

# **Older Adult and People with Disabilities Behavioral Health Initiative Report to the Senior Services and Disability Services Advisory Committees**

## *Summary from the Statewide Survey Data and What We are Doing Locally to Improve Consumer Outcomes*

August 2018

The Older Adult/People with Disabilities Behavioral Health Initiative (OABHI) began collecting data from stakeholders highlighting stakeholder's opinions about the current behavioral health system for older adults and people with disabilities who have behavioral health needs. The data describes progress towards meeting the three key goals of the initiative:

1. **Collaboration and Coordination** among community partners with the intention of improving the local behavioral health system for older adults and people with disabilities who have behavioral health needs;
2. **Complex Case Consultation**, a discussion with the specialist and one or more direct service providers with the express purpose of resolving problems or concerns about the care of and treatment plan for an older adult or person with disabilities who have behavioral health needs; and
3. **Workforce Development**, which is conducting, hosting, or planning a workforce development training, or community education event.

### **Highlights from the Statewide Survey**

The shares of stakeholders who participated regularly in discussions with Specialists about **collaboration and coordination** of services and those who never participated increased between 2017 and 2018. About half of the consultations (53%) involved consumers with **five or more issues**.

The number of no participation went from 18% to 25% and for those who regularly participate went from 38% to 43%.

Identified barriers to collaboration and coordination were identified as "old resentments between agencies getting in the way of progress" (increased from 37% to 49% between 2017 and 2018), and stakeholders reported that several other projects that compete for their time and attention (reported by 73% of stakeholders), as barriers to completing the survey.

With regards to **complex case consultations (CCC)**, there has been an increase in the numbers of stakeholders who report participating in a CCC, and 89% of the stakeholders identify the CCCs as either somewhat successful or pretty successful.

A total of 763 **workforce development** events have been held between July 2016 and March 2018 covering a wide range of topics from system navigation and resources, to assessing, and intervening with such conditions as hoarding, anxiety, and depression. Over 75% of stakeholders reported that their agencies were supportive of using the knowledge and skills they gained from trainings, provided opportunities to discuss or explore practice changes, provided opportunities to share information with other staff, and made it possible for them to attend trainings.

### **Barriers to Improving Consumer Outcomes**

The top five challenges in communities when it comes to serving older adults and people with disabilities are: lack of affordable housing; lack of services in long-term care; providers not accepting Medicare; lack of programs for older adults and people with disabilities; and lack of in-home services.

Underserved populations include Veterans; people with substance abuse disorders; those living independently; those populations who combined live in either memory care units, adult foster homes, or who have early/mild behavioral health issues; and others.

### **Perceived Progress toward Better Consumer Outcomes**

According to stakeholders who responded to the surveys:

- Older adults and people with disabilities, and/or family members are increasingly seeking advice from direct service or primary care providers to better understand their signs and symptoms;
- Complex Case Consultations are resulting in more successful outcomes; and
- Communities are recognizing older adults and people with disabilities who have behavioral health needs as a priority population.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

Since the OAHBI's inception in 2015, Specialists and their community partners have made considerable progress in building capacity to better serve this population. Stakeholder engagement is improving throughout the State, training opportunities have expanded broadly, and many more people with complex care needs are being reviewed by Specialists and others who have the needed expertise. However, resources continue to be scarce and barriers persist to engaging all community partners in the work of improving services. Success will require sustained efforts at the State, regional, and local levels.

### **Activities at the Local Level: Highlights from OABHI in Linn, Benton, Lincoln Counties**

Your two OABHI Specialists working in OCWCOG's tri-County Region are Helen Beaman (Linn and Benton counties) and Marie Laper (Lincoln County).

The stakeholder survey as well as on-going assessments of the communities served and work with key stakeholders inform OCWCOG's work. The following are goals for the coming year, which began in July, and represent most, but not all activities and services that will be provided.

### **Collaboration and Consultation**

OCWCOG has observed that the high rate of staff turnover or changes in key positions with community partners that impacts collaboration and consultation with those partners. With each change, there is some level of re-educating with those individuals in their role, about OABHI, as well as the activities and opportunities available for collaboration and consultation.

Across the State there is turnover in the OABHI Specialists positions. It is a strength in OCWCOG's Region that OCWCOG's Specialists have remained the same, which has helped us to sustain key relationships, while building new ones among stakeholders.

The goals in Linn and Benton Counties for this area include:

- To continue partnering with community agencies/organizations and fostering meaningful collaboration between agencies who share consumers, and who's services typically impact consumer care coordination.

For Lincoln County:

- To build relationships in South Lincoln County, and explore ways to serve the more rural areas of the County; and
- To continue to build bridges between key stakeholders (OCWCOG, Mental Health, Samaritan Primary Care, North Lincoln and Newport Hospitals, law enforcement, and key social service agencies), and reduce resentments and increase awareness of how service providers can work together to better serve these populations.

### **Complex Case Consultations**

The goals for Linn and Benton Counties for this area include:

- To continue providing all major aging/social service and mental health agencies, as well as local healthcare providers in complex case consultation; and
- Increase case consultations among local Law Enforcement and EMS agencies.

For Lincoln County:

- To continue to grow the number of participating agencies and number of complex cases reviewed by the Lincoln County Collaborative Older Adult Solutions Team (Linc-COAST), and explore whether a second team needs to be established for North Lincoln County; and
- Increase the number of case consultations by 50% in 2018-2019.

### **Workforce Education**

The goals for Linn and Benton Counties in this area include:

- To continue providing several monthly training events to a variety of professional service agencies/organizations on a variety of topics on healthy aging, mental/behavioral health, and issues faced by people with disabilities;
- To continue providing several monthly community education events at local senior centers and living communities;
- To begin offering training on dementia care to private care communities; and
- To continue delivering Mental Health First Aid trainings to the community and a variety of professional groups, as well as offering the EMS MHFA curriculum to local EMS agencies.

For Lincoln County:

- To host a 1 ½ day conference in October for professionals and services providers of key topics related to older adult behavioral health needs and issues;
- To increase the number of workforce educational activities to at least ten for the 2018-2019 fiscal year; and
- To provide at least ten community education activities at new venues in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

### **Additional Activities for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year**

#### Linn-Benton Counties:

- To continue serving on a variety of advisory boards, steering committees, advocacy and professional workgroups to promote the advancement/development of mental health services in the field of aging and disability services;
- To continue participating in all relevant community events designed for information and health promotion among the populations of older adults and people with disabilities (i.e. community health fairs, mental health fairs, Older American's Day event, Veteran Stand-down, etc.); and
- Create and distribute Boomer Boxes to senior centers in Linn and Benton Counties.

#### Lincoln County:

- Serve on Advisory Board for the 60-plus Center, City of Newport;
- Develop a one-two hour overview of Older Adult Behavioral Health Needs/Issues and offer it to new employees at Lincoln County Mental Health, local assisted living, and other residential services providers, and make it available to other service providers as requested;
- Attend staff meetings at Lincoln County Mental Health at least quarterly; and
- Improve access to mental health services for persons who have Medicare only, focusing on the private sector mental health providers.