



2023 Goals and Plans Form

Herkimer County Mental Health Services

Goal 1: Improve access to transportation for individuals receiving OMH, OASAS, and OMRDD services.

Goal 2: The LGU will continue to participate in planning efforts to increase housing for those with disabilities.

Goal 3: The county will work with key stakeholders to increase respite services within the county.

Annual and intermediate plans for addiction services:

Current Beacon Center Outpatient Substance Abuse Services Update-Staffing includes 5 full time counselors (includes 2 CASAC's),3 part time counselors (includes 1 part time CASAC),1 – Psych NP (share with MH program). There were 266 individuals served in 2021.Services include assessments, group and individual sessions. Groups include Early recovery, Continued Recovery, Compass Groups (co-occurring), Relapse Prevention and Trauma groups. They are held hybrid (in-person and telehealth). Beacon provides MAT (Suboxone, Vivitrol). They also have a continuing care program for patients who complete treatment but stay on for once a month MAT appointments and counseling appointments. Average caseload is approximately 130 adults and adolescents open to services. Beginning in October of 2022, Beacon Center is now providing MAT services to the Herkimer County Correctional Facility.

Catholic Charities RISE Recovery Center-The RISE Recovery Community Outreach Center believes that recovery is possible, achievable and sustainable and that there is no one right path to recovery – the right path is the one the works. The Recovery Center serves as a substance-free environment for individuals (and their families) to obtain continued support past treatment. Through peer support, recovery coaching, wellness activities, skill building, socialization opportunities and sober events we hope to support individuals in their recovery journey. The recovery center has been fully open and operational after COVID closures and building maintenance issues. Funding continues to be provided on an annual basis and contract is pending for 2022 – 2023 fiscal year. For the 2023 year they plan to provide street outreach services to the community to engage new members. In conjunction with MVPRC, they will also focus efforts on increasing Narcan training/access and obtaining data related to Narcan use.

Herkimer County Overdose Response Team- ODMAP- Each month the Partnership Members discuss the data from the map. This provides our county with information on substances and allows Catholic Charities to follow up with overdose victims and provide Narcan, Fentanyl test strips, and treatment resources. Partnership members also report out on current trends in schools, treatment, and in our community. This provides

members with information, and resources available at Herkimer County agencies. According to Herkimer County Overdose Response Data, in 2020 there were 66 overdoses, 8 of which were fatalities. In 2021, there were 76 overdoses, 7 of which were fatalities. As of October 2022 data, there have been 63 overdoses and 8 fatalities to date this year. The county has observed an increase in overdoses of the last 2-3 years.

Community Partnership Coalition of Herkimer County-Catholic Charities-Partnership meets monthly via Zoom during COVID – will meet in person beginning in November of this year. Partnership is a former DFC Funded Coalition and has 12 plus sectors represented. The mission of the Coalition is through the collaboration and mobilization of community members to prevent alcohol and substance use – focusing on youth and including adults. The membership includes, OASAS Prevention Staff, Herkimer County Mental Health Director of Community Services, Law Enforcement, Healthcare, Youth Bureau, Public Health, Treatment, Recovery, School Administrators, Media, Faith based organizations, Parents, Volunteers, and the DEA.

Herkimer County Prevention Council-Catholic Charities- HCPC is an OASAS funded prevention provider delivering a wide range of services including evidence-based education programs, workshops, and training sessions in community-based and school settings. They also work on policy and enforcement efforts to reduce underage drinking and create positive alternative activities for youth. They are dedicated to preventing alcohol and substance abuse by working with individuals, families and communities. They have begun implementing the evidence-based curriculums Parenting Wisely, an online, self-paced curriculum for parents. Their Social Emotional Wellness Coordinator has been certified to provide Youth Mental Health Training, SafeTalk, and Problem Gambling training. Two staff have been certified to provide Team Awareness training, a workplace wellness training designed to build resiliency and decrease problem behaviors. They will be focusing on increasing these new services in the 2023 calendar year.

Mohawk Valley Prevention and Recovery Collaborative (MVPRC)-Funded by OASAS – RARC or a Regional Addiction Resource Center. The MVPRC is an RARC that covers the Mohawk Valley Region which includes the following counties: Herkimer, Oneida, Otsego, Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie.

During 2022 the focus of the MVPRC has centered around the consistent updating of all resources related to prevention, treatment and recovery in the six county region. The database also includes the following; Prevention Providers, Treatment Providers, Recovery Centers, Detox, Speakers Bureau, Prescription Disposal Sites, NYS OASAS Resources including Problem Gambling and meeting information.

The goal of the MVPRC is to support and enhance services already in place- not to provide direct services. The Billboards have directed individuals to find information on the website, our social media pages and the direct phone line for assistance. All data is tracked via the website analytics as well as social media hits. The MVPRC Coordinator has met with OASAS Prevention Providers, Coalitions, Recovery and Treatment Centers, Schools, Law Enforcement, and Schools in the six counties to offer assistance with resources, or supporting a substance abuse prevention or recovery event. Narcan trainings have been facilitated with schools, EMT's, volunteer firefighters, businesses, law enforcement and the community.

MVPRC collaborates with the Herkimer County Overdose Response Team and RISE Recovery Center to provide Leave Behind Kits after an Overdose (Kits include Fentanyl test strips, Narcan, and treatment and recovery information) MVPRC and CCHC Executive Director have met with law enforcement and public health in other counties to assist with their counties ODMAPPING. MVPRC has attended many open houses and outreach events to promote the resource data base.

The focus for 2023 is to continue to provide funding, resources, information and support to those providers in the Mohawk Valley Region who have gaps. Many coalitions are unfunded and do not have the funding to support the coalition work. MVPRC will provide funding for prevention and outreach events, continue to support law enforcement with safety equipment, and Narcan and to work with families and the community to connect them to the services that are being provided in the Mohawk Valley Region.

Housing:

Poverty and the lack of affordable housing are major factors in homelessness. As elsewhere across the country, Herkimer County has experienced job losses, underemployment and an increase of low-wage jobs while the cost of living and housing costs have increased. Other underlying factors, both nationally and locally, are domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness.

The Valley Housing Coalition (VHC) offers financial assistance, advocacy and case management services to help individuals and families so they can quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. December 2018, a decision was made to join the Balance of State, which allowed the counties to tap into potential HUD funding. The VHC meets on a monthly basis, even during COVID-related complications and social distancing.

Catholic Charities received a grant for \$212,000 to use for rapid re-housing purposes. The core components of a rapid re-housing program are housing identification, move-in and rental assistance, rapid re-housing case management and services to meet short-term housing needs that lead to permanent housing.

Catholic Charities began serving homeless individuals through the NYS OTDA funded CoC-Rapid Rehousing Program and served over 20 individuals and families in the first few months. Funds were used for rental assistance and case management services. In 2020, they served 28 households under this program.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, NY State put a moratorium on evictions. To help tenants get back on track when the moratorium was lifted, NY State put into place the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). ERAP provides significant economic relief to help low and moderate-income households at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability by providing rental arrears, temporary rental assistance and utility arrears assistance. Households that approved for ERAP were eligible for;

- Up to 12 months of rental arrears payments for rents accrued on or after March 13, 2020
- Up to 3 months of additional rental assistance if the household is expected to spend 30 percent or more of their gross monthly income to pay for rent
- Up to 12 months of electric or gas utility arrears payments for balances that accrued on or after March 13, 2020

Catholic Charities and Herkimer County assisted 149 tenants with ERAP services.

ERAP services were extended through June 30, 2022

The Landlord Rental Assistance Program (LRAP) was developed to provide rental assistance to landlords whose tenants were unwilling or unable to apply for ERAP services, including for those tenants who had already vacated the property. Landlords must have documentation of unpaid rents beginning March 1, 2020. Unlike ERAP, LRAP only covers rental arrears payments. No future rental assistance is offered. Catholic Charities and Herkimer County provided 19 landlords with LRAP services. CCHC currently has the following programs in collaboration with HCDSS: ESG CV extended to 9/30/2023, ERAP which is still allowing applications into the ERAP Portal for rental arrears, STEHP Program (Homeless Prevention) until 10/2023, and RSP Rental Supplement Program which assists individuals and families who meet the criteria, and Domestic Violence Rapid Rehousing. CCHC has also worked in conjunction with Home and Community Renewal to submit applications for Emergency Housing Vouchers.

Coordinated Entry is an important part of gauging the need of the individual or family who presents at DSS. This is a collaborative effort of the CE committee who meets at the end of the Valley Housing Plenary each month. CE uses the VI-SPDAT tool to gather information and to assess the needs which then comes to us from DSS and we enter in the HMIS System.

This tool allows us as a committee to collaborate and determine by score the most in need of safe housing and also to share what we would be the best fit by agency. The CE meeting members consist of Catholic Charities housing, DSS, UCP, VA, and Veterans Outreach.

Expectations for 2023 would be to continued collaboration with NY-525 Balance of State CoC and to submit projects for Herkimer County Housing. Working closely with HCDSS, and all the community based agencies on the Valley Housing Coalition to serve the homeless population. Ongoing Coordinated Entry to prioritize those populations who are homeless. To seek continued funding for the homeless or at risk for homelessness. Establishing rapport and communication with landlords for safe and affordable housing options.

Needs- Clients continue to identify access to transportation as an issue specifically for non-medical related appointments. Affordable housing has been noted as an issue due to limited housing options and long waiting list. Workforce issues-recruitment and retainment of CASACS, Licensed Social Workers, Nurses, and Prescribers.

Annual and intermediate plans for developmental disability services:

ARC Herkimer provides Integrated Supported Employment as they assist individuals that have obtained competitive employment maintain their jobs. Arc Herkimer provides follow along supports on and/or off the work site. ARC Herkimer also provides Assisted Competitive Employment (Psych Rehab) in which they assist individuals who need support to obtain community employment. Arc Herkimer provides job coaching and other supports to assist in obtaining and maintaining employment for 90 days. For both of these programs they are starting to see the number of referrals pick up again, as they were very low during COVID. They are continuing to accept referrals for each of these services. Transportation continues to be the biggest barrier the individuals face when it comes to finding a job. Public transportation is limited in both route location and times of

runs.

Needs: Providers continue to report difficulty recruiting and retaining direct care staff.

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Annual and intermediate plans for mental health services:

The Neighborhood Center has a Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT) that provides coverage to Herkimer County. MCAT provides psychiatric assessment and intervention services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to residents of Herkimer County. The design and operation of MCAT has been tailored to meet best practices for crisis intervention and avoid unnecessary emergency room use and hospitalization. Providing a community-based response for individuals experiencing mental health crisis helps decrease utilization of acute services; demand for law enforcement responses; incarceration rates for individuals with mental illness; while improving engagement with outpatient treatment. MCAT works to divert individuals with mental illness from ED settings unless truly needed. By conducting the assessment where the crisis is occurring as well as the resources and supports available to the individual. The Neighborhood Center operates the program with the belief that crisis systems must be comprehensive and strive to encompass prevention, stabilization, and post-vention. MCAT assesses risk of harm to self or others, factors that led to the crisis, and the level of treatment support services needed. In addition, MCAT also provides the following services: de-escalation, mediation, safety planning, referral and linkage, follow-up care; utilization of an Alert Status System for high-risk persons, Wellness calls to clients with their consent, and outreach and education to the community about suicide prevention. In 2019, there was an average of 158 crisis calls per month. In 2020, the monthly average of crisis calls was 124. To date, there has been an average of 166 crisis calls per month for 2022. MCAT has difficulty filling licensed clinical positions to go into the field.

In regard to outpatient mental health services the county has 4 Article 31 clinics, which

include Herkimer County Mental Health, Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center Herkimer Clinic, The Beacon Center, and The Neighborhood Center. There are also several satellite clinics located within the county: Community Health and Behavioral Services has a satellite clinic in Herkimer and a satellite clinic within Little Falls School District. The Neighborhood Center has satellite clinics at the following schools: Central Valley Academy, Town of Webb, Mount Markum, and Dolgeville. The Neighborhood Center also has a program within Central Valley Academy called Project AIM.

The Central Valley Project AIM (Achieve-Inspire-Motivate) Program serves youth ages thirteen to eighteen who attend the Central Valley Central School District. Led by an adult mentor providing case management, referral services and group peer led programming, Project AIM helps youth access services and connect them to their community while enhancing self-worth. Groups meet on a bi-weekly basis at CVA and the Gregory B. Jarvis Middle School.

Family TIES (Treatment Intensive Empowering Services) provides short-term intensive, outcome driven counseling for children in Herkimer County who are “at risk” of out of home placement and are in perpetual crisis and require intensive mental health treatment. The program aims to improve the abilities of all family members to problem solve and use their natural and community supports more effectively to improve family and child’s functioning. The program is a collaborative effort of the Herkimer County Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Social Services, Herkimer County schools and The Neighborhood Center, Inc. All referrals are screened initially through Herkimer OMH. Services are provided by a Master’s level clinician employed by the Neighborhood Center. The Family Ties therapist is community based and works with the identified child in their home, at school and other community locations connected to the child and family.

Feedback: COVID-19 presented challenges to meeting with clients as clients were experiencing “technology burnout” and it was difficult, at times, to conduct telehealth sessions. This has improved throughout 2022 as they returned to in-person appointments. Clinician is able to meet with children and their family at school and within the home. The program hopes to increase the number of clients served in 2023 and intend to continue providing exceptional services to clients and their families.

The Beacon Center Article 31 Clinic has about 60 individuals open to services. MVPC clinic has an average of 295 people open to services. Caseload sizes at MVPC tend to be between high 70’s or low 80’s per clinician. The Herkimer County Mental Health Clinic has an average of 475 adults open to the clinic. The average caseload size is 85. Herkimer County Mental Health provided 8,396 clinic visits in 2021 and 551 correctional facility visits.

The Image Center is a Drop-In Center that works to identify and engage persons who may choose not to participate in more structured programs or may need additional supports along with their clinic treatment. The Image Center staff have worked to enhance the activities and services provided that had been impacted by COVID-19. This included added in-person activities, outreach, and engagement to recipients to create awareness and preplanning activities with leadership review each month and revising the staff schedule to ensure that services are readily available in person. Rearranging staff schedules also allowed for more flexibility in travel and transportation for participants. Staffing Challenges: The Image Center had a vacancy for a Mental

Health Advisor that was recently backfilled. There is one part-time staff that assisted in coverage during this vacancy.

Supported Housing: UCP Supported Housing program provides case management supports to individuals enrolled in this program to assist them in living independently. The objective of the program is to assist individuals in locating and securing housing of their choice and in accessing the supports necessary to live successfully in the community. Services may include assistance with choosing housing, roommates, and furniture; providing financial assistance with purchasing apartment furnishings and with initial apartment/utility deposits, assistance with resolving roommate or landlord issues that may jeopardize the stability of the housing placement; and linking residents to a comprehensive community support system of case management, mental health, and general health supports. In 2022, the Supported Housing Program Manager and AVP worked with staff to improve processes related to the coordination of care. Supported Housing has had 12 individuals transition to section 8 housing and several successes with various individuals served, to include, securing a well-paying job, completing their GED, and obtaining custody of their child. Finding affordable housing for individuals served by our programs continue to be a challenge. Case Managers are working diligently with individuals, the community and landlords to secure affordable opportunities for those we serve.

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LGU Representative Name: Kristen Snyder-Branner

LGU Representative Title: DCS

Submitted for: Herkimer County Mental Health Services



Office of Addiction
Services and Supports

Office of
Mental Health

Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities

2023 Needs Assessment Form

Herkimer County Mental Health Services

Crisis Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Need description (Optional):

Housing Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Need description (Optional):

Inpatient Treatment Yes

Applies to OASAS? No

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Need description (Optional):

Residential Treatment Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? No

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Youth Only

Need description (Optional):

Respite Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Need description (Optional):

Transportation Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes
Applies to OMH? Yes
Applies to OPWDD? Yes
Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults
Need description (Optional):

Workforce Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes
Applies to OMH? Yes
Applies to OPWDD? Yes
Need Applies to: Adults Only
Need description (Optional):

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