child within the next 9 months. This look-ahead often results in many delays to permanency for a child. (LRB 4466)
- Second, it would require signatures of clients to initiate an appeal of TPR as well as require that an appeal request for more fact-finding include specific details about why the appeal is necessary. Both of these provisions would ensure that courts are not tied up with unnecessary or unintended appeals.

#### School Notices and Records

- This bill would do three things: first, it would ensure that a foster child's school records are transferred by the next business day; second, it would clear up the notifications that schools receive when a foster home is licensed or a foster child is placed; and third, it would allow a school to submit written testimony to a child's permanency plan review or hearing.

## **SUPPORTING FOSTER CARE PROVIDERS**

### Foster Parent Education and Support grant program

- This proposal would create a grant program to help counties, nonprofits and tribes provide ongoing education to foster parents, retention efforts to keep existing foster parents and reimbursement for ad hoc expenses related to foster care.
- With the number of foster parents needed in Wisconsin continuing to climb, this will help ensure that foster parents are prepared, respected and trained to do their work.

### Mental Health Information

- This bill would allow mental health providers to give foster parents any information that they believe is necessary to the proper care of the child without violating any confidentiality laws.

### Defining Routine Dental Care

- This proposal would create a statewide consistency in the basic level of dental care that can be provided without parental consent to a child in foster care.

## **SUPPORT FOR FOSTER CARE YOUTH**

### Tuition Remission and Foster Student Support Programs

- This bill would do two things; first, it would allow former foster youth to be eligible for tuition remission at UW System schools and Wisconsin Technical College System schools.
- Second, it would create a competitive grant program where UW schools and tech colleges could apply for funds to create programs to support former foster youth who are students, similar to the current program at UW Stout.

For a complete summary of the Foster Forward package, visit [www.fostercaretaskforce.com](http://www.fostercaretaskforce.com).

## **Health Department**

The Health Department Newsletter was sent out separately to County Board Supervisors on December 28, 2017 via email by Diane Panzer.