

**Human Services Department Report to County Board
May 2019**

ADMINISTRATION

DCF Secretary Visit

On Tuesday, March 26, the Department of Children & Families (DCF) Secretary-designee Emilie Amundson visited La Crosse County Human Services. The visit encompassed most of the day and, during the morning, she was joined by Representative Jill Billings. During her time with us, Secretary-Amundson met in separate “town hall-like” sessions with Child Protective Services and Youth Justice staff. She also met with stakeholders of the La Crosse Area Family Collaborative (LAFC) at its northside office within the building owned by Trinity Lutheran Church. To close out her visit, Secretary-designee Amundson toured Human Services’ juvenile detention and shelter facilities. It was a great opportunity to provide information and have discussion on caseload size, mandates, staff turnover and secondary trauma, along with the impact of the drug epidemic on children and their families. We were also able to discuss the items La Crosse County and the Wisconsin Counties Association are advocating for in the 2019-21 State Biennial Budget.

Community Conversations

On Wednesday, March 20, Jason Witt made a presentation over the noon hour as part of the monthly Community Conversations hosted by English Lutheran Church. The subject was how Wisconsin’s opioid and meth epidemics have created a crisis for Wisconsin’s families and the child protective services system. A recording of the presentation can be found here: <https://www.interfaithleaders.org/past-events.html>

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC)

Governor’s Task Force on Caregiving

Governor Evers signed an Executive Order to create a Governor’s Task Force on Caregiving to address the state’s crisis-level shortage of direct care workers and improve supports for families providing care for their loved ones.

NEW! Brain & Body Fitness Program

The ADRC, in collaboration with the YMCA, began a new group exercise program for people living with mild to moderate Alzheimer’s disease and their caregiver, proven to improve physical exercise and mood in people living with dementia. Classes are free, occurring twice weekly for three months. A free YMCA membership is also included.

INTEGRATED SUPPORT & RECOVERY SERVICES (ISRS)

Comprehensive Community Services

The Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Intensive program is piloting the Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment (ANSA). This assessment is the adult version of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool used with children and youth inside the CCS program. Data is being collected to help with understanding if a more intensive CCS approach has positive outcomes for higher needs consumers.

Crisis

Crisis Unit Supervisor Dona Christianson was recently certified as a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Trainer. She along with other MHFA Trainers will be assisting to train community members on May 22, 2019, at Viterbo University.

Our Crisis Unit was recently informed by the Department of Health Services (DHS) that our Collaborative Crisis Intervention Services to Youth (CCISY) grant due to end June 2019 will be extended for another year through June 30, 2020. This grant is in partnership with our Western Region Integrated Care’s (WRIC) Consortium, serving La Crosse, Jackson and Monroe Counties.

Outpatient Clinic

Planning has begun for the 8th annual Mental Health Awareness Walk to be held on May 29, 2019, at 12:00 pm. The Outpatient Clinic is collaborating with Gunderson Health Systems this year to host the event, and La Crosse City Mayor will be presenting a proclamation. See the community event schedule and links to further details in agenda item 1F of the April HHS Board Packet.

Justice Support Services (JSS)

Unit Name Change

Coinciding with the 2019 budget cycle, Juvenile Justice changed their name to “Youth Justice” in order to more appropriately coincide with the Department of Children and Family’s title and philosophy.

Implementation of New Assessment Tool

On March 25, 2019, Justice Support Services implemented a new pretrial assessment tool, the Public Safety Assessment. This takes the place of the COMPAS pretrial assessment that had formerly been used. La Crosse is among six other pilot sites in the State of Wisconsin working to standardize pretrial assessment and supervision within the state.

Implementation of this tool was a piece of the pilot requirements. Much time and effort has gone into educating criminal justice stakeholders and decision makers on implementing this change, interpreting the results, and applying the results to a release condition matrix. The Public Safety Assessment is a product of Arnold Ventures, formerly the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. It is a free tool that is available online nationwide.

Letter of Interest Submission

On March 28, 2019, La Crosse County Juvenile Detention submitted a “letter of interest” to the Department of Corrections SRCCCY Grants Committee to comply with the legislative due dates that had not yet been changed, in regards to potentially applying to become a SRCCCY (Secure Residential Care Center for Children & Youth). This letter is in no way binding, but simply allows for La Crosse County to continue to pursue this grant opportunity if we so choose. Much analysis continues internally to determine if pursuing this opportunity is a positive choice for us as a county.