

Dane County: To conduct community gap analysis on access to mental health services

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Today Dane County Executive Joe Parisi announced Dane County is seeking partners to conduct a community study on the accessibility of mental health services. This analysis will be the most comprehensive review to date of existing public and private mental health services available in our community. It is aimed at identifying potential gaps while evaluating whether a community operated Crisis Restoration Center or similar facility could help improve care of those who struggle with mental illness. County Executive Parisi's 2018 budget included \$100,000 for this study.

"Our innovative crisis response teams that work every day in schools across this county are just one example of how Dane County is leading the way to help those who struggle with mental health challenges," Parisi said. "Health care providers and hospitals, community organizations, and government all have a role in making sure those who need mental health services receive them. That's why a community analysis is imperative to identifying where any gaps or overlaps in care might lie and what needs to change to fill them."

The objective of this study is to review the current mental health and substance use services provided by public and private funders and identify the needs, gaps and possible solutions to address the issues identified. Firms interested in conducting the analysis have to get their responses back to Dane County by April 30th.

Dane County's 2018 budget includes over \$32 million for adult mental health services. An additional \$11.4 million is budgeted for mental health care for children. Included in these efforts are Dane County's School Based Mental Health Teams,

created by the Dane County Executive in 2014 as his most significant policy initiative. The program started as a pilot effort in Madison, Sun Prairie and Verona and has since expanded to a total of nearly a dozen Dane County school districts. These teams work in schools daily, helping hundreds of kids each semester and are funded by a cost share between Dane County and local schools. The county's share of funding in 2018 totals over \$1 million for this program.

Dane County's 2018 budget also included \$100,000 to help fund Porchlight's Safe Haven, a program that provides transitional housing and case management for those who suffer from mental illness to stabilize their living situation and reduce homelessness.

Additionally, Parisi's 2018 budget included new money to support the critical work that NAMI (National Association of Mental Illness) Dane County does to better train and prepare front line responders and medical personnel on tactics needed to help de-escalate incidents where mental illness is a factor.