

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND CRISIS SERVICES

WHEREAS, Pepin County ("County") is concerned that the public mental health system in Wisconsin is in need of additional resources to respond appropriately to the needs of individuals with persistent mental illness and those experiencing a mental health crisis; and

WHEREAS, state law designates counties with the responsibility for the well-being, treatment, and care of individuals with mental illness, and serving those without private insurance coverage; and

WHEREAS, the Medical Assistance program (MA) covers an array of mental health services, ranging from office-based therapy to inpatient hospitalization, and many of these services are delivered by counties; and

WHEREAS, Community Support Programs (CSP) offer intensive community-based care for adults whose mental illness and functional limitations might otherwise require them to need institutionalized care. Counties use CSP services to keep people out of extended hospitalizations and support people in the community following emergency detentions; and

WHEREAS, counties are required to provide Crisis intervention services including an emergency mental health services program to serve persons in crisis situations; at a minimum, 24-hour crisis telephone service and 24-hour in-person response on an on-call basis; and

WHEREAS, while the state pays the full cost of most MA services, when it comes to county-based CSP and Crisis mental health services, the county finances the cost of the services up front, and receives MA reimbursement for only the federal share for that service; and

WHEREAS, Community Aids funding has not kept pace over the years with increased county costs for services, resulting in counties bearing a disproportionate share of CSP and Crisis service costs from county tax levy; and

WHEREAS, counties are limited in their capacity to use tax levy revenue due to state levy limits, so the lack of Community Aids increases combined with strict property tax controls makes it difficult for counties to maintain Crisis and CSP services; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the costs to county human service departments, counties and municipalities also incur law enforcement costs to transport and provide security for persons in a crisis; and

WHEREAS, the awareness of the 988 National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline has made mental health assessment and referral more readily available, resulting in more demand on the mental health crisis systems; and

WHEREAS, stagnant state funding results in variations in the extent of services available across counties, wait lists for services, and eligible people receiving limited services; and

WHEREAS, the limited state funding for Crisis services makes it difficult for counties to implement new evidence-based services, such as mobile crisis workers that could meet law enforcement officers in the field for crisis calls, that would reduce the need for law enforcement involvement and provide a more trauma-informed response to crisis situations; and,

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's counties continue to cover the costs of mental health services for individuals who are not Medicaid eligible.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pepin County Board of Supervisors does hereby request that the state of Wisconsin, in its 2025-27 state biennial budget, provide state GPR funding to cover the full non-federal share of MA CSP and Crisis services; and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Pepin County Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to send a copy of this Resolution to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin, Wisconsin State Legislators with a constituency within Pepin County, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

RECOMMENDED BY THE PEPIN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES BOARD:

 **COMMITTEE MEMBERS VOTE**
Andrew (Andy) Winkler, Committee Chair In favor 5 Oppose 0 Absent 1 Abstain 0

FISCAL IMPACT REVIEWED - The challenges faced and reasons for increasing county costs are noted above. State funding is essential to providing the services under these programs. Due to fixed county funding and levy limits, costs resulting from the impacts and decreasing funding cannot be absorbed by the County without reductions in other programs or services offered.

 X Recommendation Not Recommendation
Pamela Hansen
Finance Director

COUNTY BOARD ACTION:

X ADOPTED by the Pepin County Board of Supervisors on this 21st day of Aug, 2024
 DEFEATED
 TABLED In Favor 12 Opposed 0 Absent 0 Abstain 0

 
Audrey Bauer Tom Miller
County Clerk County Board Chair