



THE HUMAN SERVICE CENTER

(HUMAN SERVICES BOARD 51.42/51.437)

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February 23, 2021

Dear County Board Chairs, County Board Supervisors and Participating Stakeholders,

In 2019, The Human Service Center 51.42/51.437 Board of Forest, Vilas, and Oneida Counties commissioned a review of the regional human and social services system. The Board engaged Patrick Cork Counseling and Consulting, LLC to conduct this review. The purpose of the review was to identify ways to improve and support regional operations of the tri-county human and social services system.

The review culminated in a report that was developed through an analysis of relevant data and series of interviews with stakeholders. Upon completion of the review, The Human Service Center Board appointed an ad hoc committee to review and prioritize the recommendations and develop a work plan to achieve the priority recommendations outlined in the report.

We appreciate those stakeholders who participated in interviews, their input was valuable and guided the work of the ad hoc committee. Attached please find the Board's Summary Report of the ad hoc committee's work.

As always, we appreciate your support, collaboration, and participation in this project, as it aided in strengthening the systems that we all work within.

Should you have any questions, we encourage you to reach out to The Human Service Center's Board Chairperson, Mr. William Korrer, or the Executive Director, Ms. Tamara Feest.

Sincerely,

William Korrer,
Board Chair

Tamara C Feest,
Executive Director

cc:	John Albert	Corey Backhaus	John Dennee	Brian Desmond
	Christine Dobbs	Joseph Fath	Michael Fugle	Kathryn Gardner
	Lloyd Gauthier	Grady Hartman	David Jaeger	Jody Jensen
	Scott Lea	Mark Neuman	Meg O Marro	Daniel Packard

SERVING FOREST - ONEIDA - AND VILAS COUNTIES
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**Paul Payant
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The Human Service Center of
Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties
Tri-County Systems Review Project Final Report
February 2, 2021

Introduction

It is the mission of The Human Service Center 51.42/51.437 Board of Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties to provide the citizens of Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties with a range of quality services in the areas of developmental disability support services and substance use and mental health care and treatment.

Operations of The Human Service Center (HSC) are interwoven with public-sector agencies in the three member counties. As with agencies of this nature, the success of each is dependent on the support and involvement of internal and external stakeholders from the tri-county service area.

To advance the collaboration of such agencies and identify areas of improvement in the system as a whole, the HSC Board commissioned a review of the tri-county administrative and service systems.

Project

The HSC Board authorized development of a report and work plan to improve performance of the tri-county administrative system. This system provides oversight and support for HSC operations. The project will identify critical services and unmet needs, as well as offer opportunities to enhance communication and involvement of HSC stakeholders. Further, the project will identify ways to improve and support regional operations of the tri-county human and social services systems. The project will identify strengths of the existing system and areas for improvement.

Purpose

The HSC relies on representatives from Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties for administrative direction and support. This direction and support are heard through a collective group of public and appointed officials, affiliated county agencies, and other stakeholders. This group of stakeholders contributes to the operational success of the HSC. The project gathered information from stakeholders, service data in the tri-county area, and other available resources to develop a report and work plan. The report provides an assessment of the tri-county administrative system including strengths, limitations, and opportunities for improvement. The work plan will offer strategies toward achieving improvements with performance measures to reflect progress.

People

The HSC Board contracted with Patrick Cork Counseling and Consulting, LLC to implement the project. The consultant engaged stakeholders in interviews to collect information. Identified stakeholders included: elected and appointed public officials, HSC administrators and staff, representatives from public agencies providing social services, health services, corporation counsel services, law enforcement, education, and affiliated private provider agencies.

Timeline

In April 2019, the HSC Board entered into an agreement with Patrick Cork Counseling and Consulting, LLC to facilitate the project.

The project began in May 2019. Interviews and related data collection occurred over a four-month period.

The final report was presented to the HSC Board in October 2019 and copies were disseminated to stakeholders in November. Upon receipt and review of the report the HSC Board formed a sub-committee to continue the review process.

The System Review Ad Hoc Committee was formed in December 2019 consisting of HSC Board members appointed by the HSC Board Chair. The committee began meeting in January 2020 and met 14 times throughout 2020 to advance their work in accomplishing the work plan goals. The committee completed their work in February 2021.

Report

A report was created to identify ways to support and improve regional operations of the current tri-county human and social services system. It was developed through an analysis of relevant data and a series of interviews conducted with stakeholders from the tri-county service area. Information from the interviews and data analysis was compiled and presented in a report, *The Human Service Center of Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties: A Review of Administrative and Service Systems*.

HSC Ad hoc Committee

Following this report, The Human Service Center assembled the System Review Committee to review, rank, and implement the recommendations made.

The committee reviewed all the recommendations made and identified areas that were already in place or were on-going versus recommendations needing action. The group then categorically combined like recommendations and created goals for their work plan. Next the committee ranked and created 6 priority recommendations. The following outlines the priority recommendations and outcomes.

[Outplace Direct Service Staff in Forest and Vilas Counties](#)

The need to increase HSC's physical presence in Forest and Vilas Counties was raised in the report and the committee agreed this was a priority area for residents to be able to access services closer to their homes.

Vilas County expressed a need for substance use disorder counseling due to the lack of providers in the county. HSC completed edits to all outpatient substance use disorder counseling policies and procedures to apply for a branch office location in Vilas County. With changes in the Department of Health Services administrative rules due to COVID-19, HSC was able to begin offering telehealth services in September 2020, prior to licensure for the branch office being completed. The branch office license was completed and issued effective November 2020. The Department of Social Services provides office space for a counselor to see clients in person. Currently this is being done via telehealth platform due to COVID-19; however, the plan will be to have a staff member physically placed once we are able. At the time of this report, there have been no referrals received from Vilas County departments.

Forest County expressed a need for case management services to facilitate coordination of care for mutual clients. The Human Service Center identified a case manager to act as a liaison for referrals and to assess needs of client cases, beginning October 2020. Forest County Department of Social Services provides office space for clients to be seen in person or via telehealth. At the time of this report there have been 5 referrals from Forest County departments. While pursuing the branch office license for Vilas County, the HSC also did the same for Forest County. If expansion needs to occur in the future, we can do so.

Recommend Board Composition and Committee Structure Changes

Through interview of HSC Board members for the report the question of the optimal board structure was raised. Approximately 12 years ago the HSC Board underwent an increase in Board membership due to a study commissioned by Oneida County. The original number of HSC Board members was 14, around 2008 the number increased to 16. Per statute the minimum number of members is 14.

To streamline processes, a recommendation was made to the HSC Board and to the Oneida County Board Chair, to reduce the number of Board members to the original 14. This meant that Oneida County would reduce their representation by 2 members. This change became effective October 2020.

For a similar purpose, the question of committee structure was raised. There have been very few changes to HSC's Board Committee structure over the past several years. Previously the HSC Board had 7 committees: Audit, Behavioral Health, Buildings and Grounds, Developmental Disabilities, Finance, Personnel, and Policy. Management had recommended the combining of the Audit Committee with the Finance Committee in 2018, which the Board accepted. As a result of this report, additional committees have been combined to allow for more efficient function of the Board. There are now 4 standing committees: Behavioral Health; Developmental Disabilities; Administration which replaces Finance, Audit and Buildings and Grounds; and Operations which replaces Policy and Personnel; in addition, there is one ad hoc committee, the Systems Review Committee. These changes also took effect October 2020.

Develop Dispute Resolution Protocol

Interviews with stakeholders identified the need for development of recognized protocols for addressing conflict. Interviewees suggested that there are certain issues which are likely to generate differences of opinion such as philosophy, financial impacts, and service delivery methodology.

The committee developed a dispute resolution protocol for both Board members and for Administrators of County Departments. These protocols were forwarded to the 3 County Board Chairs

for signature in October 2020. Feedback was received by one county indicating the need for several changes. The committee reviewed the feedback, and one revised dispute resolution protocol was drafted to replace the previous two. The protocol was again forwarded to the 3 County Board Chairs for review in January. At the time of this report one county has signed and returned the protocol.

Develop Protocol for HSC Presentations to County Board Supervisors

The report also identified the urgent need to provide information to county board supervisors regarding the services HSC delivers for the counties. Since the full county board would make decisions regarding funding or continued partnership with HSC it is imperative that all supervisors have information about the agency.

The committee recommended the Executive Director conduct presentations on a quarterly basis to the county boards to assist in public relations and to provide information about the services and fiscal status of HSC. The Executive Director and Board Chair presented to all three county boards in August 2020.

The Executive Director will be responsible, on an on-going basis, to provide HSC updates to the County Boards.

Develop time-limited focus group to identify the most relevant data that will assist HSC in making operational and monetary decisions that best support consumer need. Determine the best strategies to collect, track and report this data.

During interviews, many stakeholders referenced interest in data points for HSC.

The first annual report of the agency (2018) was published concurrent to the report completed by the consultant. Both the 2018 and 2019 Annual Reports were distributed to all county board members. This practice will continue.

The committee reviewed all current reports the agency completes for the state as well as reports provided at the committee level. It was determined that a survey of the HSC Board members would provide further guidance on the data points needed as well as the cadence for the reports and committee meetings.

The survey of HSC Board members was completed in November 2020. The results were reviewed with the System Review Committee as well as other committees. The outcome of the survey was to continue with current committee reporting parameters, annually review data points needed, and meet in accordance the HSC Board By-laws.

Financial status reports will be sent to each County Board Chair and the county's finance manager quarterly.

Update the Joint Agreement

During interviews for the report, different opinions about departmental structure were offered with varied perspectives. These perspectives are not outlined in any one document and there are many models of human service structures and routes to implementation. With the existing Joint Agreement that brings the 51.42/51.437 Board into existence being outdated, the recommendation to update this

agreement to include practices of reviewing the system may be necessary. The committee recognizes that there are several aspects of the Joint Agreement that need updating and therefore opted to review this recommendation last, as other work influences changes that may need to occur in the Joint Agreement.

As discussion occurred on the updates needed the HSC Board recognizes that they do not have ownership of the agreement but are a result of the agreement. Therefore, the HSC Board sent letters to each county board chair in January 2021 indicating that the system review report outlines this update as a recommendation.

[HSC Board Member Training Protocol](#)

The report indicates benefits of providing information to HSC Board members on governance roles and functions of the agency.

The committee identified potential training topics and then sought experts from WCA to provide trainings. The training schedule for 2021 is as follows:

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER(S)
February 17, 2021	Ethics and Conflicts of Interest	Philip Freeburg
March 17, 2021	Roles and Responsibilities	Andy Phillips
April 21, 2021	Chapter 51	Andy Phillips
May 19, 2021	Agendas and Minutes	Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf
June 16, 2021	Open Meetings Law	Daniel Foth and Andy Phillips
July 21, 2021	Running Effective Meetings (Robert's Rules, Motions, resolutions, elections)	Daniel Foth
August 18, 2021	Public Records	Daniel Foth
TBD	Cultural Sensitivity	TBD

Conclusion

The HSC Board will suspend the System Review Committee. In place of this committee, the HSC Board will request quarterly updates from the Executive Director as to the status of the priority recommendations as well as those that have been identified as on-going.

[Priority Recommendation tasks that will continue:](#)

- Monitor referrals for branch office locations.
- Dispute Resolution Protocol signed by all three counties.
- Quarterly Requests to County Board Chairs for HSC Presentations
- Attend County DSS committee meetings as requested/needed.
- Annual Report dissemination to County Board Supervisors
- Annual Review of committee reports and data points.
- Quarterly submission of financial status to County Board Chairs and Finance Managers.
- Participate in discussion of the Joint Agreement if the counties collectively request HSC's assistance.
- Oversee Board Training Presentation schedule

Other Recommendation Action Steps

- Continue bi-monthly (6x/year) Directors Meetings.
- Continue bi-monthly (6x/ year) Tri-County Managers Meeting
- Determine joint training opportunities.
- Continue monthly Joint Staff Meetings with each county DSS.
- Periodic meetings with county sheriff departments/jail administrators
- Program staff presentations to HSC Board/Committees
- Agency website updates for Board information access
- Continue to maximize CCS enrollments.
- Monitor fiscal impacts related to residential substance use reimbursement benefit.
- Continue to monitor CLTS program growth based on State's guidelines.