

Community Health and Counseling Services

Annual Report to the Community

2023-2024

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded of the incredible impact that cooperative effort can achieve. Community Health and Counseling Services exemplifies the strength of collaboration, compassion, and dedication. Through our collective efforts, we have touched thousands of lives, forged significant partnerships, and discovered innovative methods to deliver essential services to communities across Maine.

Our work has always been defined by the outcomes we achieve together. Our organization exists to bring services that are needed and valued by individuals and communities. We only realize our mission by embracing the spirit of “ours.” It’s not just about what we do; it’s about what we accomplish together.

The power of “ours” begins within CHCS. CHCS does not exist without the incredible individuals who are a part of the organization. It is the effort of everyone that makes it possible to bring change to the thousands of individuals who receive our services. The needs of the people we serve is the reason for our existence. The partnership and support from the community is essential for us to provide our comprehensive array of services.

Our services reach individuals at every stage of life. Our compassionate team of professionals offers a diverse range of support, including assisting families in crisis, providing skilled home health care, educating students in specialized settings, supporting children in therapeutic foster care, delivering comprehensive behavioral health services, and offering end-of-life care through our hospice services.

CHCS was founded in 1883 as a collaborative among a group of churches. Their purpose for coming together was to address needs within the community. This has been the unwavering commitment of CHCS for 141 years. Thank you for your interest in CHCS. Your support is foundational to our existence and ability to be a resource to the communities we serve.

— Glenn D. Goodwin, Board President



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Governance

Community Health and Counseling Services is a non-profit corporation governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and Corporate Members.

The Board and Corporate Members represent a cross-section of interests throughout the CHCS service area. They are representatives of business, professional communities, and persons knowledgeable about the region's health care needs.

President: Glenn D. Goodwin

Vice President: John B. Miller

Second Vice President: Dr. Beatrice M. Szantyr

Treasurer: Angela T. Butler

Secretary: Judge Elizabeth O. LaStaiti

CHCS Mission

Community Health and Counseling Services will provide community health care services which are needed and valued by the communities and individuals we serve.

CHCS Vision

CHCS will be a leading community healthcare organization in the State of Maine and will be an employer of choice and foster a culture of excellence.



Corporate Members

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Mr. Brian Ahern | * The Rev. Dr. Susan Davies | * Ms. Ann Miller |
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Hospice Volunteer Program

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart.”

– Elizabeth Andrew

Health Services is excited to share information about **our new Hospice Volunteer Program**. If you have ever been touched by Hospice, you understand the value of its services. One of the services offered to each one of our hospice patients is a “Hospice Volunteer”. Since our Hospice program started in 1996; we have contracted with other hospice volunteer programs to provide this important service. In the fall of 2023, we were notified that our current hospice volunteer contract would be ending. At that time, we determined the need to develop our own internal CHCS Hospice Volunteer Program. Not only is this service valued by the patients and families in which we serve, but it is also a Condition of Participation under the Medicare Hospice Benefit.

What does it mean to be a Hospice Volunteer in home of a patient on Hospice?

Note from a bereaved family member of patient that had volunteer services:

“The Hospice nurses, aides, social workers, and volunteers were absolutely wonderful.

Not only doing their job but going above and beyond to support my family in a difficult time.

Special thank you to all.”

The Impact and Work of a Hospice Volunteer:

The Hospice Volunteer plays a key role in providing the needed hope, emotional support, and comfort to hospice patients and families.

As a hospice volunteer, you may be one of the best parts of a patient’s day. By providing patients with compassion, companionship, and a caring heart you will be making a difference.

When you volunteer, the rewards are many. Providing a person with the dignity, peace, and respect in which they deserve is life- fulfilling and meaningful volunteer work. You will not only be having a significant impact on the lives of individuals who are facing a terminal illness but also on the lives of their families and caregivers.

Some volunteers interact directly with patients and families while visiting them in their home while others prefer more clerical volunteering in the office. As a volunteer, you will have input on the types of volunteer tasks that best fit your skills as well as your compatibility with patients.

Some of the things a Volunteer can do with or for the patient and family include; taking a walk with the patient, reading to the patient, listening to music, playing cards or board games, viewing old photographs, sharing stories and current events, assisting with light household chores, providing respite support; staying with the patient so family member can get some much needed rest and so much more.



Hospice Volunteer Program—Continued

A Hospice Volunteer Story:

Orson is a 74-year-old man that lives in a small trailer house in southern Washington county. He lives alone and is now receiving the hospice benefit through CHCS. He is small man, who has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, with metastasis to his bones. He finds it very difficult to eat or leave his home due to extreme anxiety. He is petrified of medications and possible side effects since he lives alone. When we were first introduced to Orson, we eased in the volunteer Wendy. She spends her time with him meditating, talking on the phone for hours, and works with Orson to calm his nerves with distraction. She asked him one day if he would ever want to go out for coffee? He hesitantly accepted her invitation. Wendy and Orson set out on a drive that cold February afternoon grabbing a hot coffee and cruising around the small village and nearby towns. They drove and stopped by the fishing piers that he helped build as a young boy. The cemetery, where generations of his family are buried under the snow covered, frozen earth. Then passing and pausing while Orson recalled his long days as a clam digger. He shared stories when he was a tax collector in the town. Wendy listened and absorbed all the stories and life reviews. The companionship and kindness of Wendy gives Orson that additional one-on-one emotional support and friendship that would be missing without her volunteerism.

A Glimpse into our Current Hospice Volunteers:

Our longest standing hospice clerical volunteer is Avis Cander.

Avis has been volunteering for CHCS' Hospice Program on a weekly basis for over 3 years. She has been an incredible support to our hospice team and to our program's central operations, we wish to recognize Avis for her many years of service and the volunteering of her time. Thank you Avis we adore and appreciate you!

We are also extremely excited to introduce our newly recruited direct service/patient volunteers: **Colby Hamilton and Claire Canfield.**

And finally, no program would be successful without supportive resources and oversight. We have assigned **Wanda Witmer as our program's Hospice Volunteer Coordinator.** Wanda is an LCSW and has been with our hospice program for 8 years. You can reach out to Wanda at 922-4600 Ext 6466 if you wish to learn more about our program.

Recruitment for additional volunteers is still needed; therefore, if you or someone you know has an interest in becoming a hospice volunteer please reach out as there are many ways you can help support an individual who is facing a terminal illness.

Sincerely,

Helena Mailloux

Director of Quality, Hospice and Home Health Services



Avis Cander

Community Rehabilitation Services

Community Rehabilitation Services (CRS) are incredibly valuable services that support the development of the necessary skills for living in the community that promote recovery and community inclusion. These services help individuals transitioning from a higher level of care, such as a group home, State hospital, or being released from a corrections facility. The goal is to help individuals develop and maintain daily living skills to function as independently as possible in the community.

CRS is a combination of clinical case management and rehabilitation services. CRS uses a teaching base approach, combined with modeling, cueing, and coaching. This service provides support with medication administration, making and maintaining appointments with providers, developing coping skills, strengthening daily living skills including personal care, homemaking skills, budgeting, and community integration.

CRS service can be provided in an individual's home or temporary living quarters, such as a shelter. CRS services are available seven days a week from 8:00am to 9:00pm. These services are provided to adults eighteen years of age and older who have MaineCare, a primary mental health diagnosis, a LOCUS assessment level of four or greater, and have had a prior authorization approved by DHHS.

CRS currently has a team consisting of seven Community Rehabilitation Workers, two Case Managers, and one Program Supervisor. The supervisor, Vernon Wilbur, is the most veteran staff member on the team with over eighteen years' experience in the program.

“It has taken many years of community support developing a strong supportive program that nourishes growth and rehabilitation with folks living daily with mental illness in the community. The CRS program has always worked to meet client's needs, adapting to what each person might need to maintain independence.”

With Vern at the helm and a team of passionate, creative, and hard-working staff, CRS is soaring to new heights, with constant referrals and opportunities to expand services to many more individuals in our community!



Children's Urgent Care Walk-in Clinic

In November of 2023 we opened the Children's Behavioral Health Urgent Care Clinic Pilot through our Cedar Street office from the hours of 12:00pm-8:00pm Monday through Friday, increasing to Saturdays 12:00pm-8:00pm in April of 2024. The program is staffed with a clinical supervisor/clinician, and currently three full time, and three part time staff. The clinic serves all children and their families up to the age of eighteen. To date the clinic has served more than **100 new clients**, with many being seen for more than one encounter.

The purpose of this pilot is to divert families from utilizing the emergency department, and to be able to have their needs met timely and efficiently in a community-based setting. Since opening, the clinic has served acute clients who previously frequented emergency rooms for behavioral health needs. Many of these have reported that since utilizing the clinic their child has been able to stay out of the emergency department largely from the support provided by this program. **During the last quarter, staff asked the 40 new families served if they would have gone to the emergency department if they had not known about this program; out of the families that responded 72% stated yes.**

We currently are providing the service to **46 open clients**. During the last quarter **91%** of children remained home with no emergency department or inpatient unit stays during the service, **92%** maintained at home while awaiting a higher level of care placement, **98%** discharged home from the clinic without going to the emergency department or an inpatient unit directly from the building, and **82%** received referrals to external providers.

Clinic staff support families by providing a safe space for their children to have their behavioral health needs met. When a family comes to the clinic they are greeted by crisis trained staff members who triage the reason that brought them to the clinic and provide supportive verbal de-escalation if/as needed. The family is offered support, crisis assessment and planning, safety planning, referrals to community providers, coping strategies, parenting skills, and follow up short term clinical sessions as appropriate. When a child meets inpatient level of care, if they are able to maintain safe in the community, the child can be presented inpatient from the comfort of their own home. Families have reported they appreciate the non-medical atmosphere coming to the Cedar Street office. They also note they are grateful that they can bring other family members, external providers, or anyone else they see fit as a support to the site.

When families were asked if they were satisfied with the service **33.33%** agreed and **66.67%** strongly agreed. When asked if clinic staff really listened and provided support to families **30%** agreed with this statement and **70%** strongly agreed. As this program continues to grow, we look forward to how we can continue to best serve the families in our community.



Children's Crisis Clinic

Available Monday – Friday 12pm-8pm

Closed on Agency Holidays

(207) 922-4600 extension 6444

Up to age 18



**Community Health and
Counseling Services**

Safe Harbour Adult Crisis Residential Unit

The Thomas T. Lynn Safe Harbour Crisis Stabilization Unit is an 8-bed facility located in Brewer, Maine, which provides short-term crisis stabilization for adults ages 18 and older. Named after Community Health and Counseling Services' former Crisis Director, Tom Lynn, this incredibly designed unit represents Tom's passion for crisis and his leadership in establishing a program that provides support, hope, and connection for those experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Safe Harbour's value system is rooted in the belief that we are simply humans helping humans, and our goal is to support people on their journey to healing.

Safe Harbour is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with qualified crisis residential specialists, who are available to offer stabilization support, administer medications, prepare healthy meals, assist with making referrals and connecting to resources, and to teach coping skills. Additional services offered include 24/7 licensed clinical support, nursing consultation and care, as well as on site administrative and clinical leadership Monday through Friday. This team of caring individuals assists people in self-advocacy, recovery, and stabilization, empowering them to focus on renewing their strength, reconnecting with supports, and reaching their desired goals.

The best indicators for the impact this incredible service has on people are the notes left behind, comments made, and surveys shared while they are at Safe Harbour. Here are a few of the messages:

"I was greatly disillusioned about Mental Health services and resources when I walked through the doors my first day. However, I was greeted with compassion and kindness. I have gained great benefit from my stay and found the numerous resources helpful, and I specifically enjoyed having access to art supplies and the coping skills toolbox. Thank you again for each and every one of you [for all you] do in service to hope and healing."

"This place has always been the best therapy for me. I have time and space away from whatever is bothering me, allowing me to process feelings properly."

"Very kind staff, very helpful and understanding. Such a safe environment, I leave feeling relaxed. It's a safe haven."

Safe Harbour IS a "safe haven" for people to find the strength within themselves, renewing their spirit and finding hope again.



Thomas T. Lynn Safe Harbour

OUR Locations



Augusta



Caribou



Bangor



Dover-Foxcroft



Ellsworth



Houlton



Lincoln



Machias



Skowhegan



Stillwater Academy

Caught Ya Winners!

"I believe that one of the highest compliments we can receive as a professional comes from recognition by our peers. Our "Caught Ya" program was implemented for this very purpose. It is wonderful to read the submissions and learn about our incredible team members. Many of the submissions for the past quarter identified staff who went above and beyond during a period of great uncertainty, fear and change. Thank you to the staff who made the submissions, thank you to the staff who were recognized, and thank you to all CHCS staff who make this an amazing organization. "

- Dale Hamilton, Executive Director

Quarter 1: The APS Data Entry Team (Catherine Emerson, Deb Dodge, Kayla Guptill, Penny Walton, Penny Webster, Cindy White, Vicki Newman, Danica Martin, Sara Michaud, Steven Lawton, Kristy Jones, Tabatha Carasiti, and Beth Burns) and Cindy Penny were nominated by Lisa Pelkey. Lisa said "A huge shout out to the entire APS DE Team and Cindy Penney for your amazing teamwork and help covering critical tasks during a vacation leave, and for all coming together to ensure that authorizations were obtained for our MH services in a timely and efficient manner. This was a very challenging time for everyone, but you all rocked it!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!"

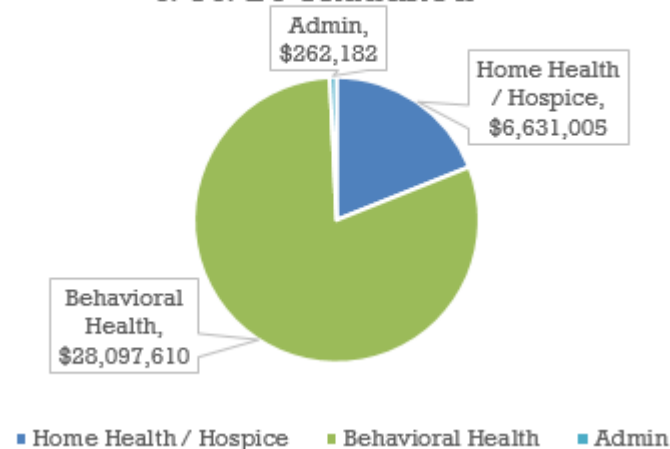
Quarter 2: Nikki Martin, Educational Technician III at Stillwater Academy, was nominated by Bruce Benson for "being a role model for other staff in showing determination and consistency with their primary student. Great for team morale!"

Quarter 3: Kevin Hill, Maintenance Technician, was nominated by Monica Gray. Monica said "I had previously expressed to Maintenance that I would like one of the lights that goes over your desk, underneath your hutch. This would help a lot with lighting on my desk when working on projects - however they stated they didn't have any sitting around and they would be expensive to get, so if I just got a lamp that would be more cost effective. A couple days later, Kevin came over and he had been up in Lincoln where they were getting rid of some of the desks/hutches and he had found 2 of these lights, and they were going to be destroyed/thrown out, however he knew I had interest in these. So he grabbed them and brought them back. Installing this light for me right away. How thoughtful to remember this request. Kevin goes out of his way when he can to help all of us out with our multitude of requests and deserves many thanks!"

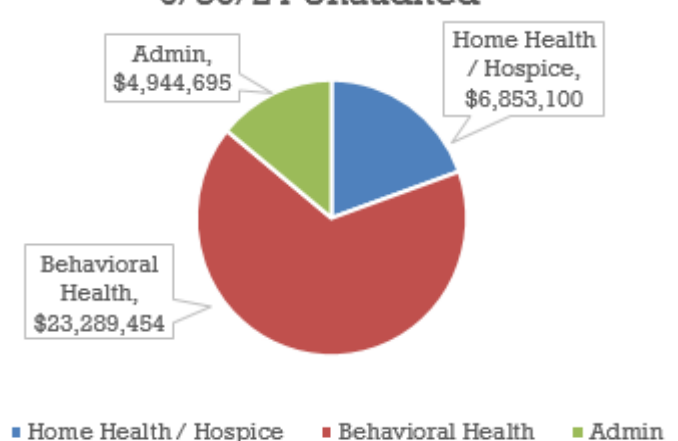
Quarter 4: Kathy Wing, supervisor of the Husson Avenue Group Home, on being our Caught Ya Winner for this quarter! Kathy was nominated by Karen Wheelock for "taking the initiative to sift through the new regulations and create cheat sheets and crosswalks from the old regs to the new regs, helping the residential programs prepare our units for Licensing. Kathy is remarkable about organizing and creating tools that can benefit the programs, which in turn enables A+ reviews from OBH. Thank you, Kathy, for going above and beyond for us!"

Financial Metrics

Revenues by Department FY Ended
6/30/24 Unaudited



Expenses by Department FY Ended
6/30/24 Unaudited



Thank you.

Donations

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Fracis T. & Lousie T. Nichols
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Orono Classmates

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Eva Newenham

Janice Sargent Mitchell

Mary Seward

Michael Eastman

Bess Gove

Andrew Kreitzer

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*(Those who have remem-
bered us in their wills)*

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