



REPORT

400 Johnson Street • Alpena, Michigan 49707
May 2021



Accredited in 17 Programs

Letter to the Community

Dear Citizens of Northeast Michigan,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff of Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority (NeMCMHA), I am pleased to present our Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2020. We hope it will enhance your understanding of the services we provide in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency and Presque Isle counties.

This year was unlike any other year in the history of all community mental health organizations. The Governor’s Work from Home order and the pandemic tested our system and the public behavioral health safety net in every way imaginable. Each time we were faced with another obstacle of delivering services, we were required to adjust our operations. It became more necessary to be flexible in order to provide necessary services and continue to fulfill our mission. NeMCMHA’s mission is... “To provide comprehensive services and supports that enable people to live and work independently.” Our network providers, community partners and staff assured the public mental health safety net stayed strong to keep our communities healthy and safe even under the most difficult circumstances. We adopted a new mantra during the pandemic --“We Will Figure It Out.” Our staff of creative thinkers have done exactly that.

We knew from the very beginning this would be a mental health challenge for all in our communities. We prepared for an increase in mental health crises, suicides, domestic violence and child abuse and neglect. We quickly began organizing and problem solving to increase support to one another, to our communities and to the people we serve.

Community Mental Health workers stood by and watched the “Hero” stories in the news and on social media; stories of nurses and doctors. We watched videos of fire and police showing up outside hospitals to cheer and encourage the healthcare workers. We joined with the entire globe participating in the applause and cheers to show appreciation for the personal sacrifices healthcare workers are making to take care of the sick. However, mental health workers are not recognized as “front line workers.”

Our behavioral health workers are the “ninjas” of the healthcare world. In fact, we are so committed to protecting and supporting those who are often the poorest and most vulnerable populations in every community, we quietly go about our business and do our work. We take care of the most seriously mentally ill citizens and support seriously emotionally disturbed children along with their families. We provide support services for the intellectually and/or developmentally disabled residents who without us would likely be living life within the walls of an institution.


Some citizens are unaware of the safety net we are providing in each county we serve. This is the greatest testimony and truest compliment to what we do and how we do it. It speaks volumes about our Board of Directors and the people who choose to work for a Community Mental Health Organization. It is their belief in the

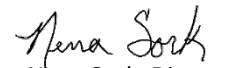
mission and vision of the organization and the policies supporting this work. In fact, we do not even usually recognize ourselves in the truly heroic nature of the work we do and the incredible responsibility we assume for people’s care and safety all the time and not just during a pandemic. NeMCMHA staff are on the front lines taking care of people in their homes and in Adult Foster Care Homes (AFC), providing in some instances 24-hour care.

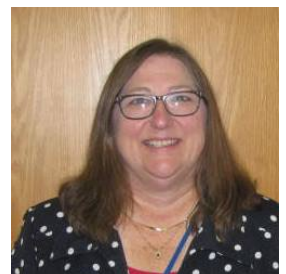
When the person we serve tests COVID-19 positive, we help care for them and walk through this physical and health crisis with them. We kept our doors open for those in need of care; we provide high-quality essential behavioral health services to our community, while ensuring the health and safety of our staff and the people we serve. NeMCMHA staff’s resilience and tenacity has helped our citizens back on the path to become the person they once hoped to be, to appreciate the community they live in and contribute to its well-being. NeMCMHA staff are truly the “unsung heroes” throughout this pandemic and the breadth of agency services delivered can literally change the course of someone’s life.

Thank you all for giving so much to this organization and for “spreading your courage to others.”

Sincerely,


Eric Lawson, Chairman


Nena Sork, Director



1 IN 5 PEOPLE WILL HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION IN THEIR LIFETIME.



TAKING A SCREEN IS AN EASY WAY TO CHECK IN ON YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.

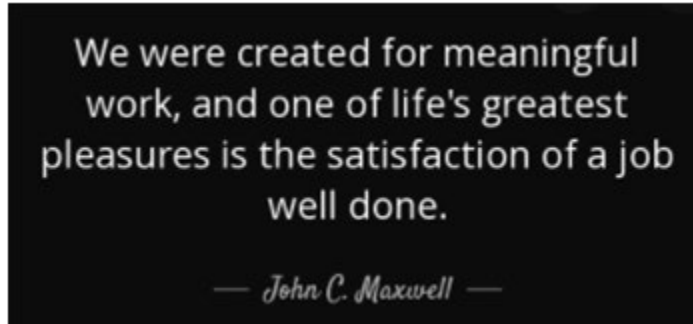


HELP US REACH OUR GOAL OF A #MILLIONINMAY. VISIT MHASCREENING.ORG

Making a Difference through Employment Services...

In March 2021, Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority (NeMCMHA) celebrated 10 years of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Employment Services for persons with mental illness. We are very proud of this milestone and the assistance provided over the years for individuals to procure meaningful, competitive work in their communities. IPS is an evidence-based supported employment practice. IPS is based on eight principles, which include – worker preferences, competitive employment, systematic job development, rapid job search, integrated services, benefits planning and referrals, zero exclusion and time-unlimited services.

The support is driven by the individual and anyone who wants to seek employment is eligible to work with an Employment Specialist. Employment Specialists help people find and maintain employment by focusing on the individual’s strengths and preferences, which increases success. Services assist people with networking with employers, benefits planning, preparing resumes, filling out job applications, interviewing, job development, job coaching, follow along and retention services. Many individuals have found this support very valuable to their success and as one person stated, “Supported employment is time saving and they know so much and have the right information when it comes to how much I can work with my benefits. Always checking in on me to make sure I’m doing well also helps overcoming my struggles in the workplace.” (anonymous from a person served)



In addition to providing IPS employment practices, NeMCMHA has delivered employment services for persons with an Intellectual/Developmental Disability for over 25 years! Services are provided both at NeMCMHA and through a partnership with Northeast Michigan Rehabilitation and Opportunity Center (NEMROC). Although this service is not an evidence-based IPS process, many of the same practices are followed with focus on competitive, integrated employment where people work alongside of others without disabilities. Both programs for persons with a Mental Illness and an Intellectual/Developmental Disability work with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) through an Interagency Cash Transfer Agreement to promote employment opportunities. Through this partnership people receive job placement and assistance, financing for micro-enterprise ownership, on-the-job training, work clothing, follow along support and other related funding that makes it possible for people to become successfully employed. Many people have experienced positive outcomes through competitive employment which assists in recovery and well-being, improved self-sufficiency, increased self-esteem, development of new skills, development of friendships and a sense of accomplishment and purpose. Currently, there are 94 individuals with an Intellectual/Developmental Disability receiving employment services with 67 people employed and 31 individuals with a Mental Illness of which 15 are employed.

In addition to our partnership with MRS and NEMROC, other factors that have led to success in the area of employment can be attributed to our community, staff, individuals served, families, guardians and natural supports. Congratulations to the many employees who have gained successful employment over the years as well as special gratitude to employees who have been working throughout the pandemic. You truly make a difference in our community!

Community Employment Services is always open to your suggestions, ideas, job leads and employee needs, so please feel free to call Margie Hale-Manley at 989-590-4096 for more information.



One Success Story...



Jason has been with our agency since February 2017. He has overcome many obstacles in his life including the loss of his father at a young age and has worked hard to maintain mental health recovery. Jason’s mom has remained helpful and supportive throughout all his ups and downs.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic last spring, Jason was laid off from a job he enjoyed at the Alpena Senior Citizens Center. To cope with this change, he began walking more often and was able to continue telehealth

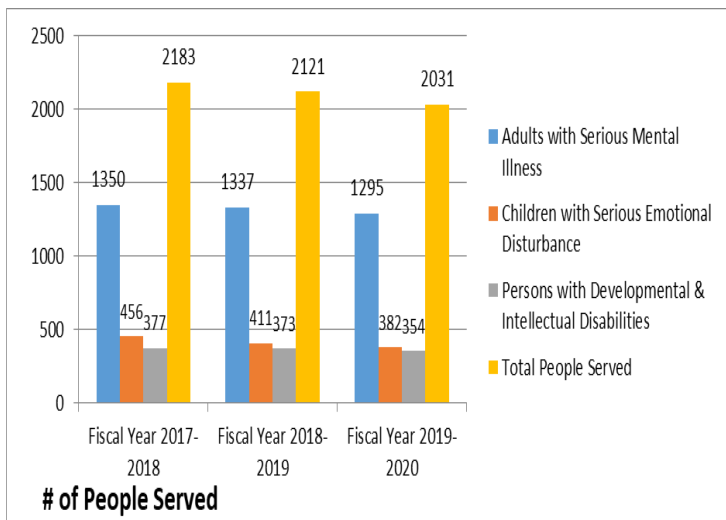
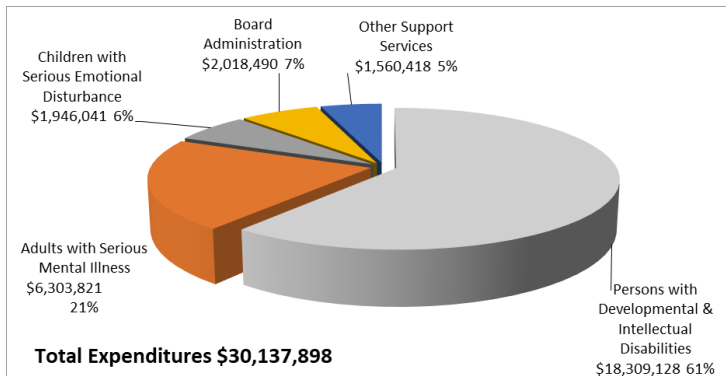
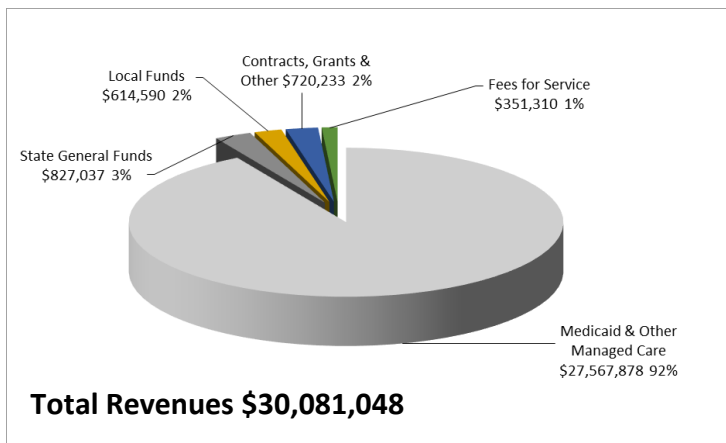
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**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority
October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020**

Sources and Uses of Funds

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Revenue | \$30,081,048 |
| Total Expenditures | \$30,137,898 |
| Net Income/(Loss) | \$ (56,850) |

**[Post-retirement benefits are not offered at NeMCMHA.
Employee Pensions are 401 Plans, which are fully
funded.]**



Four Board Members Appointed / Re-appointed to NeMCMHA Board

Members of the four-county board of directors governing Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority are appointed by each county's board of commissioners to serve a three-year term. Due to staggered terms, four Board members are appointed each year. Alcona, Alpena and Montmorency County had members to appoint this calendar year.



Terry Small
Alcona County



Eric Lawson
Alpena County



Pat Przeslawski
Alpena County



Geyer Balog
Montmorency County



Alpena County also appointed Lynnette Greskowiak to fill a vacancy, which was difficult during COVID.

2021 NeMCMHA Board

Alcona County
Bonnie Cornelius, *Secretary*
Terry Small

Montmorency County
Roger Frye, *Vice Chair*
Geyer Balog

Alpena County
Bob Adrian
Lynnette Greskowiak
Judy Jones
Eric Lawson, *Chair*
Pat Przeslawski

Presque Isle County
Lester Buza
Terry Larson
Gary Nowak, *Past Chair*

NeMCMHA is funded, in part, by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services



Carter Kits™ was inspired by Carter Severs, a five-year-old boy with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from Frankenmuth Michigan. Carter’s father, Detective Justin Severs, had the intuition of have a Carter Kits™ Sensory Bag available to first responders. He believes this added tool will better equip police officers, firefighters and EMS responders when arriving to a scene where a young or special needs child or individual is involved.

Carter Kits™ began as a grass roots call to action embodied by a simple text message sent by Detective Justin Severs, of Saginaw Township Police Department, to Brandon Hausbeck, a professional firefighter and Andrew Keller, real estate owner, in 2019 – “We need a tool to help us when we arrive at a scene with a special needs child.” Justin’s idea was to equip as many police, fire and EMS vehicles as possible with the means to calm distressed children like Carter when arriving on scene. Andrew connected with a family friend, Dr. Ellen Preen, a clinical neuropsychologist who has both a daughter with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and extensive experience working

with individuals impacted by ASD, trauma, anxiety, depression and learning challenges. Together, Andrew, Justin, Brandon and Ellen see the need to expand the scope of our efforts to *any* child in crisis who may benefit from the contents of a Carter Kits™ Sensory Bag.

NeMCMHA became aware of the Carter Kits™ through our Clinical Director, Erin Fletcher, a resident of Montmorency County. She reported to a team of staff members that the Hillman United Methodist Church first donated these Carter Kits™ to first responders and law enforcement in Montmorency County. NeMCMHA staff decided it would be a good resource for law enforcement and first responders to have in all of the counties we serve. NeMCMHA purchased and distributed Carter Kits™ to all law enforcement entities and first responders in Alcona, Alpena and Presque Isle Counties.



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH 2021

LIFE CAN BE HARD.
YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DOESN'T HAVE TO SUFFER.
GET TOOLS AND INFORMATION THAT CAN HELP.



LEARN MORE AT MhNational.org/May

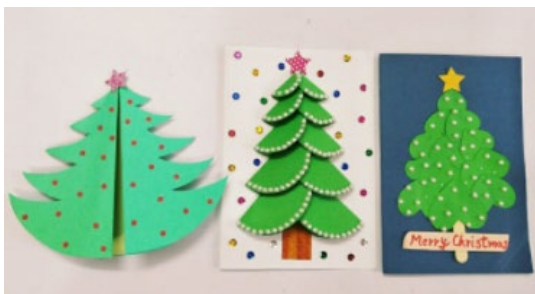
Frank VanGoethem, NeMCMHA psychologist, delivers Carter Kits to Alpena Sheriff Department.

A Christmas wish from Storm's heart to yours...

Storm's teacher presented her special "stay at home" students with a challenge, to create a plan for a Holiday Project. She supplied some paper cut outs of trees to get him started. He added glitter, glue, stars and doodads, started spreading glue and shaking glitter till he had the right jolly old mess! The finished product is a reflection of his bright, cheerful world. He has so much joy in his heart and he hopes this card will allow you to share it during the Christmas season and all year.

Constant chants of "love, happy, and amazing" see him through his days. He has no need of wondering or anticipating the

aggravations, challenges or stress that affect the rest of us. His world is filled with wondrous



things that only a young, innocent child can experience. He brings that joy and excitement to those he loves and we are blessed and grateful that he shares the wonders of his world with us... His favorite Christmas songs are those we found on a CD by John Denver and the "crazy" Muppets. There's another of his favorite words! One of the songs sung by Kermit seems to echo what Storm might wish for all of us if he could find the right words...

"...I have seen the precious gift that love brings, even though I never saw a Christmas star. I know there is a light, I have felt it burn inside. And I have seen it shining from afar. For the truth that binds us all together, I would like to say a simple prayer. That at this special time you will have true peace of mind and joy to last throughout the year. And I reach out my hand to the family of man to share the joy I feel as Christmas time. If you believe in love, that will be more than enough for peace to last throughout the coming year..." Wow! Out of the mouth of a frog!

Enjoy your card. Storm hopes every smear, smudge and piece of loose glitter will lighten and brighten your day and encourage you to walk in his world of "love, happy, amazing, and crazy." Storm gives pure, unconditional love every day. That same Gift of love was delivered to us over 2,000 years ago under a Christmas star and continues to bind us all together. Unconditionally!

Storm wished you happy days, always a song in your heart and a cookie in your tummy.

[Printed with permission]

One Success Story (continued from page 2)

psychotherapy. By summer of 2020, Jason decided he would like to obtain employment again. With little assistance from CMH employment services, Jason completed job applications and attended interviews. His work experience in the grocery industry led to him applying for a position at Walmart. Jason independently attended his interview and was hired for the job! He is now working independently and is reported to be an excellent and dependable employee who rarely requests time off.



Jason thrives on staying busy and socializing. He loves community concerts and is known to break out his dancing shoes. He currently receives support from Touchstone Clubhouse as well as Community Support Services.



Check out our website

www.nemcmh.org



We Are a Community Mental Health Center

It's our mission to provide comprehensive services and supports that enable people to live and work independently.

DONATE

Pandemic Services 2020

March 2020 – The pandemic reached its ugly arm across the world and changed business models quickly. On March 10, 2020, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) identified the first two presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in Michigan and a state of emergency was declared across the State of Michigan. By March 13, 2020 an Executive Order was signed to prohibit large gatherings of people in a single shared space, on March 14 congregate care facilities were closed to visitors not necessary for the provision of medical care and schools closed to in-person instruction beginning March 16, 2020. March 16th also began the requirement to conduct health screenings to enter some facilities and restaurants, bars, lounges, theaters, libraries, fitness centers, casinos licensed by Michigan and public amusement centers all closed. Unemployment claims skyrocketed. Required Board meetings were conducted virtually through Zoom or teleconference with the Open Meetings Act temporarily suspended. By March 21, 2020 all non-urgent surgeries and dental work were temporarily postponed. March 24, 2020 was a pivotal point and a “Stay Home” order was put in place.

The Stay Home order resulted in the Information Technology (IT) Departments scurrying to deploy laptops, cell phones and miscellaneous equipment to allow staff to work from home and this was accomplished in one to two days. A reduction in staffing in the main office at NeMCMHA left parking lots very empty. Employers around the world were ordering additional personal protection items, such as gloves, masks, face shields and gowns. Clorox wipes, Lysol solutions, bleach and toilet paper were impossible to obtain. Critical infrastructure workers held down businesses to the best of their ability. Social distancing and mandates to wear face masks ordered by the CDC became the topic of everyone’s conversations.

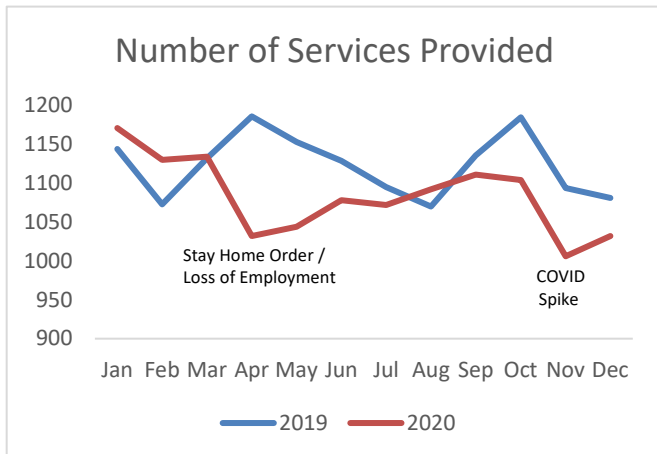


Operating nine residential homes with staff and residents all needing facemasks, a group of retired staff and current staff undertook the project of sewing face masks.

Individuals receiving services from NeMCMHA had the option to have their services provided as requested either in person or through a telehealth arrangement. Crisis services continued to be available through face-to-face, telephone or video options. Waiting rooms were rearranged to accommodate social distancing, water fountains had to be covered, reading materials were removed and extra sanitizing was provided in the common areas/waiting rooms. Community services were suspended temporarily to keep within the Stay Home order. Individuals receiving these community services were provided with necessary, life sustaining services such as grocery shopping, picking up prescriptions, etc. with recreational activities postponed. Staff provided many services outside. Services included nature walks, walks along the beach, biking, meeting together in parks and activities where social distancing could still be maintained. Many individuals receiving supported employment services through NeMCMHA were laid off from their employers which was difficult transitioning to remaining in their home versus going out to their jobs every day. Staff continued to reach out to individuals living in their own homes. Staff provided frequent contact in order to assure the people we serve had what they needed and help them to avoid becoming too isolated.



As we entered the summer, our Region was provided with a few less restrictions due to the low number of confirmed COVID cases. Restaurants were able to open with providing takeout orders and limited



outdoor dining. The staff at NeMCMHA decorated windows to show worker appreciation and hearts adorned the foyer windows recognizing all groups of employees. The Director’s Office had a painted window to remind us “The Sun Will Rise.” News of the progress on the vaccine provided hope for the future.

The fall resulted in a spike of cases and our region was again restricted to many services. Through all of this, our staff has provided all needed services. We made necessary adjustments to how we delivered those services to meet people’s needs during the pandemic. We look forward to a new normal; hopefully, in the near future.