

The Umbrella



HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY
Helping People Achieve

SUMMER 2024

ARF Proving Valuable Resource to Northeast South Dakota



On July 5, 2023, the Human Service Agency officially opened their new Appropriate Regional Facility (ARF) to create more opportunity for individuals experiencing psychiatric crisis to seek professional help. The ARF maintains a 4 bed crisis stabilization center and 4 bed detox facility where individuals can stay for up to 5 days while professionals help them stabilize the crisis they are experiencing.

Short-term crisis facilities, like the ARF, are a critical component of South Dakota's crisis response. They are available to stabilize, support, and connect individuals in a crisis to an appropriate level of care. Since it's opening, the ARF has been a huge

asset to Northeast South Dakota allowing individuals to stay closer to home for their care.

As of May 1, 2024, the ARF had 142 unique clients from counties such as Codington, Clark, Hamlin, Deuel, and Brookings for a variety of concerns such as self-harm or severe mental illness.

The ARF completed a total of 190 assessments on those clients, with primary admission being involuntary referrals from law enforcement. Primarily, clients were stabilized and discharged back into the community with an outpatient treatment plan. A select group was transferred to a higher

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Human Service Agency



123 19th Street NE
Watertown, SD 57201
1-605-886-0123

www.humanserviceagency.org

Mon-Thurs: 8 AM—8 PM
Friday: 8 AM—5 PM

For more information contact
Kari Johnston, Executive Director
Karij@humanserviceagency.org

**SD BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH**
Department of Social Services

level of care. The average length of stay was just shy of 1 full day.

The Human Service Agency looks forward to continuing to support South Dakota's short term crisis needs in the Northeast.

Prevention—It Takes a Village

What is Prevention? Let's start with an analogy. Two friends, Susan and Fernando, are fishing on a river when Fernando looks up river and sees a man in the water! He is struggling to stay afloat, so Fernando drops his fishing pole and pulls the man out of the water. The man is sputtering and cold, and Susan calls an ambulance to take him to the hospital. Susan and Fernando go back to fishing. Pretty soon they look up river again and see a woman in the water! She is struggling too, so Fernando drops his fishing pole again and pulls the woman out of the water. She is not in very good shape, so Susan calls another ambulance. The friends return to fishing when they look up river and see a whole group of people in the water! They are struggling to stay afloat, but look like they are dragging each other down. Fernando drops his fishing pole and starts hauling people out of the water. He looks up and sees Susan walking away, up river. He calls to her to come help, but Susan replies that she is going up river to find out why all the people are ending up in the water.

The people in the water represent people who are already in trouble with alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. Do you think we will always have some people in the water, or that we will ever completely eradicate substance abuse? We know we will always need ambulances, representing treatment providers, to provide services for those already harmfully involved with substances. We in prevention, however, work up river. We look for what contributes to people abusing substances and needing treatment services. We want to know what is causing people to fall into this river, which may be different from river to river. Perhaps we go upstream and find a barrier has fallen and needs to be rebuilt. Maybe we find a slippery slope running into the river and can plant vegetation on the slope to prevent people from falling down. Perhaps we find a big sign announcing, "The water's great, jump in!" and we replace it with a warning sign.

So, in prevention, we work to find out what is causing people to abuse substances in our community, and then we work to reduce those risks and to build protection against substance abuse (known as resiliency and

protective factors). We ask "why is this happening here" and "why is this happening now" and "is it harming our families and youth?" Once we find the answers to those questions, we build skills, provide tools and resources to help individuals make healthier and safer choices.

Kids learn from the environments that they grow, live, learn and play; and with access to technology, they are learning more than ever, at an earlier age. The Watertown Healthy Youth Coalition works with the Watertown School District to keep a pulse on the health and safety of our youth and digging into the answers to the "why here, why now" questions. Every two years, the Pride survey is administered to students to help understand student perceptions and behaviors related to mental and physical health, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and the risk and protective factors for those issues.

Overall, students are reporting a decrease with substance use in grades 7-12; but there have been some shifts with perceptions and increases in access/availability in regards to alcohol and marijuana use. In addition, our concern is the age of onset; we are seeing use at younger ages, which can impact brain development, decision making, and dependency.

This data is reflective of the community norms of acceptance, and the increase of social and retail access. Not only are our youth being targeted with advertising online and in stores, but they are seeing an increase in the number of vape shops, liquor stores, and medical marijuana dispensaries, as well as now seeing alcohol and tobacco sold at convenience and grocery stores in our community.

If we want to work upstream, work needs to be done within the community to educate adults on the severity of the new products that are accessible to youth and how the industry is marketing these "adult products" to look and taste like things appealing to our youth.

Kids are making better choices now than when their parents/grandparents were growing up. However,



as a society we are making it more challenging; life is not as simple as it once was and we can't compare youth today to when "we were growing up." Youth are being faced with a plethora of synthetic and high potency products, new technology and social media that is the "super peer" influence.

We want our kids to be healthy, happy, safe and able to contribute back to the community (as adults). Education and awareness are key. As adults, here is what we can do:

- Create policies, procedures, consequences and enforcement
- Continued education on social issues and trends that build and strengthen decision making and coping skills
- Be a caring adult, build relationships with youth in your life and be a positive role model
- Promote an environment of safety and belonging, prevent risky situations and empower them to know what to do in different situations to keep them safe and healthy
- Have consistent messaging and accountability, start the conversation early and have the conversation often

The majority of our kids are thriving and resilient – even with the risk factors they are being exposed to. We can help keep them on track by discussing rules and expectations about substance use; teaching and modeling healthy coping skills, social skills and resistance skills; helping to change community norms and values surrounding substance use; and teaching and modeling good habits even when faced with adversity. The biggest protective factor is when youth and adults feel connected to their community – look for ways to engage and involve others in making our community a safe and healthy place to live.



Good Things Are Happening



Where has summer gone? Just as they break out the school supplies in our local stores, we all start to wonder this every year. At the Human Service Agency, we have been busy!

The Appropriate Regional Facility celebrated it's first birthday on July 5, 2024. Since opening, we have had 277 admissions. This has alleviated psychiatric crisis admissions to the emergency room in addition to removing the obligation of being detained in the detention center for anyone experiencing a psychiatric crisis who does not need immediate medical care. Some of these individuals have continued to require inpatient psychiatric care at Avera Behavioral Health Hospital in Sioux Falls or the Human Services Center in Yankton, but

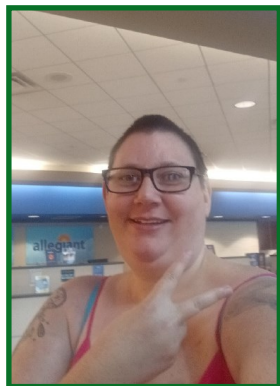
many of them are stabilized and sent back to their support system with a plan to follow up on an outpatient basis.

We are also experiencing growing pains! We have slowly become fully staffed and are in need of more offices. We are currently researching the best way to change this. One option would be to redesign of our current facility or we could be looking at the development of an addition. It is a good problem to have as we offer behavioral health therapy to our local community and surrounding counties. We are also lucky to have an in-house pharmacy. Genoa Pharmacy has been housed in the Human Service Agency for almost 18 years. We are fortunate they found us several years ago. They work very closely with our two prescribers and are also able to meet all the medicinal needs of our staff as well.

New Horizons has been equally as busy learning a new billing system and adapting to multiple changes that are driven by the Department of Human Services; Division of Developmental Disabilities. We recently built a house on Bogue Avenue that 12 residents will call "home" very soon. These individuals will move from our current house at 1203 1st Avenue, as well as some individuals moving into this location from the community. We are excited they will have the opportunity to live in a brand new building.

As you put away your swimsuits and shorts and bring out your sweaters and everything pumpkin, we hope you are doing well in all areas of your life. If you find yourself needing a "tune up" or any range of services, please do not hesitate to reach out for help.

Dreams Come True!



Thanks to the Human Service Agency Foundation's "Dreams Come True" Project, a New Horizons client was able to take an unforgettable trip to Nashville

to attend a family reunion.

Lucretia was almost not able to attend her family reunion due to low funds. She worked with New Horizons staff to make a request to the Dreams Come True Project and was approved. Lucretia was so thrilled!

She was flown to Nashville for 4 days to see her grandma, who has been

experiencing some health issues recently, and her father, whom she hasn't seen in many years.

The funding also provided her the opportunity to eat at some different restaurants and have a little shopping trip at the mall. Upon her return, she told staff that she had a BLAST and was so thankful for the generosity of the HSA Foundation. This trip wouldn't have been possible without the Dreams Come True Project.

The Dreams Come True Project was founded as a way of providing clients of New Horizons opportunities they would otherwise not be able afford. If you are interested in learning more, or would like to make a donation to this project, please contact Michelle Spies at michelles@humanserviceagency.org.

Thank You!

We want to recognize and share a HUGE thank you to outgoing HSA Board of Director members. Dan Albertsen, Jackie Baxter and Lisa Burghardt have each been on the HSA board for well over ten years and have shaped HSA into what it is today. These caring individuals are pictured below with current board member Dennis Evenson. We appreciate their dedication and service to our mission.



The Services of HSA

Outpatient Mental Health

Individual and Family Counseling
Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT)
Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
Psychiatric Evaluations & Med Mgmt

Children, Youth, & Family Services

Individual and Family Therapy
Adolescent DBT Group
Adolescent MRT Group

CARE

Med Management
Case Management
Peer Led Groups

Addictions Services

Individual and Family Counseling
Couples Counseling
Group Counseling
Consultation and Education
Referral

Serenity Hills

Halfway House for Men
Detoxification
Appropriate Regional Facility

NEPRC

Watertown Healthy Youth

Transitional Residence

Developmentally Disabled

Day Program- Alternatives to Work
Day Program - Production
Employment Connections
Employment Services
Residential Life
Project Skills

Conflict Free Case Management

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE

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Watertown, SD 57201
Permit #688

The Human Service Agency Foundation **An Investment In The Future**

The Human Service Agency is a private, non-profit organization served by a Board of Directors representing the communities served by the Agency. The Board of Directors meets at 5:30 pm on the last Monday of each month.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY ARE:

New Horizons

HSA Behavioral Health

The Human Service Agency Foundation was established to promote the long-term financial strength of the Human Service Agency. Charitable contributions and bequests to the Foundation are administered by recognized financial experts for the benefit of the Agency's programs. The Foundation provides, at no cost to the individual, confidential assistance for those considering charitable giving as a part of their long range financial planning.

For More Information, visit

www.humanserviceagency.org/donations or scan this QR Code

