



Office of Addiction
Services and Supports

Office of
Mental Health

Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities

2023 Goals and Plans Form

Schenectady County Office of Community Services

Goal 1: Staff retention and recruitment

Goal 2: Staffing shortages with Mental Health Providers

Goal 3: Housing

Annual and intermediate plans for addiction services:

Addiction services in Schenectady County are stable. There are minimal to none waiting lists for the outpatient clinics. The recent merger with Public Health has only enhanced Narcan trainings across the board, as well as providing alerts to the community regarding fentanyl laced substances. Most recently the influx of colorful pills easily mistaken for candy. The introduction of Certified Recovery Peer Advocates in ER through Catholic Charities has helped to expedite referrals. CRPAs are also involved in all many SU agencies. Also, the city of Schenectady Police Department in collaboration with OCS has created a haven for persons with substance use disorders. The program, 'Schenectady Cares' has been going well. Referrals are sent to Catholic Charities project Safe Point or to peers within the New Choices Recovery Center. The Substance Use and Overdose Coalition is active and runs weekly and monthly meetings. Topics covered during the year include: Fentanyl test strips, Co-occurring Disorders, and OD alerts. The Dual Recovery Task Force at this point communicate from and active distribution list. Updates are posted concerning community events, programs, and current training opportunities.

Annual and intermediate plans for developmental disability services:

The 2023 State Agency Planning Priority for the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities contains many initiatives that have been sorely lacking in our community. The plan includes collaboration with the CLMHD as well as DOH and OMH. Like all other Behavioral Health providers, the lack of staffing overall is crippling our ability to serve those needing services across the board. Through the American Rescue Plan (ARPA), OPWDD is proposing a significant investment into recruitment, retention and increasing wages to all direct service providers. This includes a one-time payment to support employees who worked during the pandemic, and a bonus for Covid vaccinations. Like OMH, it is our hope that this addresses the scarcity of services. Improving housing options also needs to be implemented soon. Resources in Schenectady County continue to be depleted. Recently we received word that the Center for Disability Services has closed its operations on State Street. Services will be transferred primarily to Albany County Though under utilized during Covid, losing yet

another provider of services is even more challenging. Per usual, the Office of Community Services will support all funding opportunities and distribute updated information to our providers. Any applicable grants will be forwarded to our providers.

Annual and intermediate plans for mental health services:

The mental health system in Schenectady is no different from every other county in the state. The system is overwhelmed and not able to meet the needs of the community. Clinical services are at a standstill and losing staff in rapid succession due to better pay elsewhere. This reality has forced our clinical services to cease having waiting lists at all. The need for affordable housing is in crisis. Agencies are having great difficulty in finding apartments altogether due to increased rents and drug/crime infested areas in the city. Recently RFPs were announced for ESSHI projects throughout the state. Two apartment buildings have already been established in Schenectady, but in a very short time, they are consistently at capacity. Attached is an overview of the seriousness of these issues. OMH, like OPWDD and OASAS are offering bonus incentives, paths to career opportunities, and increased wages in to recruit and retain staff. Thus far, this funding has not occurred. Our non-profit providers have contracts with OCS. Quarterly reviews will continue to be required to assure that services are provided per the contracts. In addition, quarterly interviews occur with the leadership of these programs to assist with problem solving when possible, and to continue to collaborate in any way we can. All current information, alerts, and opportunities distributed through Public Health, OMH, OASAS and OPWDD will be forwarded to our providers.

LGU Representative Name: Margaret Coker

LGU Representative Title: Behavioral Health Systems Administrator

Submitted for: Schenectady County Office of Community Services



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2023 Needs Assessment Form

Schenectady County Office of Community 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? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Need description (Optional):

Outpatient 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? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

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):

Transition Age Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? No
Applies to OMH? Yes
Applies to OPWDD? No
Need Applies to: Youth Only
Need description (Optional):

Transportation Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes
Applies to OMH? Yes
Applies to OPWDD? No
Need Applies to: Adults Only
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):

LGU Representative: Margaret Coker

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