



Department of Public Health and Human Services

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Steve Bullock,

Richard H. Opper, Director

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Good Afternoon Central Service Area Authority Board Members and Congress Guests,

Thank you for attending today's special meeting. I apologize for my absence and look forward to the results of today's congress. In the past 10 months the CSAA has launched new Mental Health Local Advisory Council's, seen the opening of a crisis facility in Helena, provided education and training and hosted productive discussions at its monthly board meetings. Through each challenge and success it has been AMDD's pleasure to partner with the CSAA. Thank you for welcoming myself, Jane Wilson, Kenny Bell, Glenda Oldenburg and the countless other DPHHS representatives you have brought to your table. We look forward to positive changes in mental health services in the year ahead!

Looking forward, we anxiously await the end of another Legislative Session. Even as I write this, the Free Conference Committee continues to wrestle with funding decisions for crisis services under House Bill 33 and the County Matching Program. I wish I could write about results and funds for specific programs, but it seems we will be kept in suspense until the very end. As a state, Montana has had victories and the changes Medicaid Expansion alone will bring are exciting. AMDD is committed to providing a legislative update and status report at CSAA's board meeting in May, so stay tuned as we stay tuned.

Some figures I can share is that in Fiscal Year 2014 for the Mental Health Service Bureau:

- 60% of spending was in community services for a total of 69.4 million dollars spent
- 30% of spending equal to 34.4 million dollars were spent for the Montana State Hospital
- 9% of spending equal to 10 million dollars were spent for the MT Mental Health Nursing Care Center
- 1% of spending or 1.6 million dollars were spent for administrative costs

Community services and programs funded in the 69.4 million dollars include Medicaid services, Mental Health Service Plan services, MHSP waiver services, Severe Disabling Mental Illness waiver services, County Matching grants, Drop in Centers, Supported Employment, Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), 72 hour crisis stabilization, suicide prevention programs, Project for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT), Peer Support Pilot Projects and housing and re-entry (Goal 189). All of that spending makes for a busy year!

Along with changes in my position and start 10 months ago, there have been staffing changes within the Bureau and AMDD as a whole. I am happy to report that our Medicaid Unit is fully staffed after several months; the Substance Use Disorder Bureau is hiring a new Treatment Coordinator who will work closely with me and our Clinical Program Manager to further our behavioral health focus; and my team of Community Program Officers and Community Liaison Outreach Specialists continue to work on community wellness issues and the most difficult state hospital discharges. In a moment, Jane will address what she and Andrew Boyer have been up to since October as Mental Health First Aid Trainers. I can even tell Jane what to do in a letter! In all seriousness, I know staffing challenges have been difficult for our Service Area Authority partners and I appreciate your perseverance amidst change.

I heard it said recently that with every change, we experience loss. With changes coming in the year ahead I hope we can remember mental health has actually *had* some things to lose. We have lost stigma, we have lost ignorance, we have lost isolation; all good things to lose. As we move forward, let's continue to leave behind the things that hold us back and embrace the good things that come from change.

Thank you again for your commitment to improving behavioral health services in our great state!

My best to you all,

Carrie Lutkehus
Community Resources Manager and Proud CSAA Partner