

Human Service Model Feasibility Task Force

July 18, 2013 1:00 pm
North Central Health Care, Board Room

Meeting Minutes

Present:

Marathon County:	Brad Karger, John Robinson, Gary Gisselman, Vicki Tylka, Joanne Leonard
Lincoln County:	Nancy Bergstrom, Randy Scholz, Bruce Giese, Mike Nelson, Bob Lussow, Bob Weaver
Langlade County:	Dick Hurlbert, Robin Stowe, Kim Van Hoof, Ron Nye, Charlene Nagel
State of Wisconsin Reps:	Theresa Steinmetz, Gail Chapman
North Central Health Care:	Gary Bezucha, Toni Simonson, Paula Hawkins
Facilitators:	Gail Nordheim, Gerry Born

Minutes

- **Motion** Nye, 2nd Lussow, to approve the minutes of the 6/20/13 meeting. Motion carried.

Cost Allocation & Managing Outcomes

- Direct and shared services allocation methods were reviewed.
- Standardized services are provided in each program in each county.
- Allocation per county is based on the allocation method identified in the Joint County Contract. Currently it is based on 11% for Langlade County, 16% for Lincoln County, and 73% for Marathon County.

Current Services Profile

- It would be helpful to know which services are mandated and which are optional. For example, providing child support services is optional. Child welfare, juvenile justice, must be provided. You might not have to provide the service, you could be the manager of them and contract them out.
- The statute says counties must provide core social services and 51 chapter programs.

Findings from Other States

- The only state with a multi-county human service program is Minnesota, and they have three of them.
- North Carolina: They looked at multi-county social services programs (they call it human services). No counties have developed a multi-county program. Individual programs within a county have combined for a "human services" program.

- Only 15 states have county systems; the rest have all state programs. State employees run programs in individual counties.
- Wisconsin: a county or multi-counties can create a human services department.
- Minnesota – they have had a program in existence since the mid-70s. In recent years counties have found it is beneficial to come together to provide services. Minnesota passed a law that encouraged counties to come together.
- Southeast Minnesota is a four-county planning service. One of their issues is how you establish an allocation method for each county. They will implement services in 2015. The Southwest Minnesota program is six counties.
- WCHSA (WI County Human Service Association): They are working on a potential piece of legislation, not dissimilar to the current joint powers authority that counties can work on together in various ways (collaborate). It would allow some collaboration that would not be possible under current law. There is also language that would require the state to approve any plan that meets the requirements of the section (joint powers doesn't require state approval). WCA (WI Counties Association) also supports it. It will allow for flexibility and will all be voluntary for counties.

Southwest Minnesota Human Services Delivery Authority

- Health & Human Services became a joint effort in the 70s. It was very visible the smaller counties could not thrive alone to provide all the services the bigger counties could provide to the constituents that needed them.
- It began with one county collaborating with two other counties. Two additional were added, and finally, a sixth was added.
- They wanted to create a one-stop shop for their consumers. They wanted to streamline and make services more efficient.
- They realized that some counties were very good in some areas and weak in others. By combining they could use the "good" from all.
- They went from six director salaries to one director.
- It brought consistency on service delivery. Standards could be set for customer service across the organization.
- They can provide more specialized services, such as dietitians and dental services. They are expanding services into counties that couldn't support them before.
- They are receiving larger grants to cover the entire area.
- They needed to grow service and slow the growth of tax levy.
- Commissioners were on board from day one – the decision-makers. It wasn't about turf. Each county has the same amount of authority, so are equal regardless of county size.
- Tax, population, and SEAGR (individual county data) are three areas used in determining cost allocation.
- In their first year with a two county collaboration they were able to put \$1 million back into the budget because of efficiencies. This year (with six counties) they are putting \$800,000 back into the budget. It does not go back to the counties, it stays with the organization to be put back into services.

- Customers did not see a difference with changeover. There was no interruption with services. Long transitions are hard on staff. A six month notice is plenty.
- At the time they decided to dissolve the two agencies, the two unions sued them. They were tied up in legal issues for a while, and there were legal costs for both the unions and the organization. Issues have since been resolved, and they have had no problems.
- Most staff were already working with staff in other entities; they now work in the same place.
- No staff lost money. The organization made that decision. It does have pay discrepancies among counties for long term staff. They have one pay structure for new employees.
- Populations: Lincoln County is small and with older individuals – no new families moving in. Three counties are agricultural and no new families moving in. Lyon is transient; it is a college town and has a larger Hmong, Somalian, and Hispanic population. Rock County is very mobile and 30 miles from Sioux Falls, SD.
- You can't change the uniqueness of culture of each office.
- They contract with a mental health center, so they don't provide these services within their human services. They don't do therapy in-house; those are also contracted out. They work with specialized providers. They provide child welfare directly. They work with probation for juvenile justice; they do certain portions of it. Juvenile justice intake is with the court.
- They still have two unions.

Statutory Framework for Human Services Consolidation

- Must include programs authorized under ss. 46.22 and ss 51.42, with a single policy-making board, and a single director accountable to the board.
- If the decision is made to go to a Human Services Board, we would need to dissolve each county Social Services Board and the current 51.42 Board.

Findings to Date

- There is agreement that a Human Services model will only be created if there are clear measurable benefits/outcomes.
- Some interviewed felt status quo is not an option; others think current system is working reasonably well.
- Concerns by some on philosophy towards human services, and urban/rural differences.

Stakeholders

- Elected judges and DA
- Corp counsels
- Law enforcement
- Schools and providers
- Employees
- Boards
- Citizen review panel

- Consumers (foster parents, former people who had been in the system)

The facilitators will have another request for information based on the template of information previously provided.

Next meeting agenda

- August 22nd from 9:00AM-12:00PM
- Review of potential collaboration models
- Overview of financial information submitted
- Previewing schedule of talking with stakeholders

Motion to adjourn by Nye, 2nd Hurlbert, at 3:40p.m. Motion carried.

Pdh