



Health & Human Services Agenda Request

3A
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: December 23, 2024

Title of Item: Aitkin County Local Advisory Council (LAC) for Mental Health

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA	Action Requested:	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested	
<input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA		<input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY		<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>

Submitted by: Paula Arimborgo	Department: H&HS
---	----------------------------

Presenter (Name and Title): Rebecca Person, Behavioral Health Supervisor	Estimated Time Needed: 20 minutes
--	---

Summary of Issue:
A presentation of the Aitkin County Local Advisory Council (LAC) for Mental Health

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Recommended Action/Motion:

Financial Impact:
Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No
What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$
Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*



AITKIN COUNTY LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The goal of Local Advisory Councils (LACs) is to utilize the knowledge of diverse groups of individuals in order to improve mental health services for Minnesotans

Aitkin County Board Presentation 12/23/24

HISTORY OF LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCILS (LACS)

- Minnesota's Comprehensive Mental Health Act of 1987 and Minnesota Comprehensive Children's Mental Health Act of 1989 required that each county in Minnesota establish a Local Mental Health Advisory Council (LAC).
- The intention of these laws were to ensure the individuals with lived experiences and their families were provided a voice regarding mental health services within their communities.
- LAC's are required to include individuals with lived mental health experience and their families, mental health professionals as well as representatives from local mental health service programs to ensure a variety of perspectives on mental health issues and services.

IMPACTS OF LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCILS

- Active and effective LAC's lead to better mental health service provision for community members.
- LAC members can share personal experiences which can inform service providers about gaps in services or how to improve existing services.
- LAC members are empowered and have a voice in working to improve the current service provision.
- LACs can provide mental health expertise to the community.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCILS

- Minnesota Statutes 245.466; Subd. 5 and 245.4876, Subd. 5 which outline the responsibilities of LACs require that county boards establish LACs.
- Ideally, the majority of LAC's (at least 51%) are made up of individuals with lived experience and family members.
- LACs meet at least quarterly to review current mental health services.
- LACs must provide annual reports of unmet mental health needs/services to the county board.
- Coordinate its evaluation and recommendations regarding local mental health services with the state mental health advisory council.
- Create annual Work Plans which include initiatives and timeframes to address unmet mental health needs within the community, improve mental health awareness and complete outreach.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATES

- Aitkin County is part of Region 5+ Regional LAC. This LAC is made up of Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena Counties.
- Aitkin County's and Regional LACs meet every other month providing hybrid options for in person or virtual attendance.
- During 2024, the Regional LAC completed their By-Laws, which are being sent to County Directors for review and signature.
- Regional and Local LACs working on a joint logo to create cohesiveness and increase awareness of LACs.
- Aitkin County's LAC is currently focused on expanding community involvement and participation.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATES CONTINUED


- Petals for Peace, Resource Center/Drop In Center is opening 1/6/25 and has agreed to host Aitkin County LAC meetings.
- Aitkin County's LAC oversees an annual awareness campaign during Mental Health Month, which is held in May. Over the past few years, the LAC has coordinated with local and regional resources/service providers to gather information which was placed in buckets and dispersed throughout the county. These buckets included wristbands, magnets, pens, fidget spinners, wallet cards, hand sanitizers, stickers—everyday items that could create name/logo recognition when used within the community.
- Aitkin County's LAC participated in the Suicide Prevention and Awareness last summer.
- Aitkin County's LAC had a booth at the County Fair providing a survey for community members to complete regarding gaps in services.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL FUNDING AND EXPENSES

- Regional and Local LACs are provided funding from the Region 5+ Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI), through state grant funds.
- Each county is responsible to oversee and manage the expenditure of these funds.
- Regional and Local LACs provide stipends and travel reimbursement to officers of the LACs. Within the Region, there is discussion about consistent reimbursement for officers as well as meeting attendees to reduce financial and travel barriers to promote participation.
- Aitkin County has used these funds to pay for Mental Health Awareness Month expenses, ie buckets, reimburse officers, community event expenses and currently local logo.

LAST THOUGHTS...

- Aitkin County's LAC has been around for decades with varying degrees of success, but always with the goal of ensuring our community members with lived mental health experience have a voice and access to services.
- During and since COVID, there has been a renewed effort by the state to support and promote awareness about LACs as the statewide gaps in mental health services were exacerbated by the pandemic. Pursuing community input and involvement is the appropriate avenue to ensure all perspectives are being heard and participating in the solution.
- Regional and Local LAC's welcome any interested county board members to attend their meetings.

- 
- Questions or comments please contact:
 - Rebecca Person at rebecca.person@aitkincountymn.gov or 218-927-7200
 - Reina Irvine at reina.Irvine@aitkincountymn.gov or 218-9270-7200.
 - Thank you.