

Cherokee County MH/DD Services Management Plan Annual Report FY09

It is the intent of this report to summarize and measure the progress of the Cherokee County MH/DD Services Management Plan for the time period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009. This report will cover the third year of the current strategic plan for FY07 – FY 09. This report will contain data on the following county information:

- ↪ Progress towards goals and objectives
- ↪ Documentation of stakeholder input
- ↪ Actual provider network
- ↪ Actual expenditures
- ↪ Actual scope of services
- ↪ Number, type, and resolution of appeals
- ↪ Quality assurance implementation, findings and impact on plan
- ↪ Waiting list information

Overview of Fiscal Year 2008-2009

Here is a brief overview of some of the changes and highlights of the year.

- Efforts to create a regional Management Plan began.
- Developed a new 3 year Strategic Plan using input from stakeholders and by also holding focus groups with those served.
- Hired Dena Woltman as a Targeted Case Manager starting August 2008.
- Two meetings were held with our local vocational training center, Cherokee County Work Services, to collaborate in ways we can begin to control non-mandated service costs.
- Two staff attended free training in Des Moines on Psychological First Aid which was offered in response to the devastating tornadoes and floods in Iowa.
- The Northwest Iowa Contracting Consortium went through their second rate negotiations using the CRIS process and while there were still some things to work out, the group felt more progress had been made from the year before.
- Hosted voter training activities through a grant from ID Action in preparation of the General Election in November 2008. **See Attachment D for copy of the summary and news articles.**
- Began the process of eliminating the sliding fee scale for services over 150% poverty level in order to prepare for additional funding shortfalls over the next couple years.
- Cherokee County Residential Services began planning to build a new HCBS Waiver site to aid in the efforts of Money Follows the Person and to help bring home individuals currently living in ICF/MR facilities.

Progress on Goals and Objectives

GOAL

The Cherokee County disability service system will provide more individualized supports for people with disabilities so that they are more able to make informed choices which will lead to interdependence with the communities of their choice.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Throughout the timeline of this plan, Cherokee County will provide, support and encourage educational opportunities for people with disabilities which will lead to responsible, informed decision making.

ACTION STEPS:

- 1.) Beginning FY07, the Cherokee County Community Services Department, with the help of the Cherokee County Self-Determination Project Team, will organize and host semi-annual educational opportunities in the areas of “life decisions.” These sessions will be focused around the message of “How to be a good _____” and will cover areas such as: employee, boyfriend/girlfriend, friend, and neighbor. These sessions will also be open to family members and provider agency staff who are interested in attending.
Not completed during FY07.
A mini-conference was held on April 9, 2008. It was decided by the Self-Determination Project Team to complete the entire training session on these “life decisions” at one time instead of trying to arrange semi-annual trainings when it would be difficult to get everyone together. The Community Services Director, arranged presentations and discussions with the group in attendance in the areas of, being a good employee, boyfriend/girlfriend, friend and neighbor. A total of 21 consumers attended the training. Availability to the training was limited to consumers in order to have a more open conversation amongst participants, which was achieved. It was decided having families and agency staff may limit consumer participation.
Not completed in FY09, but completed in FY08.
- 2.) Each year, the Cherokee County Community Services Director, Case Management Agency and the local providers will continue to use person-centered planning tools such as the Essential Lifestyle Plan, the Individualized Action Plan and other resources as developed. Through this process we will continue to help people identify their values and work towards having those present in their lives.
Cherokee County Community Services, Case Management Agency and local providers continue to work closely together to create a more person-centered approach to providing services to the individuals we serve. We plan to hold formal training for new staff on the person-centered approach as well as a refresher course for staff that have been through the initial training. Plans to involve family in this training have also been discussed.
Training in FY08 was held July 30 and 31, 2007 in the Community Services Office. Mae Hingtgen, certified trainer, provided training on the first day to new staff who hadn’t had Person-Centered Thinking training before. Eight staff attended the training. A family training was held that evening to inform families on the Person-Centered Approach and how staff was trained to work with their family member. Only four family members attended the training, which was disappointing and only three consumers’ families were represented. The second day of training was used as a refresher course for staff that has been through the initial training. Eighteen staff from local agencies attended the training, which provided helpful feedback and a boost in the services provided by Cherokee County agencies. See Attachment B for a copy of the article.
Due to difficulties with scheduling, ELP training was not offered in FY09. The efforts of Person-Centered services continued to be used during 6 month and annual meetings as well as monthly Cherokee County Person-Centered Coaches Team meetings.
- 3.) During FY07, FY08, and FY09, Cherokee County will continue to financially support people with disabilities to attend the Mental Health Consumer Conference, which focuses on self-advocacy and responsible decision-making. Two thousand dollars will be appropriate each year and will be expended on a first come, first serve basis.
Cherokee County did not fund any individuals to attend the conference in FY07. Reminders were sent out to providers as well as individuals who have attended the conference in the past and there was no interest.
Once again, Cherokee County did not fund any individuals to attend the conference. Funds have been allocated for anyone choosing to attend.
Cherokee County did not fund any individuals to attend the conference in FY09.
- 4.) Throughout the length of this plan, Cherokee County will encourage the use of natural supports in this area. This will be accomplished by social skill development and the building of “bridges” between people with disabilities and the general public.
During FY07, Cherokee County Community Services Director contacted “Best Buddies”, a nation-wide organization that assists in setting up “chapters” in schools and communities to provide peer-to-peer connection between the community and individuals with disabilities. No funding was available to set up chapters at this time, but we have shown interest should this become available. Cherokee County Community Services, Case Management Agency and local providers continue to “connect” with the communities in Cherokee County through educational opportunities and public service announcements. A radio spot was completed in May 2007 involving Cherokee County Community Services Director and a local provider. A newspaper article was also

printed in June 2007 to outline the services provided in Cherokee County. Each local provider created information about their services to be included in the article. See Attachment A for a copy of the article.

In May 2008, an Open Forum was sponsored by the Cherokee County Coaches Team. The Coaches Team felt there was a need for the communities in Cherokee County to understand the roles of provider agencies and the consumers so the community may understand how to provide more of a supportive relationship. Invitations were sent out to approximately thirty businesses and all area churches to have informal discussion in the areas of hiring individuals with disabilities, working with individuals who are shopping in their businesses, encouraging volunteerism, involving people in church, etc. An article was also placed in the county newspaper to explain the role of the Coaches Team and invite all to attend. It was also the intent to not only educate the community, but to also look to the community to educate us on myths and concerns about people with disabilities so we may build those bridges through education and understanding. Besides the attendance of the Coaches Team, only two other individuals attended this "open forum". See Attachment C for a copy of the article.

Not formally completed in FY09. Continued efforts by local providers to educate and work with the community.

GOAL

The Cherokee County disability service system will provide more individualized supports for people with disabilities to lead fulfilled lives that offer choices and opportunities within the scope of a person's abilities, so that they are able to make informed choices which will lead to interdependence with the communities of their choice.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Throughout the timeline of this plan, Cherokee County will provide support to local providers so that they may continue to listen to, encourage, and support people with disabilities.

ACTION STEPS

- 1.) At least twice during the course of this plan, the Cherokee County Project Team will plan and hold an event that recognizes direct care and administrative staff at the local provider agencies. This is being done in order to show appreciation for the people who provide direct services and to educate the general public regarding the important work these agencies perform.

Completed in August 2006 with a picnic for agency staff and families. Door prizes and games were also provided as a way to thank them for the excellent service provided in Cherokee County.

The Cherokee County Project Team did not hold an event to recognize direct care staff. While they feel it is important, it is very time consuming and the Project Team felt there were other needs to be addressed.

Not completed in FY09.

- 2.) Between FY07 and FY09, Cherokee County will continue to work with the Northwest Iowa Contracting Consortium in order to ensure the providers in Cherokee County receive adequate funding to meet their agency needs.

Quarterly meetings are held in Northwest Iowa with 9 counties attending. Rate negotiations were held in December 2006 involving Board of Supervisors, providers and CPC's from the 9 county consortium. In FY07, Cherokee County also became members of CRIS.

The Northwest Iowa Contracting Consortium continued to meet again this year on a quarterly basis. Efforts to contact legislators and educate them on the funding issues were made. The Cherokee County Community Services Director attended the CRIS training. There has been much discussion regarding how the Northwest Iowa Contracting Consortium should use the information provided by CRIS. The entire consortium feels that CRIS will be a helpful tool during rate negotiations held each December.

NICC met again as usual in FY09. Discussions regarding the future of county management MH/DD services were a big topic again this year. CPC's and service providers have been crucial in sharing their experiences recent information with Board of Supervisors on the consortium. Cherokee County continued to play the role as fiscal agent for this board. Rate negotiations were held once again in Cherokee in December 2008 to negotiate rates for the FY10 year.

- 3.) During this plan period, Cherokee County will further develop the use of "Person-Centered Thinking Coaches." This team of direct care staff who are peer mentors in the person-centered approach will continue to meet to strengthen their use of the person-centered skills and continue to coach their peers when working with people with disabilities.

Enhanced Coaches Training was scheduled to take place in June 2007, but was rescheduled to take place next FY07. The Coaches Team continued to meet on a monthly basis in FY07. The Coaches Team provides inter-agency supports and tests their person-centered skills through the sharing of client issues and suggestions. The skills are also used during consumer meetings to create more focus on needs and wants of the individual instead of the needs and wants of the rest of the team.

The Cherokee County Coaches Team continued to meet on a nearly monthly basis to assist each other in supporting those we serve in the county. In conjunction with the Person-Center Training, this was also used to enhance the skills the Coaches Team mentors to their co-workers within their agencies. The purpose of the Coaches Team continues to involve the direct staff who work with our consumers every day and assisting them in understanding important aspects of work with individuals with disabilities. The Coaches Team has become an excellent resource in determining the needs of staff and consumers in Cherokee County.

Cherokee County Coaches Team met regularly in FY09. The Team took a different route during this year. Instead of focusing on just person-centered skills, efforts were made to provide some teamwork strategies. Some of the meetings consisted of discussing myths or misunderstandings regarding individuals with disabilities and how we can work to educate people, we also met to discuss perceived roles about our agencies as well as what truly are the roles of the agencies. Direct service staff also had the opportunity to meet the new HCBS Specialist for our county, Jeri Hass, in an effort to share information and inform Jeri about our local service providers.

- 4.) Throughout the duration of this plan, Cherokee County will continue to hold regular (at least quarterly) meetings with local providers in a roundtable discussion atmosphere,

This is an on-going process through the Self-Determination Project Team. The meetings are held every other month for approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours each time. See stakeholder input for additional information.

The Self-Determination Project Team continues to meet 6 times per year. A list of stakeholders and meeting times are listed later in this annual report. Specific information is shared with the Project Team and the opportunity for open discussion is always available to each and every team member.

On-going through Self-Determination Project Team meetings which are held every other month as well as members of the Coaches Team which is held nearly monthly. Opportunities for providers to ask questions and share information is encouraged.

- 5.) Each year, the Cherokee County Community Services Director, Case Management Agency and local providers will continue to enhance the implementation of person-centered planning. The Cherokee County Community Services Director, a certified Person-Centered Thinking instructor, will provide training to local providers in this area, as needed.

At the time this Action Step was written, Mae Hingtgen was still Community Services Director. She has since accepted a different job with the State of Iowa. Mae has agreed to travel back to Cherokee County to provide this training as our needs arise and as her schedule permits. Enhancing the person-centered approach is also completed using the members of the Coaches Team.

Person-Centered Thinking training was addressed earlier in this report. The Coaches Team has also been addressed in their role with Person-Centered Thinking.

Due to scheduling conflicts, Person-Centered Thinking Training was not completed. This does not mean it wasn't encouraged throughout the year. This concept whether completed formally remains an important part to the service provision in Cherokee County.

GOAL

The Cherokee County disability service system will provide more individualized supports for people with disabilities to lead fulfilled lives that offer choices and opportunities within the scope of a person's abilities so they are able to make informed choices which will lead to interdependence with the communities of their choice.

OBJECTIVE 3:

During FY07 through FY09, Cherokee County will facilitate at least 2 events aimed at increasing community awareness and understanding of disability issues.

ACTION STEPS:

- 1.) Before the end of FY08, the Cherokee County Community Services Department will sponsor an event for family members of people with disabilities. This event will help family members understand the person-centered approach that Cherokee County utilizes, the concept of balancing rights and responsibilities, guardianship/payee issues, and allow family members to seek answers to questions as well as support from each other.
Not completed in FY07.
Mae Hingtgen, HCBS Specialist and Certified Person Centered Thinking Trainer, provided Person Centered Thinking training to family members of people with disabilities. While there was a low turnout for the event, those in attendance were appreciative of the opportunity to understand the approach used in Cherokee County. Only four family members attended. The training was aimed at approaching the topics listed above. The training was not as involved due to the lack of participation from families.
Not completed in FY09 again due to scheduling conflicts with the trainer.
- 2.) When Staff Appreciation weeks are scheduled, each provider will write a summary of their agency and the duties their staff perform to be used as public service announcements in the local paper, so the community can become educated regarding the service delivery in Cherokee County.
During FY07, a picnic was held to thank the agency staff for their hard work. While no write-ups were put in the local paper at the time, a large article was published in the local paper in June 2007 with contributions from local providers to assist the public in understanding our roles in working with individual who have disabilities.
The Community Services Director encourages providers to offer whatever information they deem appropriate to the public regarding the services in their agencies. Agencies can always add any information they choose to a public service announcement as per their agency needs. An article on the Coaches Team in May 2008 did provide some information on the work agencies do with those they provide services to. This was not completed formally this year.
During FY09 there was some discussion regarding educating the public through articles regarding their agencies and what their staff do. The Project Team has decided to leave it up to the local provider agencies to provide this information by their choice of media.
- 3.) By the end of FY09 the Cherokee County Community Services Department and Cherokee County Work Services will explore the possibility of reorganizing the Business Advisory Council, so that more employers in the Cherokee County area will understand disabilities and be more likely to hire people with disabilities to work at their businesses.
Not completed in this FY, however the Cherokee County Community Services Director has had some discussion with the Co-Director of Cherokee County Work Services to look at organizing a Business Advisory Council.
Cherokee County Work Services has not shown much interest in starting up a Business Advisory Council. An effort was made by the Coaches Team during the May 2008 Community Open Forum to involve businesses in the discussions in hopes to open up communication as to why they are willing to hire people with disabilities or why they are hesitant to do so. There were no business members in attendance.
Not completed in FY09 for reasons listed in previous years of this plan.

GOAL

The Cherokee County disability service system will provide more individualized supports for people with disabilities to lead fulfilled lives that offer choices and opportunities within the scope of a person's abilities.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Cherokee County will conduct efficient use of taxpayer dollars through the management of Fund 10 in order to prevent waiting lists for services and to maintain funding for a full array of services for people who have Cherokee County legal settlement.

ACTION STEPS

- 1.) Cherokee County Community Services Director will annually maintain and supervise the MH/DD Budget.
Accomplished and ongoing. For FY07, the fund balance ended at 18%. This was in large to the additional state funds we received due to our low fund balance in FY06.
Accomplished and ongoing. For FY08, the fund balance ended quite low at -4.5%. The Community Services Director budgeted for growth and community services dollars however due to a shortage of funds from the State;

Cherokee County did not receive these dollars. If funds would have been available, we would have received \$59,000. Cherokee County also reconciled over \$35,000 in disputes with the State, which had added up over the last 10 years.

Accomplished and on-going. For FY 09, the fund balance ended at 21.7 %. This was in large to the additional state funds received in FY09 due to the low fund balance in FY08. There was also an effort made to really look at authorizations and how best we could begin the preservation of the MH/DD funds in Cherokee County for future years when dollars aren't available. Counties were also given a large amount of FMAP credits towards the end of FY09 that were retroactive to October 2008. This created additional unspent dollars in the budget which increased the ending fund balance for FY09. Cherokee County's FMAP credits totaled more than \$40,000.00.

- 2.) Cherokee County Board of Supervisors will oversee and approve the annual mental health budget.

Accomplished and ongoing. The Cherokee County Board of Supervisors actively monitors and provides advice on the MH/DD budget.

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Accomplished and on-going. The Cherokee County Board of Supervisors actively monitors and provides advice on the MH/DD budget.

- 3.) Throughout the timeline of this plan the Community Services Director will monitor levy rates and expenditures then work with the Board of Supervisors and Project Team as necessary to avoid a waiting list in Cherokee County.

Cherokee County has never had a waiting list for services and maintained that status during FY07.

Cherokee County has never had a waiting list for services and maintained that status once again during FY08.

Discussions were held with the Board of Supervisors regarding the FY09 year in preparation for funding of service problems. The sliding fee scale was lowered from 300% federal poverty level down to 250% federal poverty level beginning July 1, 2007. This was approved through a public hearing in June 2007.

Cherokee County once again did not institute a waiting list for services in FY09. Efforts began in FY09 to prepare for future years when funding is not going to be as available in Cherokee County and to work very diligently to make sure waiting lists in the future do not have to be maintained. Federal Poverty Guidelines remained 250% for Cherokee County in FY09, however discussions to lower the FPG to 150% for Cherokee County was discussed in order to plan for future funding shortfalls.

- 4.) Cherokee County will collaborate with the courts/judicial referee to ensure cost containment and protect the rights of those who are involuntarily committed.

Accomplished and on-going. During a time of statewide tension between the court system and county MH/DD services, Cherokee County has maintained a close, cooperative relationship with the Clerk of Court, Magistrate, Judge, County Attorney and Sheriff to prevent unnecessary commitments and undue delay of services to people who are in need of immediate hospitalization and/or treatment.

Accomplished and on-going. There seems to be a very comfortable protocol in Cherokee County which involves a wide variety of entities in Cherokee County. Cooperation has been essential to prevent unnecessary commitments. The Community Services Director had a meeting in August 2007, with the Cherokee County Attorney, Cherokee County Assistant Attorney and the District Clerk of Court to further discuss the current protocol and everyone thought it was a protocol easy to work with. The Clerk of Court agreed to share concerns brought up by the Judge as they came up.

Accomplished and on-going. Collaboration continues to be a crucial part in the efforts to ensure dollars are being spent on involuntary commitment costs that are appropriate. In FY09 discussion was held regarding the possible loss of our Magistrate in Cherokee and how we plan to change protocol if needed. There was also a meeting with District Judge Donovan Schaefer, District Clerk of Court, County Attorney Ryan Kolpin and the Community Services Director to discuss protocol changes for Involuntary Substance Abuse commitment. In FY09, the dollars spent on commitment costs was drastically lower than the previous year. This was due to the additional efforts made to make sure commitments were appropriate for the person.

- 5.) Cherokee County CPC Administrator will track funds using the CoMis program in order to do future planning in the service system.

Accomplished. During FY07 the Cherokee County CoMis system was used to provide information regarding applicant information, service authorization and expenditures. CoMis was also used to assist in creating client profiles to be sent in for approval of applicant to the State Payment Program (SPP).

Accomplished in FY08. During this fiscal year, CSN (Community Services Network) has been developed. CoMis will phase out and this web-based system will phase in sometime in FY09. The Community Services Department had some problems with the CoMis program during the FY08 year with the system duplicating payments. This decreased the efficiency of entering information. Much time was spent on running the duplicate payment query and deleting the duplications. Assistance was provided on a limited basis for the problem.

Accomplished in FY09. Initial plans indicated CSN would be up and running in FY09, however these efforts have been pushed back. During this fiscal year, the Cherokee County CoMis system was used to provide information regarding applicants, service authorization and expenditures. CoMis also continues to be an avenue in creating client profiles to be used for determining SPP eligibility for state cases who are located in Cherokee County. There was a lack of technical assistance available for problems with the CoMis system during FY09.

- 6.) As funds allow, Cherokee County will continue to fund a full array of services as well as supports that are not statutorily mandates such as transportation, socialization and educational opportunities.

In FY07, a ½ day cut was instituted for all 100% county funded individuals receiving work activity services. This was instituted in October 2006 and continued until the end of FY07. There were also limitations put on outpatient therapies at the local Community Mental Health Center. Individuals were limited to 8 outpatient sessions. Cherokee County Community Services Director worked closely with the staff at the mental health center to ensure the individuals received the adequate number of sessions they needed. The Cherokee County Board of Supervisors authorized the Community Services Director to authorize additional sessions based on individual need.

During FY08, the ½ day cut in work activity services was lifted. Limitations at the local Community Mental Health Center continued with the understanding no one would go without services needed. The relationship between Plains Area Mental Health Center and Cherokee County has been strong and understanding. The sliding fee scale for outpatient mental health services was lowered from 300% federal poverty level down to 250% federal poverty level.

During FY09, there were no limitations put into effect. Efforts were made to really look at additional requests for services and hours/days of service so Cherokee County would not have to make a decision to institute across the board limitations.

Documentation of Stakeholder Input

During the course of FY09, the Cherokee County Community Services Department has relied heavily on the Cherokee County Self-Determination Project Team for ongoing input and evaluation of services.

SELF-DETERMINATION PROJECT TEAM

Community Services Director
Cherokee County Case Managers
Cherokee County Supervisor
3 MH/DD Providers
MH Provider
Family Member
3 Self-Advocates
Community Member

The Self-Determination Project Team meets every other month and has given input regarding direct care staff recognition, person-centered thinking implementation, case management activities and future program development. Specific details of this input are provided in the FY07 – FY09 Strategic Plan. The Self-Determination Project Team met on the following dates:

July 22, 2008 – Topics for the meeting included an update on the Open forum held in May 2008 hosted by the Coaches Team, the hiring of a new case manager who will start in August, information shared from the CCMS Administrator’s meeting. Also discussed funding problems and the need to contact our legislators. Cherokee County is applying for the ID Action grant to help support efforts in training people to vote in November and addressed concerns about consumers and their safety during emergencies and disasters.

September 9, 2008 – Introduced Dena Woltman as our new case manager who started August 4. Discussed 15 minute billing and Consumer Choices Option. Reviewed the approved voting grant and discussed the activities that were held on September 8 at CCWS to kick the activities off. Began the process of Strategic Planning.

November 18, 2008 – Continued the discussion on case management issues involving 15 minute billing, Consumer Choices Option and how the case managers were managing their case loads. Again we review the ID Action grant, discussed Strategic Planning and talked about housing issues in Cherokee County. FY08 Annual Report and CoMis reports have been sent to the state and information was provided to the board.

January 6, 2009 – Case Management issues were discussed which continued to include 15 minute billing. Both Lynda and Dena reported on their caseloads and what they were doing. The office moved around a little due to space needs. While we actually spent more on the Voting Grant than we asked for, we were reimbursed by ID Action the full amount of what was spent. Reviewed the expectations for Growth and Community Services dollars.

March 10, 2009 – Reviewed Chapter 90 changes to include 24/7 coverage by the case management staff, new assessment information and the elimination of prior-authorizations with IME beginning July 1, 2009. Approved set goals for Strategic Planning to present the next week at Public Hearing. A couple of the staff in the office attended Psychological First Aid Training in Des Moines. Reviewed the budget for FY10 and what was actually received in Growth and Community Service dollars. Reviewed Property Tax Relief and Medicaid funding issues. Money Follows the Person training with Sherry Stowe was held February 5 in Cherokee. Reviewed SF 134 and 144. Discussed Atalissa.

May 23, 2009 – Reviewed Chapter 90 proposed changes. Accreditation survey for Case Management is scheduled for July 21-23, 2009. Reviewed Performance Improvement Plan and discussed the need to have an IAP Meeting with providers. Discussed Coaches Team and the next planned meeting to have HCBS Specialist visit. Reviewed Public Hearing in March for Strategic Plan and Management Plan. Reviewed budget for FY10. Gave an update on housing project from CCRS.

PERSON-CENTERED COACHES TEAM

Lisa Langlitz	Community Services Director
Lynda Holmich	Cherokee County Case Manager
Dena Woltman	Cherokee County Case Manager
Lori Siefken	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Kelly Carlson	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Diana Ockerman	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Peg Christensen	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Carrie Smeltzer	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Mary Jo Carnine	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Gaylene Booth	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Maureen Peterson	MH/DD Provider/Advocate
Nicole Campbell	MH/DD Provider/Advocate

The Person-Center Coaches Team meets monthly to receive additional training in the person-centered approach. The goal of the team is to increase knowledge and use opportunities and challenges to support and advocate for the individuals served. The team is then prepared to take the skills they have learned and informally teach them to their peers in the work setting. The Person-Centered Coaches Team received further training in the Person-Centered Approach.

During FY08, an attempt was made to “Build Bridges” between the community and service providers and consumers. While the Open Forum did not produce the numbers and open communication, the Coaches Team is willing to try it again.

Actual Provider Network

During FY09, Cherokee County expended county dollars from the MH/DD Services Fund to support people with disabilities to the following providers:

Associates for Psychological and Therapy Services	Cherokee County Work Services
Cherokee Mental Health Institute	Cherokee Regional Medical Center
Christian Opportunity Center	Clarinda Geriatric Psyche Unit
Concerned, Inc.	Echo Plus, Inc.
Glenwood Resource Center	Hope Haven
Ida Services Inc.	Life Skills Training Center
Link Associates	Loughlin Law Firm
Mainstream Living	Mid-Step Services
Miller Law Firm	Oak Haven Care Facility
Park Place	Pathways for Emotional Wellbeing
Plains Area Mental Health Center	REM Leadway
Season's Center	Siouxland Mental Health Center
Siouxland Regional Transit System	Spencer Municipal Hospital
Stephen Hankens	The Pride Group
Village Northwest	Woodward Resource Center

Number, type, and resolution of appeals

During FY07, there were no appeals for services.

During FY08, there were no appeals for services.

During FY09, there were no appeals for services.

Actual Expenditures and Actual Scope of Services

County Dollars Spent by COA Code and Disability Type

Date Prepared 11/3/2009

For Cherokee County FY2009

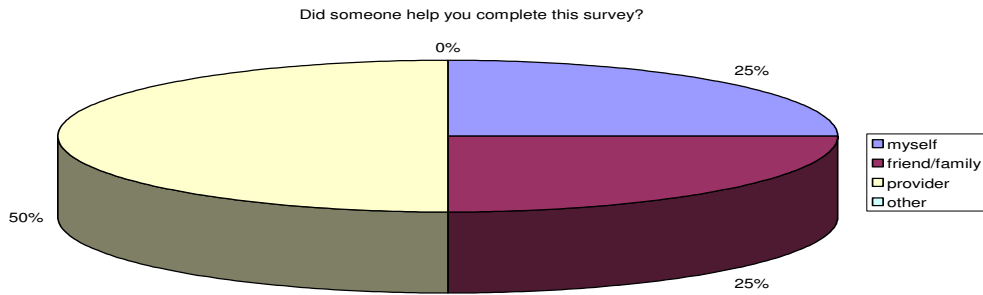
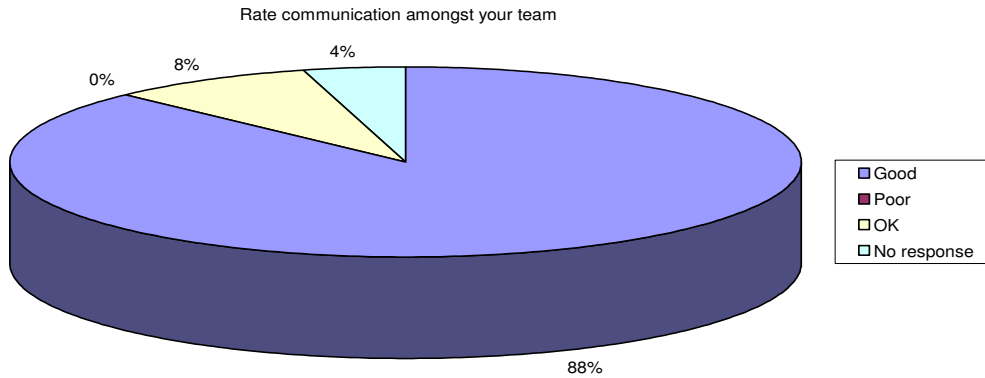
Account Code	Mental Illness	Chronic Mental Illness	Mental Retardation	Developmental Disability	Other	Service Total
11000 Direct administrative		\$15.20			\$49.78	\$64.98
21374 Case Management - T19 Match		\$1,568.70	\$8,984.77	\$765.73		\$11,319.20
31000 Transportation (non-Sheriff)			\$17,116.88	\$1,219.18	\$213.28	\$18,549.34
32320 Homemaker/Home Health Aid		\$19,480.00				\$19,480.00
32325 Respite			\$2,273.00	\$336.92		\$2,609.92
32328 Home/Vehicle Modification			\$1,851.18	\$1,559.00		\$3,410.18
32329 Supported Community Living		\$12,662.73	\$14,226.39	\$42.20		\$26,931.32
32399 Other			\$488.96			\$488.96
41305 Physiological Tmt. Outpatient	\$7,600.54	\$1,346.35	\$332.00	\$83.00	\$53.72	\$9,415.61
41399 Physiological Tmt. Other	\$8,008.40	\$2,643.60	\$415.20	\$549.00		\$11,616.20
42305 Psychotherapeutic Tmt. Outpatient	\$31,413.63	\$90.00	\$1,520.00		\$324.00	\$33,347.63
43000 Evaluation	\$260.00					\$260.00
44396 Community Support Programs		\$1,500.00				\$1,500.00
44399 Other		\$50.00				\$50.00
50360 Sheltered Workshop Services			\$27.71			\$27.71
50362 Work Activity Services	\$1,118.89	\$17,291.64	\$145,502.15	\$27,234.07	\$389.90	\$191,536.65
50367 Adult Day Care	\$655.88	\$16,961.61	\$2,176.55			\$19,794.04
50368 Supported Employment Services		\$166.83	\$971.28	\$871.16		\$2,009.27
50399 Other Vocational Services		\$1,362.73	\$2,035.43			\$3,398.16
63310 Comm Supervised Apt Living (Comm. 1-5 Bed)			\$637.56	\$3,031.73		\$3,669.29
63329 Supported Community Living (Comm. 1-5 Bed)	\$2,253.12	\$12,731.44	\$198,335.50	\$14,262.62		\$227,582.68
64316 RCF/PMI (Comm. 6-15 Bed)		\$39,514.90				\$39,514.90
65314 RCF (Comm. 16+ Beds)		\$37,128.61				\$37,128.61

65315	RCF/MR (Comm. 16+ Beds)			\$85.26				\$85.26
65318	ICF/MR (Comm. 16+ Beds)				\$222,686.75			\$222,686.75
71319	Inpatient (State MHI)	\$10,591.57	\$38,170.12	\$164.65		\$554.22		\$49,480.56
72319	Inpatient (State Hosp. School)				\$111,078.88			\$111,078.88
74300	D & E Related to Commitment	\$475.51				\$250.00		\$725.51
74353	Sheriff Transportation	\$177.95	\$186.94			\$62.00	\$85.20	\$512.09
74393	Legal Representation (cmtmt court costs/legal fees)	\$581.00	\$385.62	\$75.00			\$75.00	\$1,116.62
74395	Mental Health Advocates	\$143.97						\$143.97
Total County \$:		\$62,624.58	\$187,036.55	\$745,684.90	\$52,193.16	\$1,995.10		\$1,049,534.29

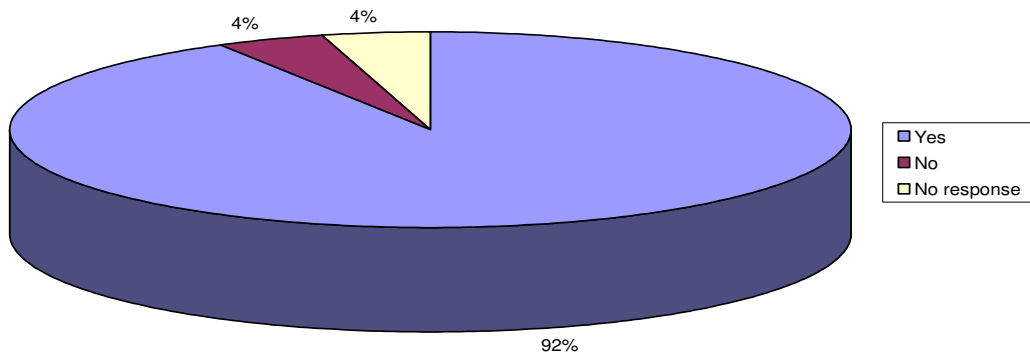
Quality assurance implementation, findings and impact on plan

Cherokee County Community Services has decided to change the time of year quality assurance surveys will be completed. They will now be done every January to give ample time to organize the information effectively for the annual report. The following information from Cherokee County Community Services will remain the same as FY08 for this reason.

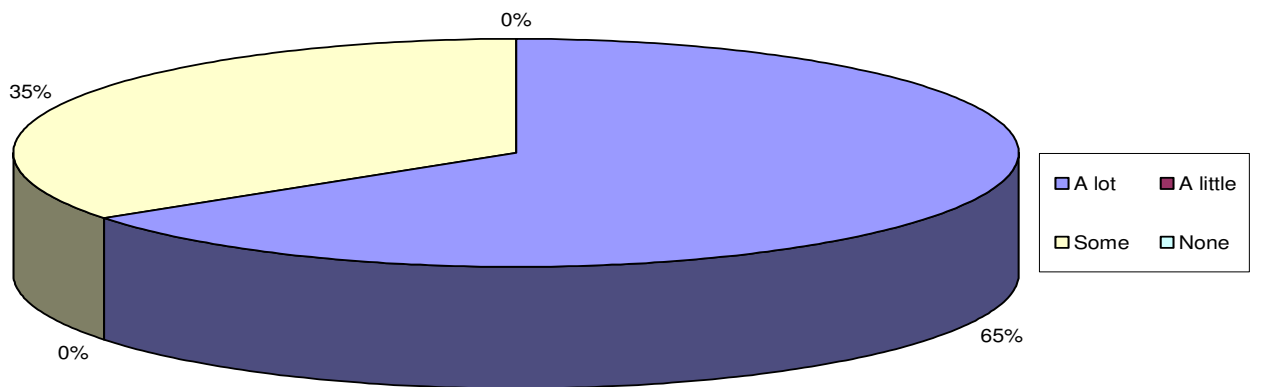
Community Services Department – 39 surveys were sent, 25 were returned



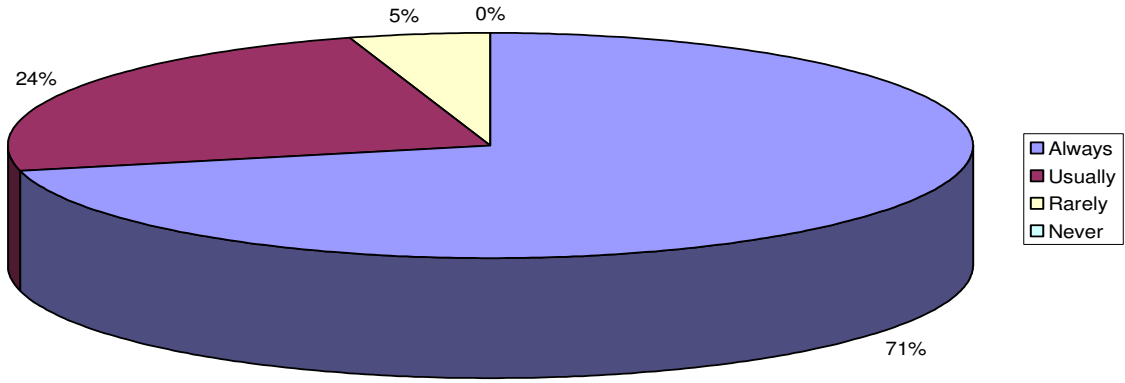
Does your support team listen to your opinion about things you need?



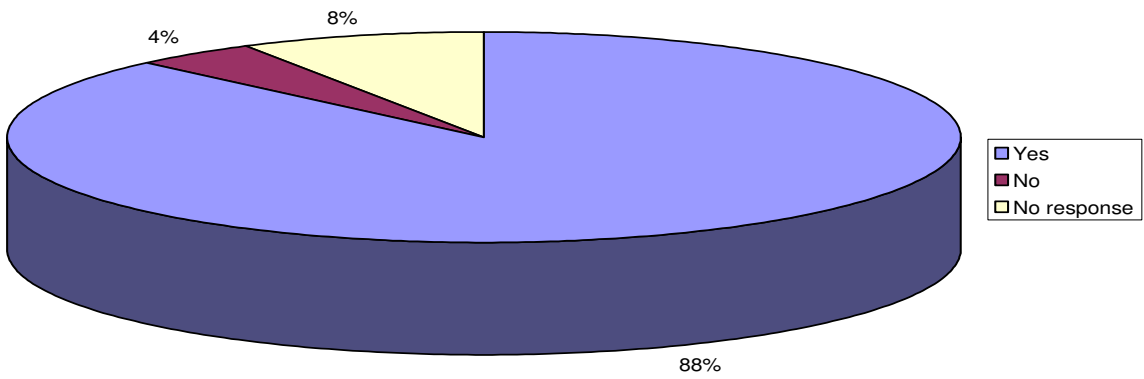
To what degree do you control your service plan?



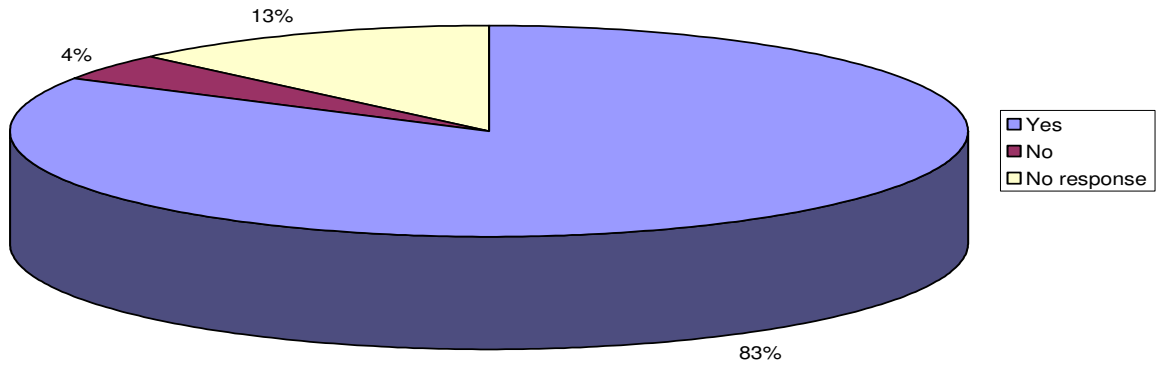
Does someone help you advocate for things you want and need?



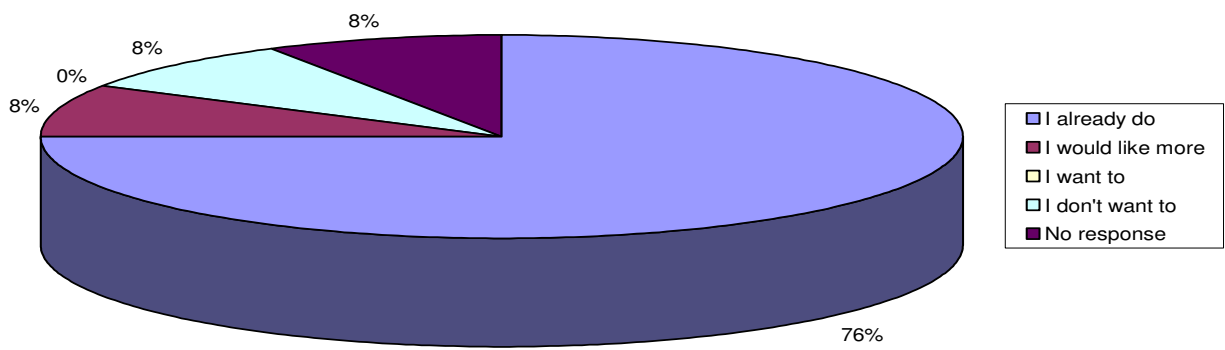
Are you happy with where you live?



Are you happy with where you work?



Do you participate in community activities?

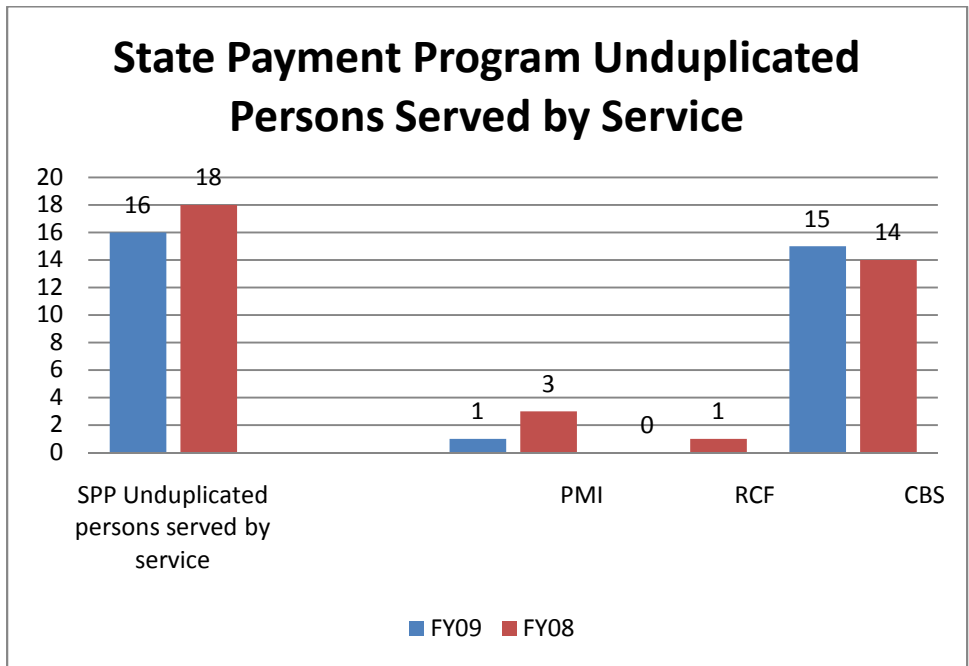


State Payment Program

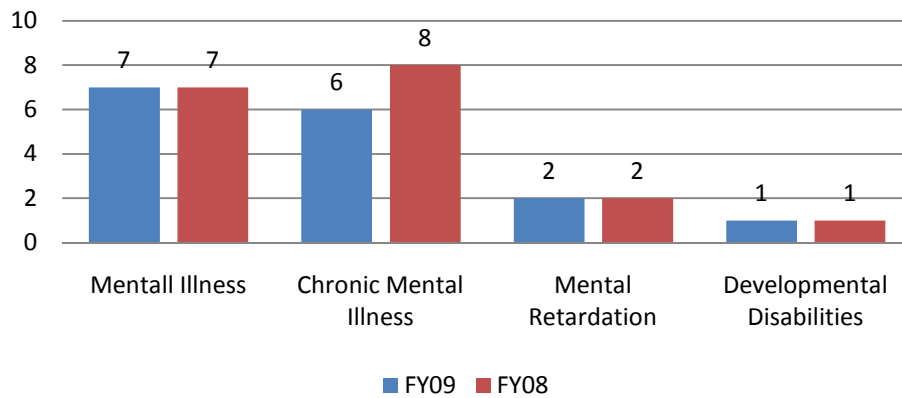
Cherokee County had no waiting lists for state cases through the State Payment Program in FY09. Individuals with state case status were treated the same as anyone with Cherokee County legal settlement and were referred to services requested and beneficial to the individual based on their needs and disability. All state cases under the State Payment Program were followed by either the Cherokee County Community Services Director to monitor service usage or were referred to Targeted Case Management to try to obtain services through waiver or Habilitation. Cherokee County Community Services has found it difficult to help individuals with a given Mental Retardation diagnosis obtain waiver services because there is not enough information prior to the age of 18 to prove this is a lifelong condition even when a licensed psychologist wrote that he/she believed it was based on the information provided by family or other information obtained. Because of this, at least two individuals funded through Cherokee County and SPP, have been limited in the services they are able to obtain because they can't access waiver services. Not only would it benefit the individual and family to have waiver services it would also benefit Cherokee County and specifically the State of Iowa financially.

Cherokee County has found an increase in the time it takes to monitor these cases as well as submitting information for payment each month. Although it takes more time to manage these cases, Cherokee County has found submission of payments by the State Payment Program each month to be timely and correct which has been very helpful when trying to maintain our own county budget.

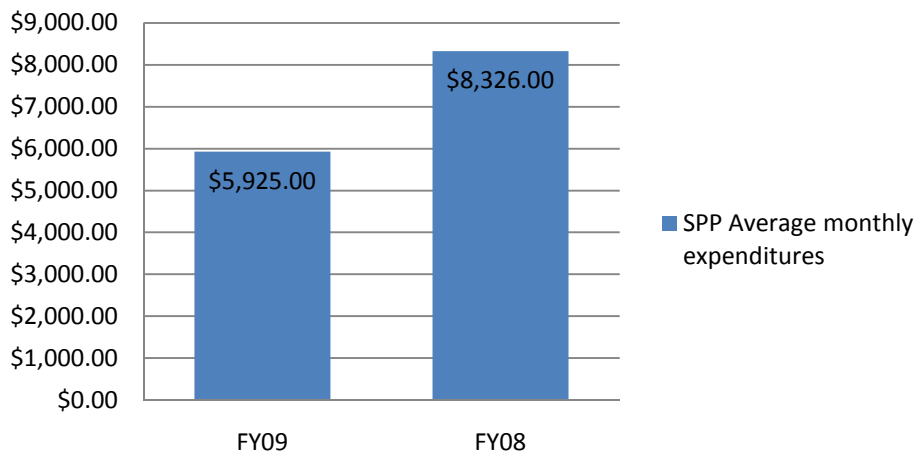
In an effort to show trends from FY08 to FY09, Cherokee County has included information as a comparison.



State Payment Program Unduplicated Persons Served By Diagnosis



SPP Average monthly expenditures



The average monthly expenditures changes greatly from FY08 to FY09 due to the efforts to try to keep individuals out of expensive services and kept in the community as well as a decrease in the number of individuals served at the PMI located in Cherokee. Two individuals moved out of the PMI Unit from FY08 to FY09 which shows a considerable cost savings.

Cherokee County Work Services Quality Assurance

Cherokee County Work Services is a small vocational training center located in Cherokee. CCWS was happy to share information about their program in order to keep from over-surveing individuals accessing the program.

PROGRAM EVALUATION for FY09

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLANS

Each client has an individual program plan. Each plan has specific goals of the client with objectives written to help the client reach these goals. The objectives have to be measurable and have criteria to indicate the level of completion, competency, or independence. These would mark important success or growth for the individual client. When an objective's criteria are achieved it is considered "reached".

In FY 2009, 311 objectives were written for the clients. Of those objective 268 were reached. 87% of the objectives written had a successful outcome.

FY 2009 SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Each year CCWS assesses the satisfaction of persons served, referral sources, and our contracted customers. Survey responses are computed and aggregated. It is the goal of CCWS to achieve an aggregated average score of 75% or higher for each service areas.

Satisfaction of Persons Served:

Facility Based Employment	89%
Community Based Employer's	81%

Satisfaction of Referral Sources

Facility Based Employment	73%
Community Based Employment	96%
Work Adjustment	82%
Work Evaluation	75%

Satisfaction of Supported Employment Employers

Employers	75%
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Satisfaction of Customers

Customers	84%
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Recreation and Leisure –Activity Fund Grant

During Fiscal Year 2009 CCWS sponsored 17 activities with a total of 510 people attending. This surpasses our goal of 12 activities with 300 participants.

HIGHLIGHTS OF FISCAL YEAR 2009

In September 2008 the Knights of Columbus held their annual fund drive for us. We received a record amount of \$16,759.80 that we put toward the new dryer.

In November 2008 the ASCS Office donated 8 filing cabinets, which solved a long term document storage problem.

In March 2009 Peg Christensen resigned and Julie Ballard was hired. First staff change over since January of 2003.

In April 2009 CCRS Board made plans to build another residential home geared for people in wheelchairs.

In May 2009 we received the Legacy Grant for \$500.00. The money was used to purchase equipment and supplies for our Adult Day Program.

In June 2009 we installed a wheelchair accessible drinking fountain in the shop.

CCWS FACT SHEET 2009

CURRENT CONSUMER DEMOGRAPHICS:

	FY09	FY08
Total # of persons served	49	52
Males	22 (44%)	27(52%)
Females	27 (56%)	25 (48%)

Average age of persons served is 40-41. In the 17-30 year olds we have 16 clients, 31-50 year olds we have 17 clients, 51-65 year olds we 14, and 65+ year olds we have 2 clients.

Average hourly pay for consumers in the facility:

Highest yearly average	\$5.36	\$8.48
Highest single 2 week pay average	\$5.55	\$12.58
Lowest yearly average	\$.31	.42
Lowest single 2 week pay average	\$.16	.19

The combined average hourly pay for all consumers for the year was \$1.86. (Last year was \$2.43)

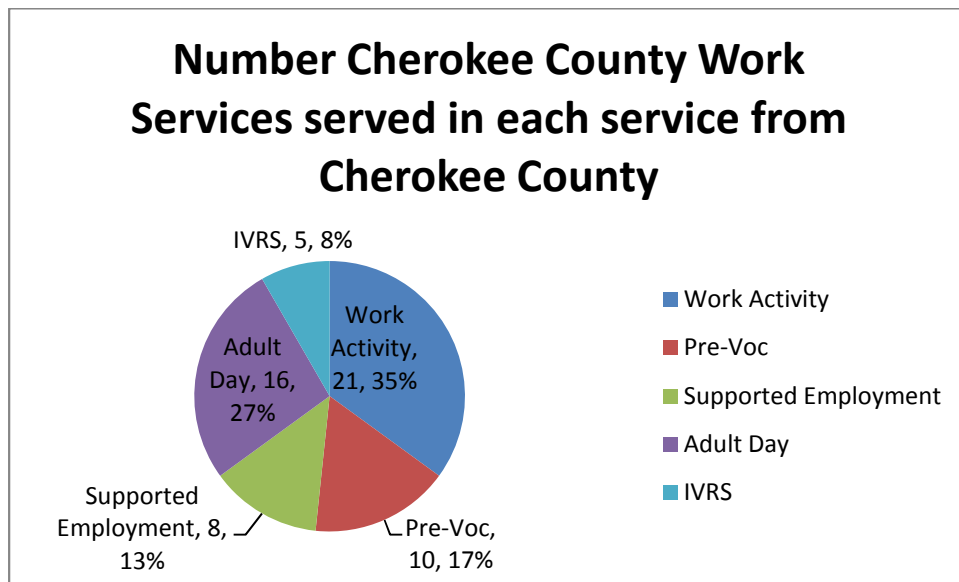
Average hourly piece rate pay for consumers in the facility:

Highest yearly average	\$3.46	\$8.39
Highest single 2 week pay average	\$5.37	\$12.58
Lowest yearly average	\$.19	\$.41
Lowest single 2 week pay average	\$.12	\$.17

The combined average piece rate pay for all consumers for the year was \$1.48. (Last year was \$2.16)

Cherokee County Work Services reports placing 2 individuals in community based employment in FY09 which is an increase from no placements during FY08.

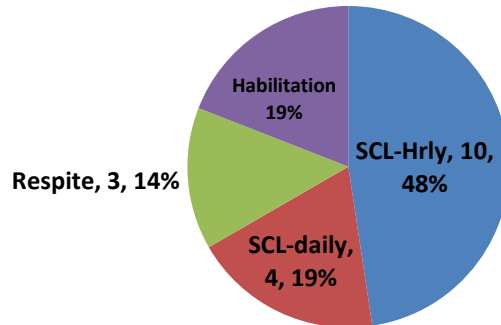
All the information about Cherokee County Work Services was provided by them based on their annual program evaluation.



The Pride Group Quality Assurance

The Pride Group is a residential provider with their corporate office located in Le Mars, Iowa in Plymouth County. The Pride Group oversees Home and Community Based Services and 100% County Funded SCL services in Cherokee as well as Le Mars and they also provide RCF and PMI oversight with locations in Le Mars, Primghar and the PMI in Cherokee. The statistics have been provided by The Pride Group's total agency survey for FY08.

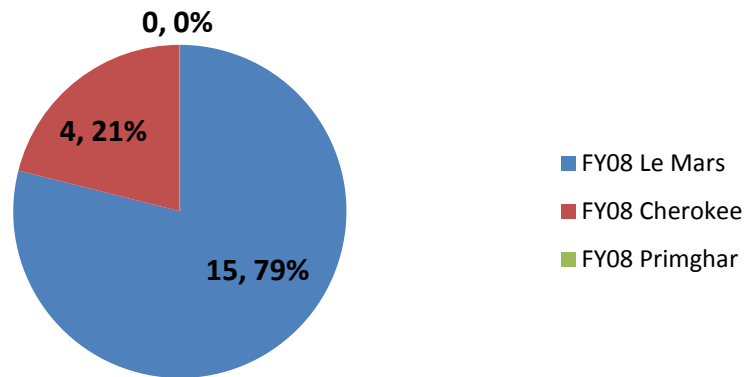
Number served by The Pride Goup by service from Cherokee County



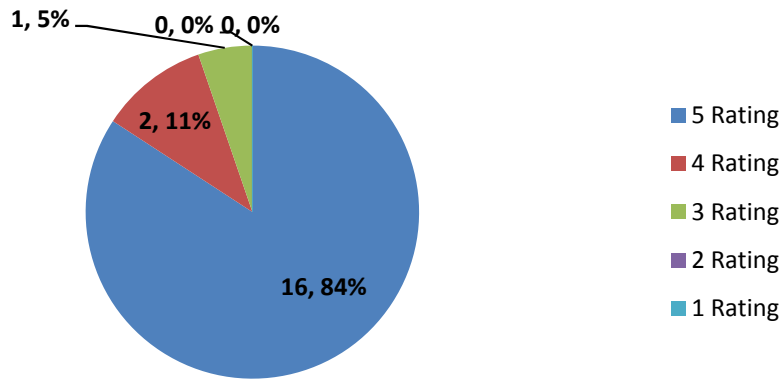
County Funded SCL- Consumer Survey

On a scale from 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating and 1 being the lowest.

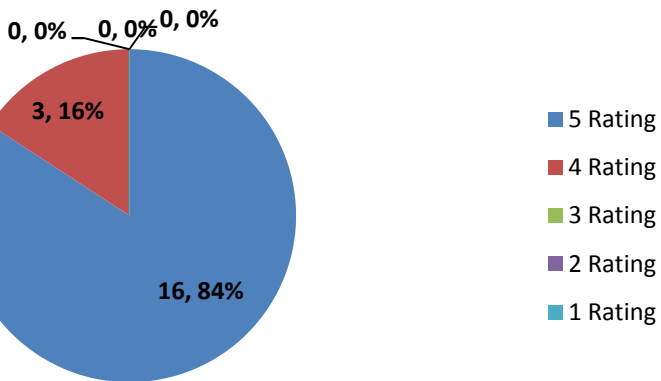
Adults served under county funded SCL Services at Pride Group



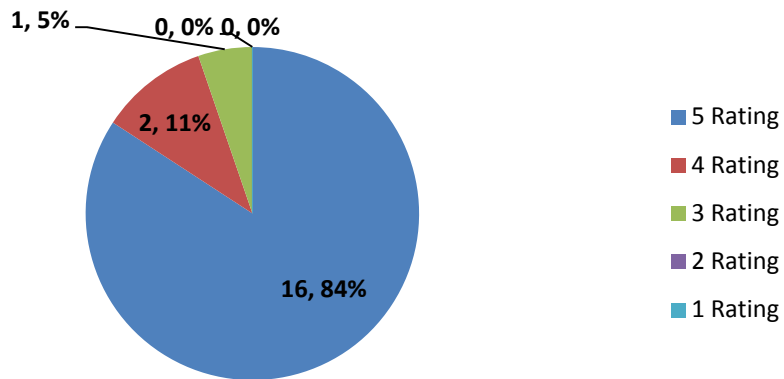
I am satisfied with county funded SCL Services at The Pride Group



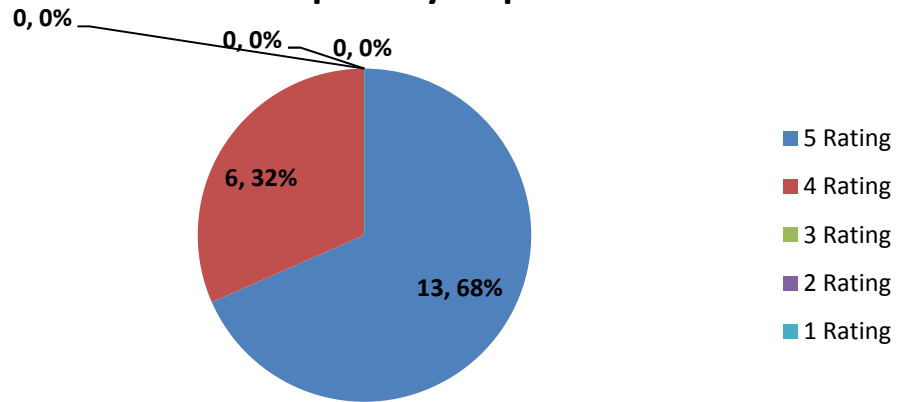
I feel The Pride Group advocates for my programming needs and personal choices



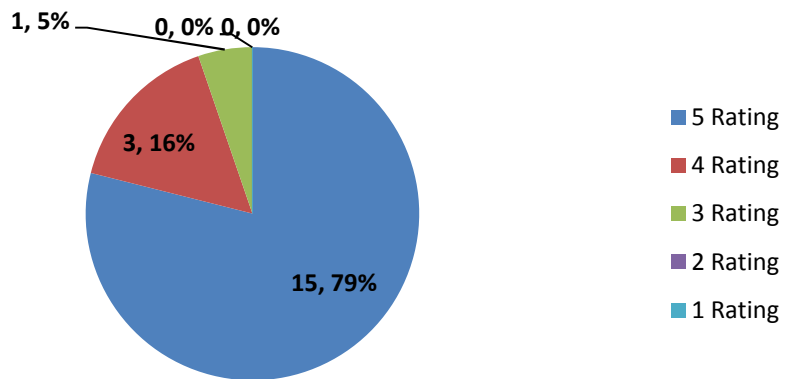
I feel The Pride Group treats me with dignity and respect



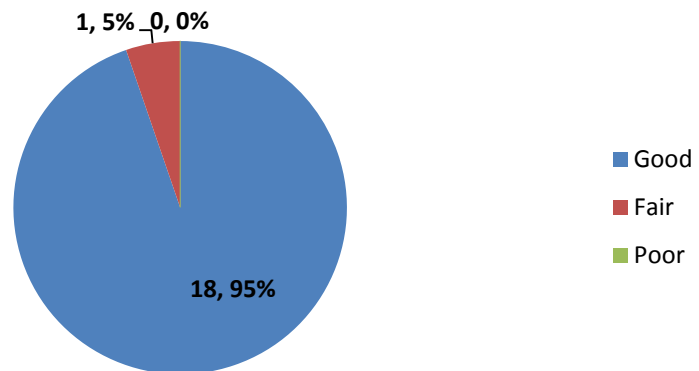
I feel The Pride Group listens and acts upon my request



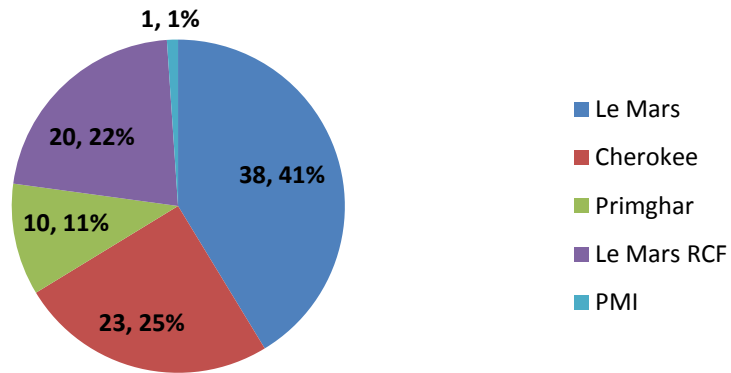
I feel the Pride Group meets their mission by assisting me to live a good quality life



Overall provision rating for county funded SCL Services



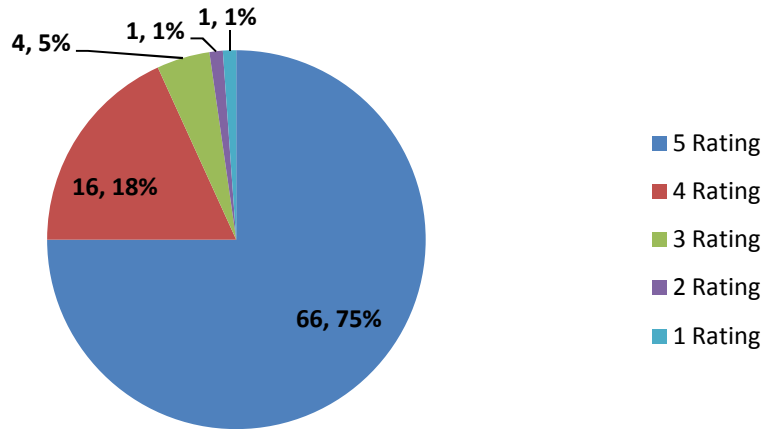
Adults served under HCBS/Habilitation at Pride Group



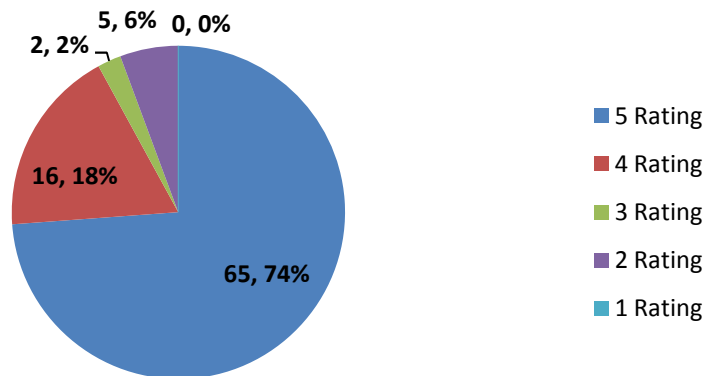
HCBS/Habilitation- Consumer Survey

On a scale from 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating and 1 being the lowest.

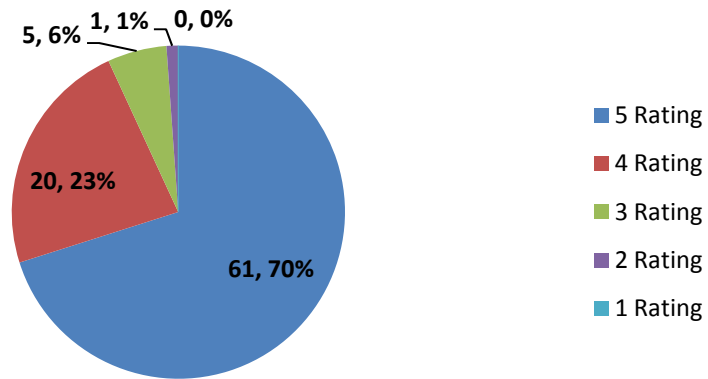
I am satisfied with services at Pride Group



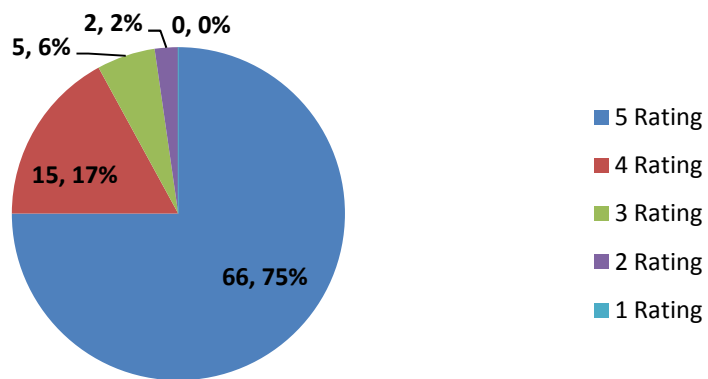
I feel Pride Group advocates for my programming needs and personal choices



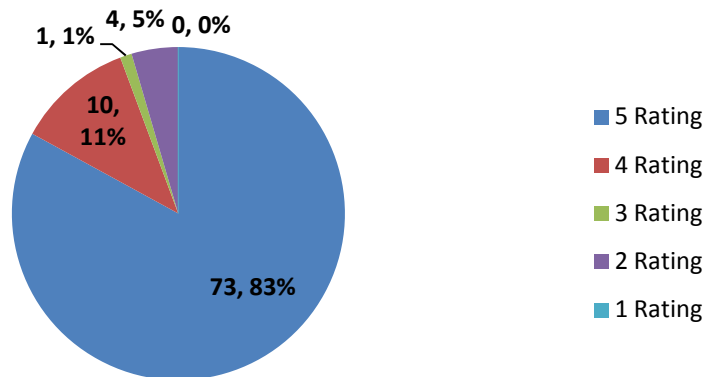
I feel Pride Group treats me with dignity and respect



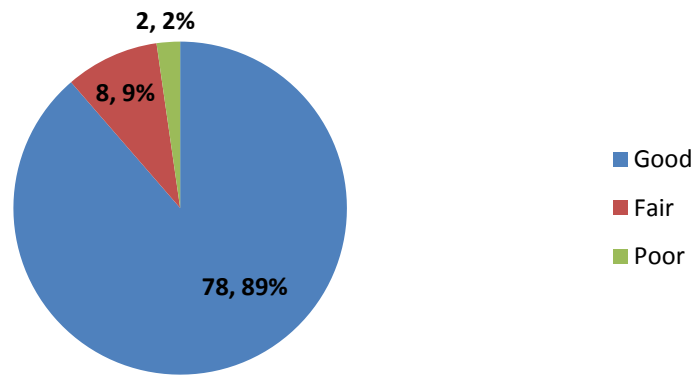
I feel Pride Group listens and acts upon my request



I feel Pride Group meets their mission by assisting me to live a quality life



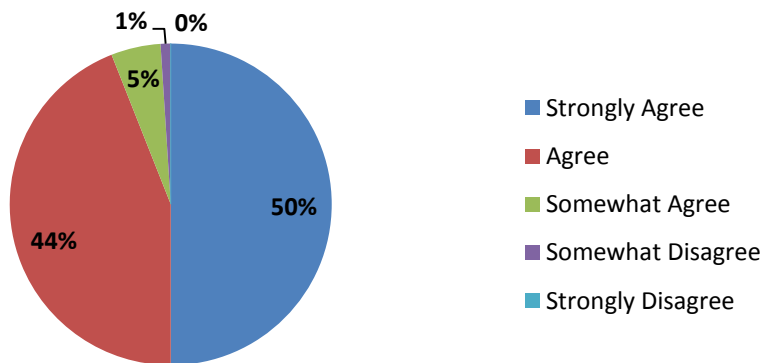
Overall Provision Ratings for HCBS/Habilitation



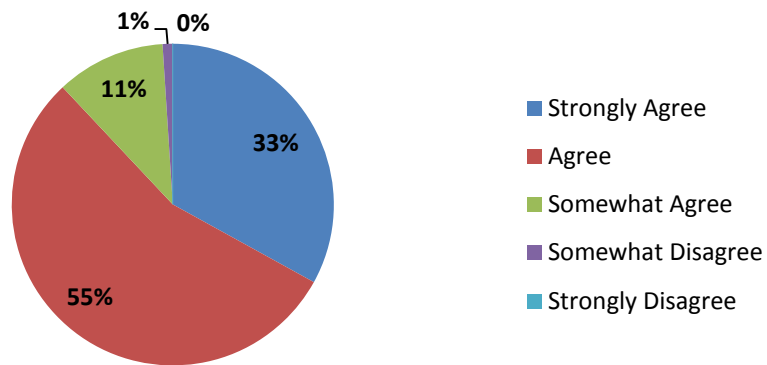
Mid-Step Services Quality Assurance

Mid-Step Services is another residential provider for Cherokee County. Their corporate office is located in Sioux City, Iowa which is in Woodbury County. Mid-Step Services oversees an HCBS Waiver home in Cherokee and also provides hourly SCL in the community. The outcomes below are that of all Mid-Step services and not just those in Cherokee. Overall, the services provided by Mid-Step are rated very high.

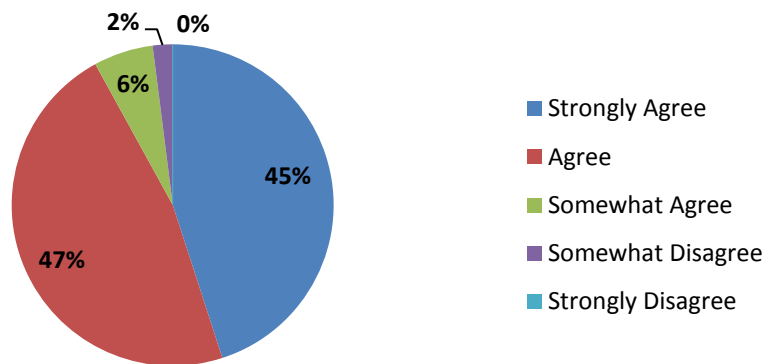
I am happy with the help that Mid-Step staff gives me.



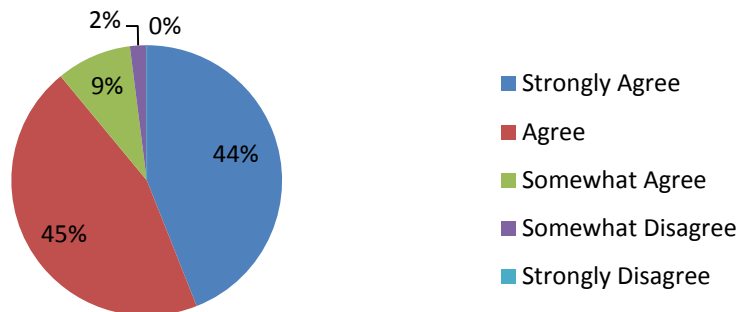
**I am happy with the amount of time
Mid-Step staff spends with me.**



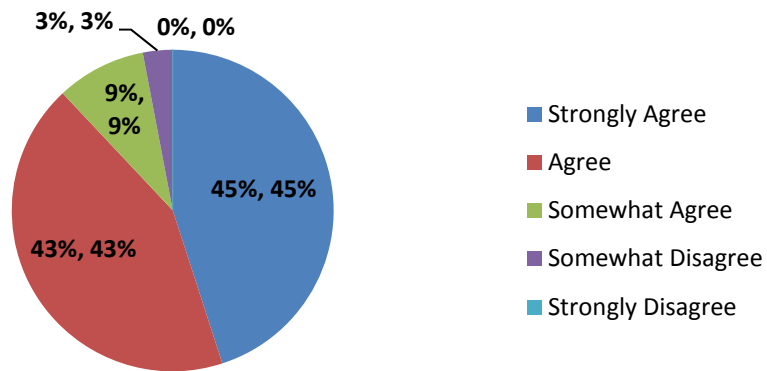
**I can tell Mid-Step staff really cares
for me by how they treat me.**



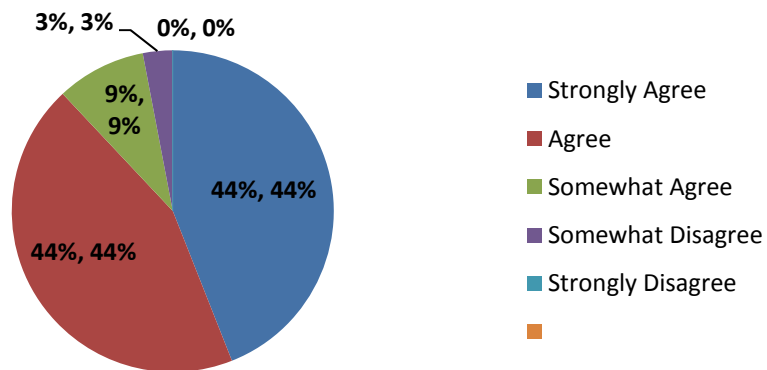
**Mid-Step staff don't tell other people
things about me that are private
without my permission**



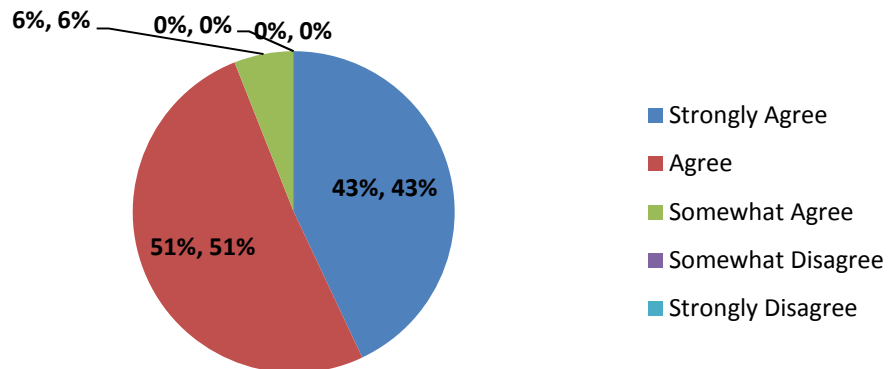
Mid-Step staff help me find things to do in my community.



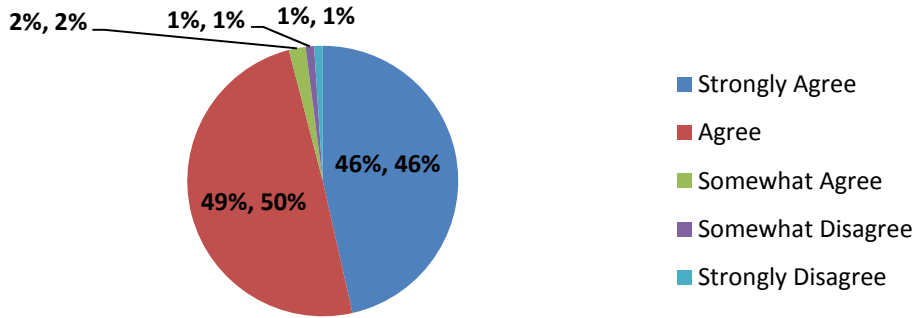
Mid-Step staff help me with my friendships



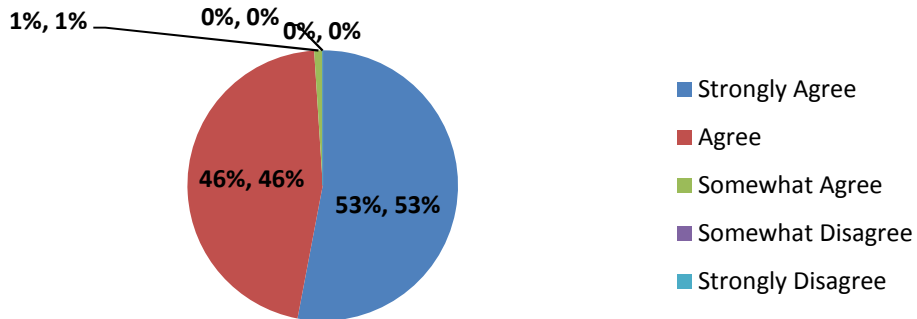
Mid-Step staff know what to do to help me with what I need



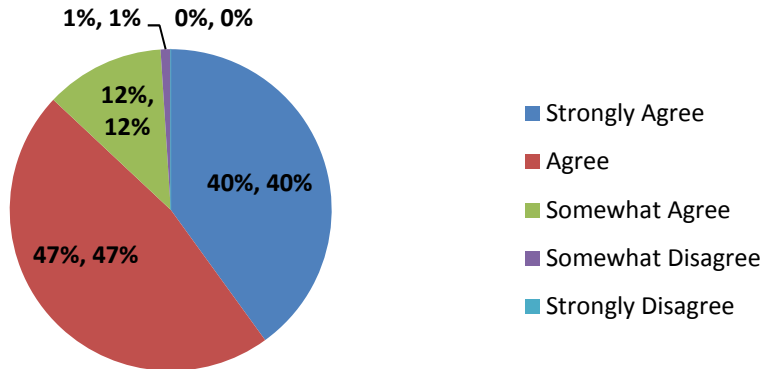
Mid-Step staff help me understand my rights and make sure others don't take advantage of me



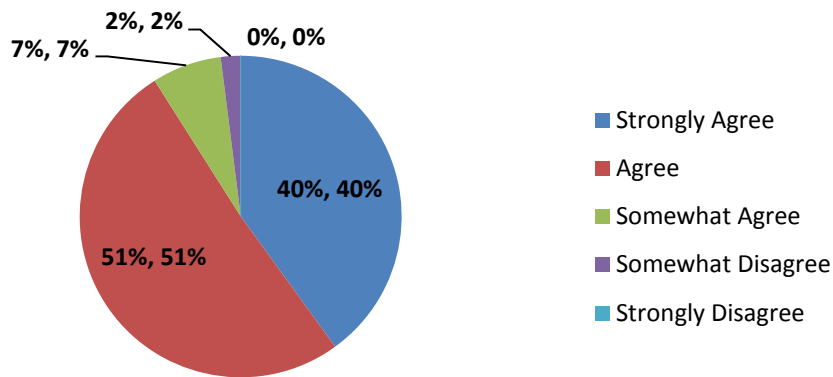
Mid-Step staff care about me being healthy and safe. I feel safe when I am with staff.



I get to help decide what my goals are going to be.



Mid-Step staff tell me what I need to know about my services.



The Cherokee County Community Services Director relies heavily on the Self-Determination Project Team to assist in quality assurance. The Cherokee County Coaches Team also provides excellent insight and input into the services offered in Cherokee County. The teams consist of providers, local citizens, family members, and consumers. Open communication allows for quality assurance checks in regards to funding, service delivery by providers, and Cherokee County Case Management services. Cherokee County Community Services also relies on the quality assurance surveys completed by providers specifically geared toward their services in order to keep from over-surveying individuals. Based on the information provided, Cherokee County will continue to focus on supporting providers within the county to assist people in living the least restrictive life they can. This includes increasing the number of individuals moving into community based employment from facility based employment as well as individual living in daily SCL services to hourly SCL. Best practices and outcome based results will continue to be evaluated. As mentioned in previous annual reports, the need for a Business Advisory Committee would be beneficial to the vocational services offered in Cherokee County, but there is not the support available to put this together. This goal will not be continued in the next 3 year strategic plan.

Cherokee County joined County Rate Information System (CRIS) in FY2007. The purpose of CRIS is to establish rate setting based on actual cost, standardized service definitions, standardized units of service, uniform classification of cost and consistent reporting to enable participating counties to negotiate appropriate reimbursement rates with covered MH/DD providers. CRIS also helps facilitate effective and efficient communication among participating counties and covered MH/DD providers through technical support and training. Cherokee County will make every effort to provide fair and reasonable rates to the providers in the county network.

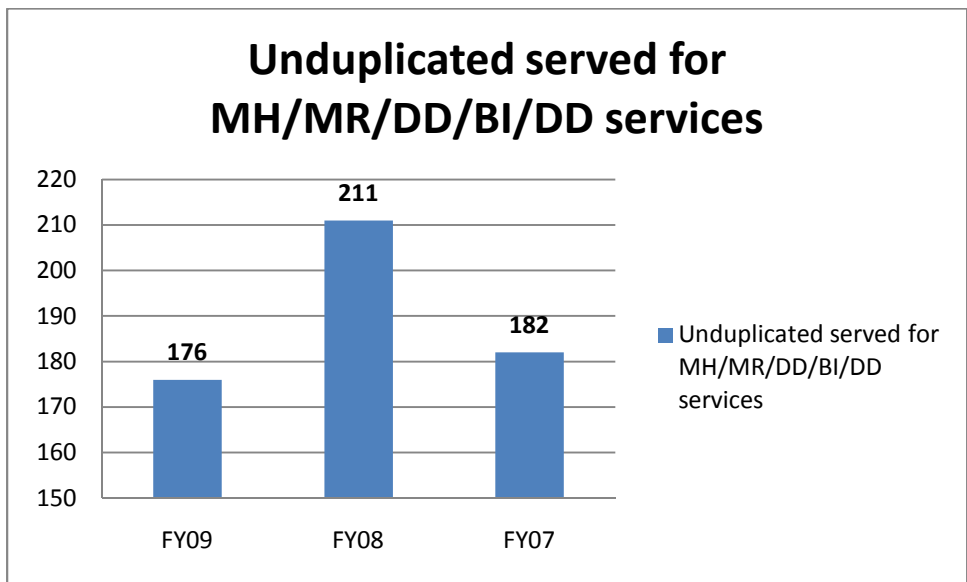
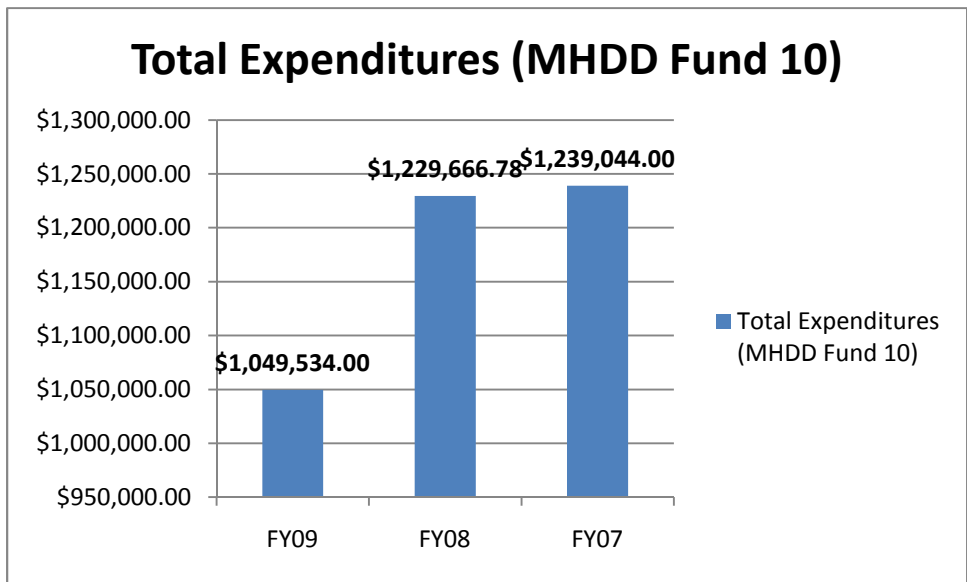
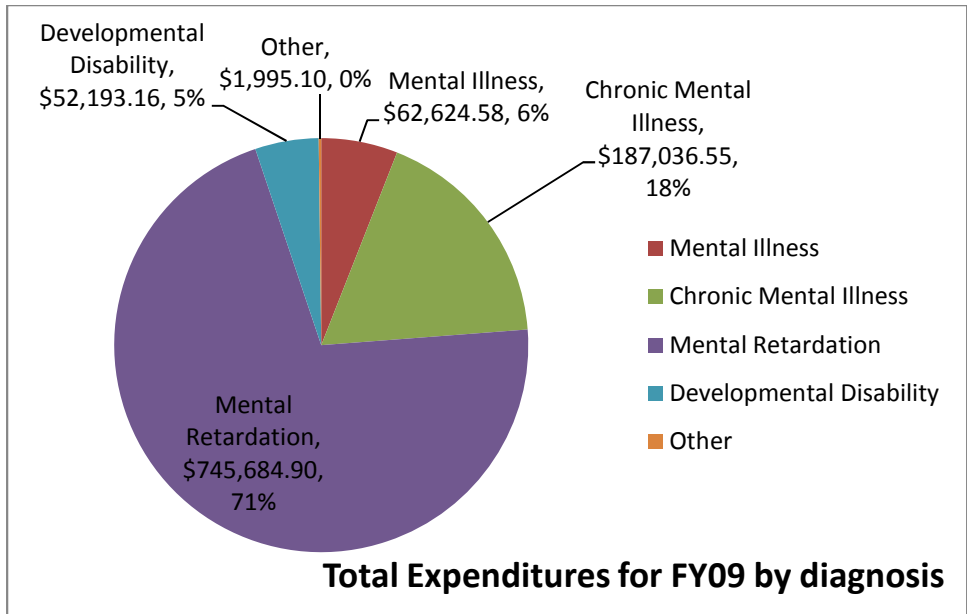
Waiting list information

During the course of FY07 Cherokee County did not maintain a waiting list. All services were fully funded with Support Team input after applicants met eligibility thresholds.

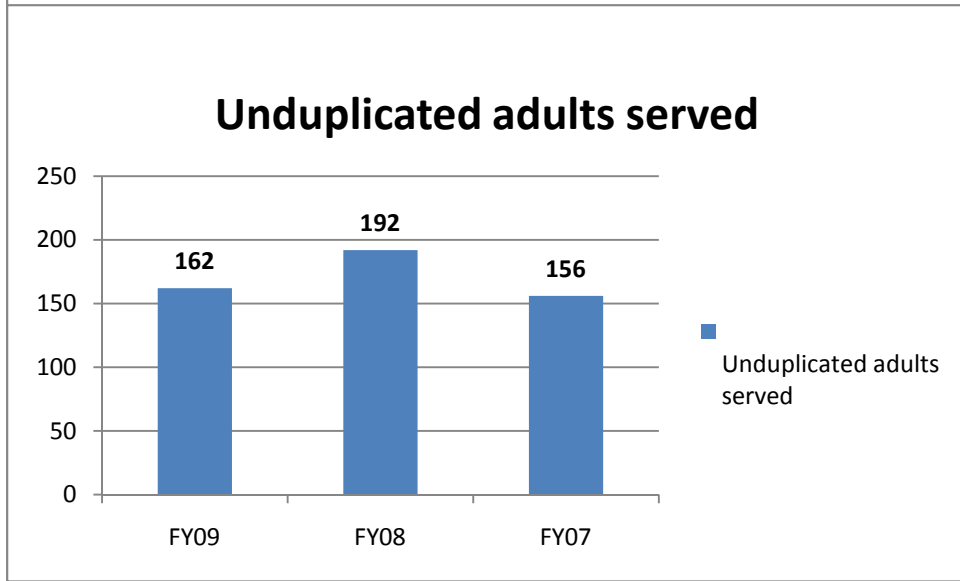
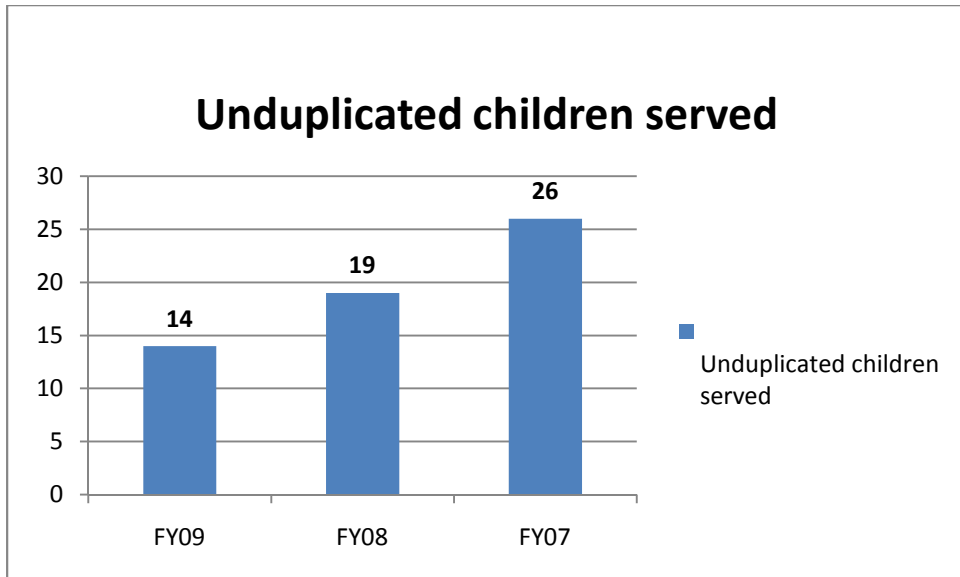
During the course of FY08 Cherokee County did not maintain a waiting list. All services were fully funded with Support Team input after applicants met eligibility thresholds.

During the course of FY09 Cherokee County did not maintain a waiting list. All services were fully funded with Support Team input after applicants met eligibility thresholds.

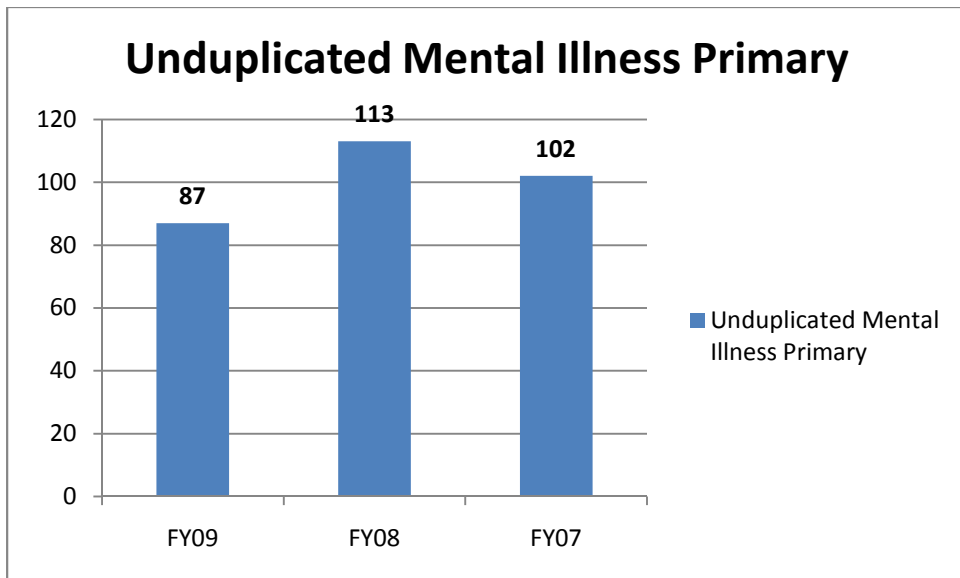
FY09 CoMis Aggregate Reports



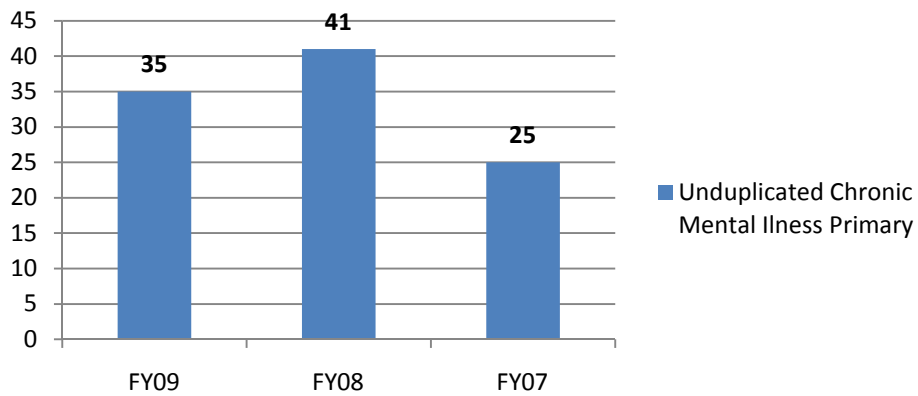
By Age



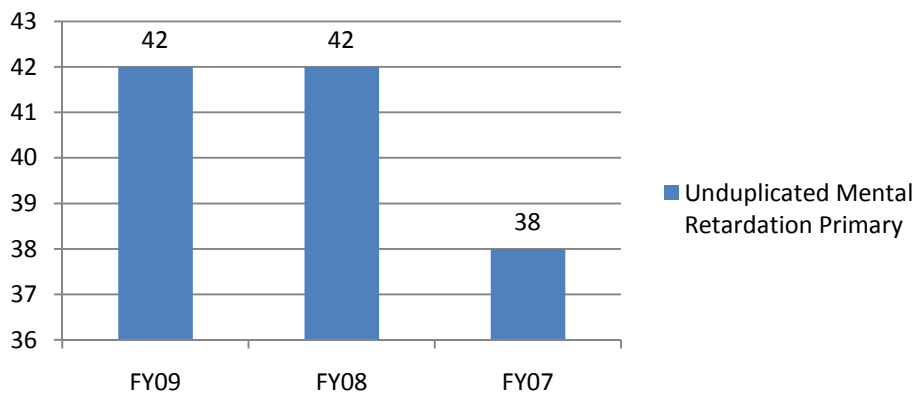
By Diagnosis



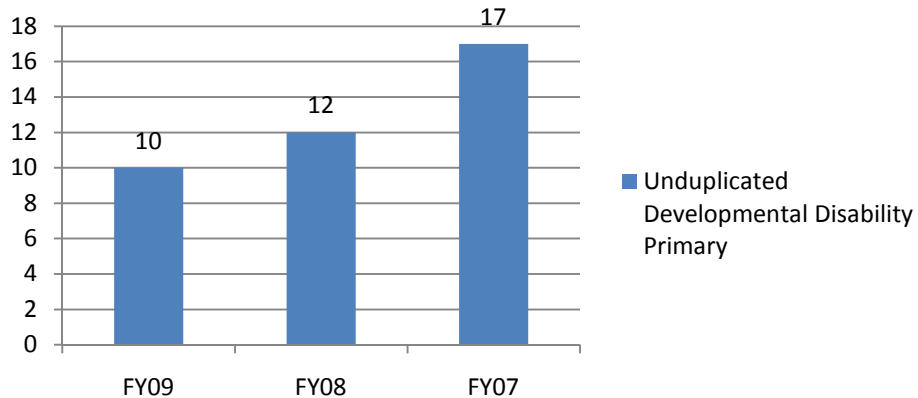
Unduplicated Chronic Mental Illness Primary



Unduplicated Mental Retardation Primary



Unduplicated Developmental Disability Primary



Attachment A

County provides services for people with disabilities

Thursday, June 21, 2007

Contributed by Lisa Langlitz, Community Services Director

Cherokee County Community Services Department serves as the entry point for accessing county mental health funding for persons with disabilities. Some of these disabilities include mental retardation, developmental disabilities, brain injury, and chronic mental illness. The Community Services Department is responsible for monitoring all county mental health functions in Cherokee County including review of applications, determining eligibility for funding, service planning and authorization of all mental health expenditures. Within our department, Cherokee County also employs a case manager who provides coordination and monitoring of services for individuals. In order to receive case management services through our department, a person must be Medicaid eligible and have a need for coordination of more than one service. Once a person is determined eligible for case management, the case manager will find agencies to provide the needed services.

Cherokee County Community Services works closely with agencies in Cherokee County to provide needed services for people who have disabilities. Services are determined based on individual need. It is our goal to help educate the community regarding mental health services in Cherokee County. If you would like us to speak to your organization, please contact us at 225-6700. Our offices are currently located in The Depot. Beginning July 1, we will be in our new location at 203 East Bow Drive, on the north side of Plains Area Mental Health Center.

Mid-Step Services' Cherry House Offers Cheerful Living

Cherry House

in Cherokee offers supervised community living and services to nine persons with mental disabilities who live independently with minimal support. Cherry House is the first facility of Mid-Step Services which began operations in Cherokee in 1978. After moving from its first site, today Cherry House is located a duplex at 794 & 798 N. 1st Street.

Mid-Step Services started as one home with six residents and four staff members in Cherokee 30 years ago. Mid-Step Services is an organization with 20 residential facilities and vocational programs serving the special needs of 300 individuals with mental and physical disabilities. There are 400 employees working in five communities. They provide services in homes, apartment buildings, vocational centers and programs in Cherokee, Lawton, Merville, Sergeant Bluff and Sioux City Iowa.

Mid-Step residents receive care in all levels of living ranging from independent living in neighborhood home settings like Cherry House to those who need specialized care in intermediate care homes.

The Cherry House staff of 10 employees is led by coordinator Nicole Campbell. "We have a great home here in Cherokee and are grateful for the local support we have received," says Campbell. "Thanks to generous volunteers, churches, donors and businesses, about 18 months ago we were able to transform a garage into an office area and gathering space to benefit our Cherry House residents."

For information on how to be a volunteer buddy to a resident or make donations to Cherry House, contact Campbell at Cherry House at 225-2233.

Achieving Success

Pride Group, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit corporation with locations in Cherokee, Le Mars, and Primghar. We serve individuals who are diagnosed mentally disabled. Our mission is to help the individuals we serve achieve an excellent quality of life within the least restrictive setting possible.

Our Programs are designed to help the consumers we serve manage their illness and/or disability, as well as helping them meet some specific goals that they set for themselves. The goal is outlined in their plan, then support staff implements activities and projects to help the consumer get closer to achieving their goals. All divisions offer individualized programming objectives that may include these services;

- Money Management
- Medication Management
- Nutrition
- Socialization
- Laundry Skills
- Assist with Application of Governmental Programs
- Meal Preparation
- Personal Hygiene
- Community Integration
- Work Training Programs
- Adult Basic Education
- Service Divisions in Cherokee include:

HCBS, (Home and Community Based Services) currently include the HCBS hourly, daily and Respite programs. The HCBS Daily Services are designed to assist and instruct the individual with daily living needs within the community setting of four people or less. The HCBS Hourly services are designed to assist and instruct the individual with daily living needs on an individual basis. The respite service is provided on a short term basis. It is designed to give families/caregivers relief from their duties with the consumer being served. This relief for the family may be enough to ensure that the consumer remains in the family home instead of an outside placement.

SCL, (Supported Community Living) Division provides support and stability for individuals who reside in apartments/houses. Services include personal assistance, daily living skill instruction, community integration and 24 hour emergency assistance.

West Cedar Division, Residential Care Facility for Persons with Mental Illness is an adult living arrangement licensed by the State of Iowa for 15 individuals. Food, shelter, personal development and social activities are provided for the consumers in a positive environment. The facility is staffed 24 hours a day by professional health care staff. West Cedar staff members work with and are supported by the local Mental Health Center personnel.

Lisa Shiley, Program Coordinator for The Pride Group wants this article to raise "Public Awareness" for Mental Health Services. "I would like the general public to understand that through proper treatment and management, persons with mental illness' and mental disabilities can be safely integrated within a community. Mental illness/disabilities are not prejudiced, they can affect anyone."

CCWS Provides Work Opportunities

Cherokee County Work Services, Inc. was the start for adult services to disabled citizens of Cherokee County 39 years ago this August and back then was known as Cherokee Training Center. Later there was a name change and we were called Cherokee County Work Activity Center. Today this facility provides work for the people they serve by doing packaging, document shredding, salvaging, small assembly, and laundry for area businesses. Cherokee County Work Services, Inc. also provides training and assistance for those whose goal is to find employment in the community.

Attachment B

Culture of support training given

Monday, August 13, 2007

By Mike Leckband, Staff Writer

Despite perceptions by many that people with disabilities require around-the-clock care, most only require a bit of support to live primarily independent lives.

Last week, members from the Cherokee County Work Services (CCWS), Mid Step Services and the Pride Group inc. met at the Cherokee County Community Services offices for a training seminar.

Speaking at the event was Mae Hingtgen, who works for the state of Iowa's HCBS (Home and Community Based Services). She is the former director of Cherokee County Community Services.

During this annual two-day training seminar, Hingtgen talked to area support givers on a variety of topics concerning the needs of their clients.

They also discussed problems that support givers face on a daily basis such as clients needing to be convinced of care needs they might not realize such as personal hygiene. There are frustrations support givers have resulting from the limitations they have in dealing with sometimes stubborn clients.

Many of the clients who utilize the services of the previously mentioned groups have many diverse needs including physical and mental.

Most of the community assumes that the support givers are the same as care givers. Even though the clients are on a very personal basis with their support givers, the agents are not full-time, around the clock care givers.

The goals of these agencies are to show their clients how to care for themselves and to offer support when needed. They coach clients to get into daily habits and build peer support based on the clients' individual needs.

Other examples of how to help their clients reach more independence are just little things that can be done around a client's home such as getting a stove for someone who enjoys cooking or providing community volunteer opportunities for clients who enjoy such activities.

It is not always the big stuff that makes a client independent, usually it is just a little thing that makes a difference in a client's life.

The purpose of the annual training was to review coaching principles and skills and how the coaches are being supported in their work and how they can support their organization in making changes.



Mae Hingtgen from the State's Home and Community Based Services met with area support givers for annual training. Photo by Mike Leckband [\[Click to enlarge\]](#)

Attachment C

Cherokee County has many mental health services

Friday, May 9, 2008

By Mike Leckband, Staff Writer

Members of the community are invited to learn more about the various mental health services provided in Cherokee County. On May 20, a question and answer session for the public will be held at the Cherokee Depot.

Cherokee County Person-Centered Coaches Team (CCPCCT) is a group of individuals who provide direct support to individuals in need of mental health services.

“There is a lot of misconception about Mental Health,” said Cherokee County Community Services Director Lisa Langlitz. “When it comes down to quality care it all comes down to choices. Choices and to have people have a say in their lives” add Langlitz. “We have choices to they should too.”

The CCPCCT helps give people choices like vocational training, independent living, respite services (going into the home to stay) and transportation. All so that people who have disabilities can be fully active members of the community.

The CCPCCT is made of individuals from Cherokee County Case Management, The Pride Group, Mid Step Services and the Cherokee County Work Services.

According to Langlitz a coach is someone who “gets the concepts of Person-Centered Thinking (Person-Centered Thinking is a training program for improving skills and improvement of quality of care). This person may or may not have been through formal training and really understands and employs respectful, supporting practices in working with people with disabilities.

Using Person-Centered Thinking skills will mean that people with disabilities will be more independent and be involved more with the community.

Using Person-Centered Thinking skills will mean that the lives of the disabled will improve and those providing services will likely develop the values needed to support people in having positive control over their lives.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and Langlitz invites the community to the lower level of the Cherokee Depot on May 20. There will be a question and answer session from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. so the community can learn more about the CCPCCT and all the agencies that serve Cherokee County. Getting involved is key to giving people with disability a chance to be part of the community.

Attachment D

Getting out the vote

Wednesday, October 15, 2008

County officials recently helped some local citizens prepare for the November 4 General Election.

County CPC Lisa Langlitz, County Auditor Kris Glienke, and Assistant Auditor Jody Hauptert provided the citizens with information about, as well as "hands on" practice in registering to vote and using the voting machine in "mock elections" held at Cherokee County Work Services and the Mental Health Institute on Wednesday Oct. 8th.

Those present who will need a ride to the polls were also able to sign up for transportation.



Getting ready for the election - Cherokee County CPC Lisa Langlitz (left) and County Auditor Kris Glienke (right) assist people with registering to vote and signing up for rides to the polls at Cherokee County Work Services. Photo by Dan Whitney.



Casting her vote Assistant Cherokee County Auditor Jody Hauptert (right) helps Lyn Johnson cast her mock ballot in the voting machine. Photo by Dan Whitney.

[\[Click to enlarge\]](#)

Straw Poll held in Cherokee

Wednesday, October 29, 2008

By Dan Whitney, Staff Writer

Cherokee County received a grant from the Iowans with Disabilities (ID Action) this year, and the county has used the funds for several activities related to the upcoming November 4th general election.

On Tuesday October 21, Cherokee County Community Service Director Lisa Langlitz co-ordinated a "straw poll" for members of the community, and Cherokee County Work Services graciously allowed the use of their facility. All present practiced voting, casting their "ballots" in the Presidential election.

The CCWS consumers also prepared a meal for participants, and several local candidates for office in the November 4 election accepted an invitation from the consumers and joined them for lunch.

Following lunch, the candidates spoke about why they were running for office.

I think everyone's ready for the "big day."

By the way, McCain won this poll, 18-17.



Casting her ballot - Dena Woltman (right), Cherokee County Case Manager, assists Lynn Smith as she casts her ballot in the recent "straw poll" vote in Cherokee County. Photo by Dan Whitney

[\[Click to enlarge\]](#)