

LifeWays Service Activity Statistics for Hillsdale County

Recent U.S. Census Data indicates that approximately **46,212** persons reside in Hillsdale County; **7,643** of those are Medicaid recipients and **5,429** are uninsured (total of **13,072**).

When the national prevalence rates of mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance use disorders are applied to the number of Medicaid and uninsured residents in Hillsdale County, we can estimate that **2,400** persons may be in need of specialty mental health services and supports through LifeWays.

In fiscal year 2009, **1,400** Hillsdale residents received services through the LifeWays Provider Network. **72%** received Medicaid funded services and **18%** received General Fund supported services. This indicates an estimated **1,000** unserved persons in our community at the current funding levels.

LifeWays continues to see an increase in the number of new persons presenting for services each year (around **2,750** persons per year). On average, **30%** are uninsured and have a severe enough illness to qualify for CMH services per the Michigan Mental Health Code.

While statistics indicate that the demand for specialty mental health services and supports continues to increase, funding constraints are making it difficult to supply what is needed for our community.



Providing Community Mental Health Services to Those Most in Need

Our Priority Population

Per the Michigan Mental Health Code Act 258 of 1974¹, Community Mental Health Organizations are required to serve individuals with a severe mental illness or disability *regardless of their ability to pay*.

An individual cannot be denied a service that is medically necessary² because of an inability to pay or lack of insurance. However, many CMHs in Michigan have implemented Waiting Lists for the uninsured due to the inability to serve under limited resources.

Mental Health Needs are Rising

The national and statewide economic crisis is causing many environmental stressors, which is increasing dependence on public health services.

The Michigan joblessness rate has increased significantly from **7.1%** in 2007 to **14.0%** in 2009³. Job loss results in more uninsured persons, more cases of major depression and severe adjustment disorders, which increases the need for public mental health services.

Over a 4-year period (FY 2005 to FY 2008), Michigan has experienced a **9.4%** increase in the number of persons served by the public CMH system. Over the same period, LifeWays, the Jackson and Hillsdale County CMH, experienced an **18.3%** increase in the number of persons served.

In 2008, LifeWays saw an *unprecedented* increase of **1,000** new uninsured persons seeking services, the largest increase in the last decade.

According to the Michigan Surgeon General's 2010 Health Status Report⁴, "**When left untreated, the consequences for individuals diagnosed with mental disorders, for their families, and for society are staggering:** distress, unnecessary disability, unemployment, the disruption of family life, social isolation, substance abuse, incarceration, homelessness, suicide, and wasted lives." Additionally, "Mental health issues...are more prevalent than statistics may indicate."

The Role of LifeWays

LifeWays is primarily funded by Medicaid and General Fund dollars to provide specialty mental health services and supports to Medicaid and indigent persons that meet medical necessity criteria for service.

General Fund dollars are used to serve the immediate need of the uninsured, provide brief recovery-focused treatment and link them to benefits (such as Medicaid) and community resources.

CMHs in Michigan like LifeWays have implemented many cost-effective evidence-based programs and services to provide the desired treatment outcomes for consumers.

Per to the Michigan Surgeon General's report, "Evidence-based treatments and programs...are effective in reducing symptoms and promoting the restoration of a meaningful and productive life." "Michigan's public mental health system was among the first to offer these types of services to support the recovery and the individual's inclusion in the community."

How Will LifeWays Be Affected by Future Budget Cuts?

Without proper funding to serve our priority population (Medicaid and the uninsured), **treatments that are effective in preventing and managing chronic illnesses will be reduced or cut.**

- **600** uninsured consumers would be turned away if LifeWays received a \$1,000,000 (20%) cut to the FY 2010 General Fund.
- Community-based treatment services and residential programs that are designed to help consumers become independent may be reduced or eliminated. Elderly and disabled persons who live on their own may lose their independence.
- More people will not receive the preventive care that is necessary to keep them from requiring a psychiatric hospitalization. Not only will hospital admissions increase, but the length of stay may also increase due to lack of community resources.
- Without the ability to provide low cost preventative services, the overall cost to provide mental health services will increase.

¹Courtesy of Legislative Council, State of Michigan, May 2009, www.legislature.mi.gov

²Medically Necessary: A term used to describe one of the criteria that must be met in order for a beneficiary to receive public mental health services, indicating that the specific service is appropriate and necessary for the treatment of the diagnosis and is expected to improve functioning.

³State of Michigan Labor Market Information, April 2009, www.milmi.org

⁴Michigan Surgeon General 2010 Health Status Report, *Healthy Michigan 2010*, April 2004