

# **RESPONSE FROM LANGLADE COUNTY** **TO THE**

## **MULTI-COUNTY DHS PLANNING TEMPLATE**

At the September 19 Task Force meeting, it was agreed that each county would meet to determine its preferred approach to “Option 3”—the Multi-County Human Services Department on the NCHC platform. NCHC will be represented at each of these meetings.

This template is intended for use at those meetings, to make sure that each county considers the same list of questions. **Please make sure you consider each question on this template during your meeting. Your responses can be typed directly into the template.**

Each county should return its completed template to Gail Nordheim ([Gail@gnconsulting.info](mailto:Gail@gnconsulting.info)) no later than **Friday October 18**.

### **I. Desired outcomes for the Multi-county Department of Human Services**

Assume that the multi-county DHS has been in existence for 2 years, and that it has been quite successful. You are reporting to your county board and constituents about DHS accomplishments. What specific accomplishments (e.g. availability of specific services, service integration, quality, budgetary savings/control) would you like to be able to report?

1. Increase in the array of services available to Langlade County residents (i.e., crisis services, prevention services, effective drug treatment programs, intensive in-home services, parenting skills).
2. Funding mechanisms for the costs of services provided by the Multi-County DHS are sustainable (i.e., each County paying a portion of "shared" expenses and responsible for the full share of any "direct" or customized services provided exclusively within the County).
3. Services are measured to assess quality, efficiency and effectiveness; and adjustments to services are made according to these measurements.
4. Reduction in service/funding disputes as services are delivered under a single point of contact.
5. Programming is responsive to concerns of partner agencies, stakeholders and clients/customers.
6. High level of commitment by employees to achieve the mission of DHS.

Again assuming you are reporting to your county board and constituents about a successful multi-county DHS, how would you contrast this structure to the past—what has improved?

1. The array of services was limited and continually scaled back due to available funding and resources.
2. The funding mechanism for these programs provided by Langlade County were not sustainable (specifically, out of home placement costs, and costs of comprehensive in-home services).
3. Questions existed whether the current organizational structure for delivering these programs was the most efficient and effective (i.e., Court supervision of juvenile justice, staffing levels for child welfare services, delivery of intensive in-home services and other prevention services).
4. When "silos" existed, disputes occurred regarding which silo was responsible to provide and/or fund a service.
5. Issues with information sharing and other impediments to effective communication existed with partner agencies, stakeholders and clients.
6. Low employee morale existed due to limited resources, changes to service delivery (regionalization) and changes to employee compensation/benefit plans (as a result of Wis. Act 10 & 32 "Budget Repair Bill").

## II. Governance

Following are statutory requirements for composition of the Human Services Board:

HUMAN SERVICES BOARD REQUIREMENT from s.46.23(4)(a), Wisconsin Statutes.	
Total number of members	At least 7 members; not to exceed 15 members.
County supervisors	At least 1/3 county board members; not to exceed 2/3 county board members
Special qualifications of board members	At least one member shall be a person who has received human services or a family member of such an individual.
Other provisions	No public or private provider of services may serve on a human services board.

Taking into account the statutory requirements

How many members would the board have?	First preference is "equivalent" representation on a 9* member board. Langlade County is open to consideration of other board compositions including a larger board having representation based upon population or funding share.
How many of these members would be county	

board members?	2*
How many county board members would there be from each county?	2/2/2*
How many public members would there be on the board?	1*
How would public members be selected?	Nominated by DHS Board subject to confirmation by County Board.
What terms would board members have?	3 year terms for both member classes.
Could a board member serve multiple terms?	Yes.

### III. Programs to be included

The following programs would need to be included in the multi-county DHS, per requirements of section 46.22, Stats: Child Welfare; Income Maintenance; Child care; Energy assistance

The following programs could be included in the multi-county DHS, but could remain with the counties: Child Support; Juvenile justice intake

For the “optional” programs, indicate where they would be administered:

Program	✓ Administered by the multi-county DHS	✓ Directly administered by the county
Child Support	√	
Juvenile Justice Intake	√	

**IV. County financial impact**

It will be difficult to definitively complete this table until county contributions to the Multi-county DHS are known. However, there are some financial impacts (for example, loss of DHS payments for centralized county services such as corporation counsel, human resources, or finance) that can be quantified now. It may be possible to project savings in rent or other operating costs.

**NOTE: Langlade County assumes that the Multi-County HSD will operate using a funding mechanism similar to NCHC, with each County paying for "shared" costs based upon population and paying 100% of any "direct" costs (provided exclusively for the benefit of one County).**

Areas of potential savings to the county	Estimate of potential savings	Magnitude of potential costs to the county	Estimate of potential savings
*	*	*	*

**\* County financial impact: Langlade County is prepared to allocate current funding to the HSD and therefore does not expect any up-front savings. Langlade County understands that to a certain extent the funding levels from each County will need to be "equalized" to determine whether any County is over-funding or under-funding a program to be consolidated under the HSD. The Counties will need to agree upon an initial operating budget for the HSD and it remains possible that some Counties may see a net savings while another County may need incur additional costs to meet its particular funding obligations. Also, Langlade County anticipates some savings from the elimination of certain social service program-related costs (administration, IT, management, supervision, payroll, etc.) that are currently duplicated in Langlade, Lincoln, and Marathon Counties as well as NCHC; and that these savings could be made available to the HSD for redeployment to cover HSD-related program costs.**

**V. Employee impact**

Which model(s) for employee transitioning would the county support? If more than one model is acceptable, indicate which is first choice, second choice, etc.

Model	✓
Model 1—The Multi-county DHS posts openings for positions. County DSS employees	

apply for positions in which they have interest. Employees who do not successfully compete for these positions are no longer employed (or are employed in other county positions) as of the transfer date.	
Model 2—County DSS employees who are in positions that are needed by the Multi-county DHS can automatically transfer into the new positions without an application process. Employees in positions that are not needed by the DHS are no longer employed (or are employed in other county positions) as of the transfer date.	√*
Model 3—All county DSS employees transfer into the Multi-county DHS. The DHS adjusts its workforce via attrition or layoff over its first year of operation.	
Other—please describe	

***\*Employee must be qualified for available position as determined by HSD. In previous consolidations (Family Care), the Langlade County Board expressed a desire to ensure that all employees were offered positions with the new organizations; and that may not be possible for transition to a Multi-County HSD.***

#### **VI. Local presence and consumer access to services**

<p>Describe the preferred approach for assuring that there is adequate staff for quick response and easy consumer access throughout the 3 county area, while still assuring the flexibility and efficiency that result from regionalization. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What programs require staff based in the regional offices? Why is regional staff presence important for these programs?</li> <li>• What programs can be centralized in Wausau without regionally based staff? Why can these programs be centralized?</li> <li>• How would supervision work for staff in regional offices?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need sufficient staffing presence in each County to adequately address services that are delivered directly to residents (intake, client interviews, investigations, etc.). A caseload-to-worker ratio may be used to determine staff need; however the HSD should have the flexibility to assign workers within the region as needed. Also, HSD should also have the ability to organize specialized teams to provide services within all three counties (i.e., crisis referrals, emergency response).</li> <li>• Aspects of programs that do not require direct contact with clients to perform (example, child support: account seizures, license suspensions; data entry) could be centralized in Wausau.</li> <li>• Single Director/Manager for each main program type with Office Managers/Coordinators/Lead</li> </ul>

Workers located at "field" offices.

## VII. Quality

What measures of quality would you expect the Multi-County DHS to provide?

Quality measure	How this measure would be obtained?
<p>Objective measurements/statistics maintained for each program or service. This information would be readily available.</p> <p>Example: Response time; desired outcomes; statutory timelines met;</p> <p>Quality measurements should be adaptable to current needs.</p>	<p>The information would be obtained from all stakeholders (both internal and external). Some data would be in the form of statistical information (i.e., caseload, number of contacts with provider, type of outcome, etc.) similar to the "Dashboard" model used by NCHC while other information would be in the form of survey responses.</p> <p>The results would be analyzed to determine whether any modifications are needed similar to the Commitment to Service Recovery process used by NCHC.</p>
<p>Process for stakeholders to communicate concerns about quality of service.</p>	<p>This process would be clearly identified and communicated to partner agencies and stakeholders.</p>
<p>Process to provide feedback to any complaints or concerns about quality.</p>	<p>Timely responses are provided to quality concerns.</p>

**VIII.** How would you respond to the following concerns that may be expressed by county board members, employees, consumers, service providers and/or community members in general?

Concern	Response
Our county will lose control over local programs.	Ultimately, each individual County remains responsible for the HSD program or service. Although representation on a single vs. multi-county HSD is different, this difference in representation should not be perceived as a loss of control. Each County will have a voice through its representatives on the HSD Board.
This will result in hardship to employees.	As a general rule, no one likes change. However, there may be more "hardship" to employees absent a multi-county HSD. Through regionalization and consolidation of programs, Counties are better able to sustain programs and regionalization has offered employees with greater opportunity for advancement.
We have been dissatisfied with NCHC's services to date. Why should we give that organization more responsibility?	NCHC has demonstrated the ability to respond to service dissatisfaction and make necessary changes to how services are delivered. NCHC is engaged in a process of meeting with partner agencies to discover the source of service dissatisfaction and make adjustments to services as needed.
This will result in loss of local access to consumers.	The HSD will offer greater access to consumers, by offering multiple access points with the region to deliver services, and better ensure a continuum of care when consumers move within the region.
We will risk the partnerships between social workers, law enforcement and other community	The HSD will enhance partnerships by reducing the bureaucracy (fixed interests and service lines) and place greater emphasize on

Concern	Response
partners in our county.	identifying common interests and offering an array of services to meet the needs of the community.

**IX. Add other issues and suggestions here.**

It is the understanding of the representatives from Langlade County that the consultants will use this information provided in this Planning Template to prepare a report which addresses the "feasibility" of establishing a Multi-County HSD; and that this Feasibility Report would be completed before the end of this year. The Taskforce would then need to determine whether such action is feasible and if so, to determine what additional steps will need to be taken before the Taskforce would be able to report its recommendations back to the respective County Boards.

At the conclusion of this Feasibility Study, the following issues remain:

- 1) Given the concerns about building off the NCHC platform that were raised during the focus group meetings, what additional actions need to be taken by either the Taskforce or NCHC before the Taskforce would agree to present a proposal to their respective County Boards?
- 2) In the event that the Taskforce determines that a Multi-County HSD is feasible, then the County Boards may be asked to approve resolutions to conduct an Implementation Plan. It is understood that the Implementation Plan would address the important questions such as: organizational structure, funding, staffing, transition timetable, etc.
- 3) Since the DHS, DCF and DOC must all agree to any Multi-County HSD Plan, to the greatest extent practicable, the Taskforce should attempt to obtain answers to identified "essential questions" from these State agencies at the earliest stages in developing a Plan.
- 4) Although Langlade County's motivation to study the feasibility of a Multi-County HSD is not driven primarily by cost considerations, it will be important for the Taskforce to obtain some cost estimates for this proposal at the earliest stages in developing a Plan.