



Human Services

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Chippewa County Department of Human Services

Preparation and Coordination of Report

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MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

We are pleased to provide the 2024 Annual Report for Chippewa County Department of Human Services. As you will see, it highlights our achievements, challenges, and investments in support of our mission.

While we celebrate our achievements, we look forward to continuing to meet challenges with creativity, collaboration, community engagement, and fiscal responsibility.

One important focus in 2025 is our ongoing commitment to building a healthy workplace and a culture of service. We have assembled an incredible Human Service team that utilizes client and family-centered service models and data driven decision making to achieve operational efficiencies while delivering high quality services to the citizens of Chippewa County.

We will continue building on this foundation of demonstrated success to continue to meet the needs of those we serve.

DHS Leadership Team

ABOUT US

The Chippewa County Department of Human Services (DHS) is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals and families across the county. Guided by its vision – “Everyone reaching their full potential to live their best life” – DHS upholds core values of advocacy, compassion, empowerment, partnership, and respect. Our mission is to strengthen our community through partnerships and services to promote dignity, increase resilience, and provide hope.

DHS offers a comprehensive range of services through several key divisions:

- Aging and Disability Resource Center
- Children, Youth, and Families
- Economic Support
- Fiscal and Contracts
- Recovery and Wellness Consortium
- Western Region Recovery and Wellness Consortium

Top L-R: James Ericksen, Dean Mueller, Dr. Robert Bullwinkel, John (Jack) Halbleib, Darren Kirby, Bottom L-R: Lee Hennick (Vice-Chair), Kari Ives (Chair), Marcia Kyes, Not Pictured: James Ericksen, Nichole Wallsch



Thank you to our HHS and ADRC Board Members!

L-R: Patricia German, Yvonne Hedrington, Darren Kirby, Cindy Spaeth, Renee Thompson, Not Pictured: Don Hauser, Larry Marquardt



FISCAL AND CONTRACTS

The Fiscal and Contracts Division supports the Department of Human Services, Aging and Disability Resource Center, and the nine-county Western Region Wellness and Recovery Consortium with a variety of activities including:

- Medicaid and Consumer Billing
- Grant Claiming and Reconciliation Reporting
- Financial Accounting and Reporting
- Budget Planning and Analysis
- Vendor Contracting and Payments

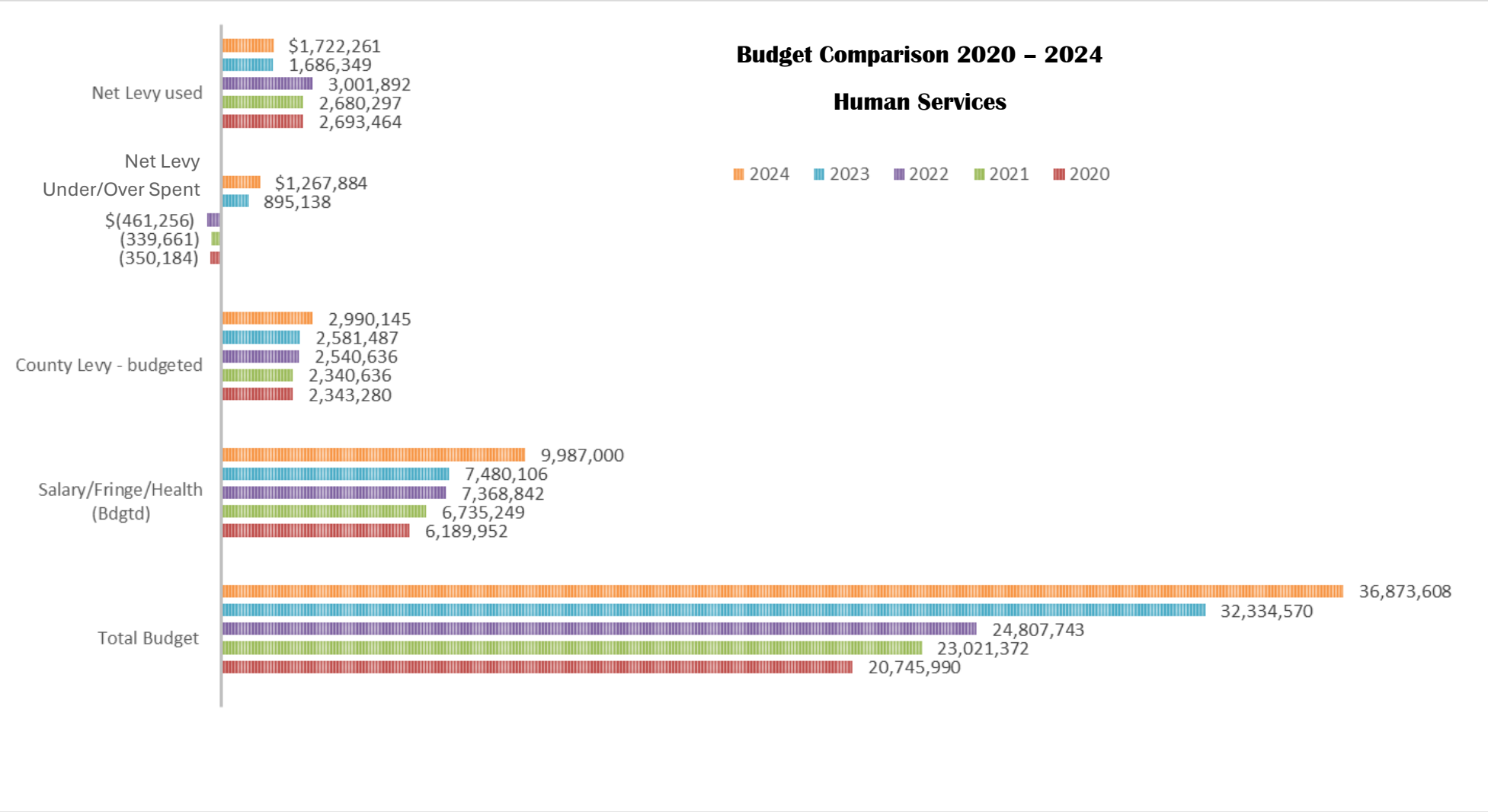
Achievements/Successes

- Decreased child placements resulted in a \$1.25 million-dollar (unaudited) surplus
 - The majority of the surplus was the result of decreased child placement costs
 - The second largest contribution to the surplus was indirect costs recovered by the Western Region Wellness and Recovery Consortium (\$483,780)
- In October 2024, we filled an account position approved by the County Board for 2024. Our division has not had any turnover since a previous retirement in March 2023.
- The fiscal team dedicated themselves to billing Medicaid for reimbursement sooner, decreasing the Accounts Receivable days to 33 days and continuously beating billing deadlines.

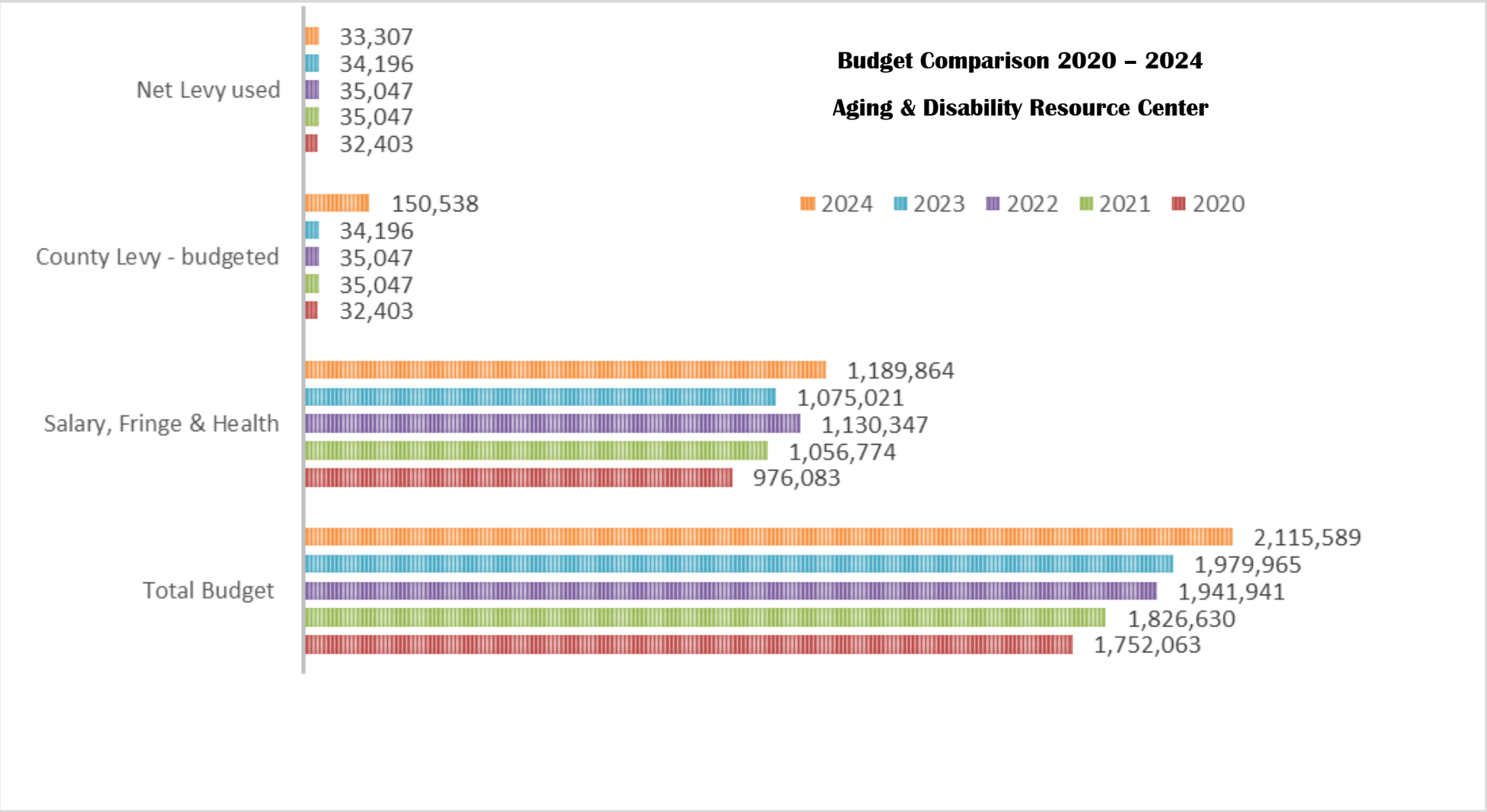
Challenges

- IMD (Winnebago and Trempealeau) costs continue to increase and exceeded the budgeted cost by \$181,067 (unaudited)
- Birth to Three costs increased due to new vendor after the HSHS closure

HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET COMPARISON 2020-2024



ADRC BUDGET COMPARISON 2020-2024



AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER



The simplest version of the ADRC mission is to say that we are here to help older people and people with disabilities remain as independent as possible in the setting of their choosing. Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) are the first place to go to get accurate, unbiased, and timely information on all aspects of life related to aging or living with a disability. ADRCs are friendly,

welcoming places where anyone – individuals, concerned families or friends, or professionals working with issues related to aging or disabilities – can go for information tailored to their situation. It isn't about what we feel is best for the individual, but rather it's about presenting options so they can make an informed choice.

We also recognize that people don't always know what they need. That's okay too because ADRC staff have extensive training in asking the right questions. The questions not only help people figure out what they need or want but also help to identify their strengths. When help is requested with applying or connecting to programs or services, ADRC staff will assist.

The ADRC of Chippewa County provides more than information and assistance. We also have programs that can help people remain in their homes. Meals on Wheels, Senior Dining, Transportation Coordination, Caregiver Respite, In-Home Support, Healthy Living workshops, Memory Screening, and Dementia-related programs are just some of the programs our agency offers. Our Options Counselors present customers with an array of choices that can help with their situation, along with assistance in accessing if needed. We also have highly trained Benefit Specialists that assist with Medicare, Social Security, Consumerism, Medical Assistance, and other private and public benefit questions. Complicated issues require extensive training, and our Benefit Specialists work directly with attorneys who specialize in all these areas as they relate to older people and people with disabilities.

One thing that sets ADRCs apart from other governmental agencies is the fact that we are legislatively required to provide advocacy on behalf of the people we serve. Sometimes that means talking to local businesses and sometimes that means connecting with legislators. But, most importantly, it means providing people with information empowering them to advocate on their own behalf.

Achievements/Successes

- Our Senior Farmers Market Voucher program again exceeded all previous records. We provided more vouchers than ever before, and it is the first time over 50% applied online. A total of 358 consumers served, resulting in \$11,736 in local fresh produce being redeemed with this program.
- Developed and implemented Café 60, a modern model for senior dining providing meals in a restaurant setting in rural areas which are too small to support a formal congregate meal site
- Streamlined nutrition program processes and reduced the number of vendors, resulting in improved customer satisfaction with meals.
- Increased number of “Medicare and You” offerings in a virtual format while maintaining our in-person offerings as well.
- Staff and board members participated in several advocacy events.
- Expanded our outreach into the community, which included participating in Farm Technology Days held in Chippewa County this year.
- Developed transportation procedures ensuring we would be able to provide rides through the end of the year and assisted several dialysis transportation participants in applying for benefits that would help cover the cost of their rides.
- Added two Health Promotions Programs: Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less, as well as Staying Active and Independent for Life (S.A.I.L.).
- Nutrition Program volunteer participation increased by 12.5%.
- Participated in the Independent Living Support Pilot program with Dunn and Eau Claire counties with \$558,000 worth of goods and services provided to low-income Chippewa County residents.

Challenges

- A change in the statewide system for recording services we provide created a significant learning curve that affected every staff member and all services.
- Turnover in the two leadership positions in the ADRC – Manager and Nutrition and Transportation Programs Supervisor.
- Closure of HSHS and the impact of that on our transportation program.
- The increase in the aging population continues to create stress points for our Elder Benefit Specialist program, particularly related to Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans.
- Turnover of Nutrition Program staff, combined with the challenges of hiring those very part-time positions, created challenges in service delivery.
- Decrease in funding of several of our programs supported by the Older Americans Act. We were able to utilize ARPA funds to mitigate the impact of these decreases.

Service Delivery Data

ADRC Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2024
Bridging Chippewa County	21,247 copies distributed†
Caregiver Respite	39 consumers 2,969 hours of respite
Dementia Related Services*	51 consumers 69 programs/services
Disability Benefits^	136 consumers 364 cases
Elder Benefits**	665 consumers 1,478 cases/contacts
Healthy Living Workshop Sessions	92 consumers 1,134 classes/sessions
Information and Assistance/Options Counseling (does not include information provided by reception)	5,507 consumer contacts 1,396 unduplicated consumers
In-home Supports (housekeeping)	44 consumers 1,267 service units
Nutrition Program	470 consumers 39,448 meals
Transportation	3,847 rides 190,209 miles

†Includes print and email distribution. Does not include the number of online views of the newsletter.

*Dementia consumers do not include the number of people who attended various presentations or workshops. The number of programs/services reflects separate programs or presentations.

**Due to database migration, we do not have figures for November and December.

^These figures are October 2023 to October 2024

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY SERVICES

BIRTH TO THREE EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

Birth to Three is Wisconsin's early intervention program for infants and toddlers, with developmental delays and disabilities, and their families. Once a child is found eligible and enrolled, a primary coach works with the family to provide support, strategies, and education related to the child's development. The ultimate goal is for the child to be a full participant in their family routines and in their community. Services are provided in a way that makes sense for each family, in the child's natural environment. This family-centered program recognizes the importance of parents, family, and friends in a young child's life and empowers them to be the child's best teachers.

Achievements/Successes

- The Birth to Three Program received 237 referrals in 2024. On average, between 75-85 children are enrolled in the program at any given time. On October 1, 2024, there were 78 children enrolled in the program.
- The Birth to Three program was awarded a grant from Essential Resource Purchase Program. The program was able to purchase an iPad to be able to explore modeling how families can use it to bridge communication gaps with children who are nonverbal. The program was also able to purchase books for our lending library and other therapy tools that can be loaned out to families.
- 2024 was a year filled with lots of change for our Birth to Three program. With HSHS/Prevea closing, we needed to find a new therapy contract. We were successful in finding a new agency to contract with and were able to keep the same great team of therapists, including one full-time Speech Therapist along with three part-time positions for Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy. We had an additional staff change, as the Birth to Three Program Coordinator/Teacher/Service Coordinator resigned due to a family move. A new team member with years of Birth to Three experience was hired in April 2024. The team moved through the changes with very little glitches, and families did not have any disruptions in services.
- In Fall 2024, the Birth to Three program completed outreach by sending packets out to all licensed in-home and center-based childcare businesses in Chippewa County. We are hoping to build better connections and strengthen our partnerships. We did receive a couple of referrals from Early Head Start and a childcare provider.
- Chippewa County Birth to Three received a Determination Status of "Meets Requirements" from the State Department of Health Services for the 2022-2023 reporting year, with 93.75 percent of indicators met. This indicates strong compliance with reporting and timeline measures and increased child outcomes.

Challenges

- Families struggled to find appropriate and affordable daycare for children, along with resources for their family while continuing to work; trying to balance providing for their family and caring for their children who may have additional needs can be very difficult. The impacts on parents mental

health has changed the dynamic of the Birth to Three program over the years. We have shifted from providing one-on-one therapy to children to providing support for the entire family. These changes require staff to remain versatile in their roles outside the intended scope of services of the Birth to Three program.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Child Protective Services (CPS) unit assesses families whose children may have been abused or neglected. When an intensive approach is necessary, ongoing services are provided to families. Services may include foster care, parenting support, or other resources to keep children safe. CPS works closely with law enforcement, community organizations, courts, schools, and other community providers to keep children safe and empower families. CPS also provides foster care licensing, foster care placement, and the Kinship program. When safety cannot be reached with a family, the unit works with the court system to find alternative permanency for a child, such as adoption or guardianship.

Achievements/Successes

- CPS served 310 children. Twenty children were removed in 2024, compared to thirty-nine that were removed in 2023. Of those twenty children, four children were able to be placed with their protective parent, eight children were able to be placed with relatives, and four children were able to be placed with “like-kin providers” (i.e. adults who had a previous relationship with the child). That means that only four children were placed in foster care in 2024.
- Thirty-three children achieved permanency; of those thirty-three children, seventeen children achieved permanency through reunification with their parent(s), seven children achieved permanency through guardianship, and nine children achieved permanency through termination of parental rights/adoption.
- CPS was able to close forty-two open cases.
- At the end of 2024, only nineteen children were in out-of-home care.
- CPS applied for and was awarded the Targeted Safety Support Funding (TSSF) grant and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) grant. These two grants help social workers keep children in their homes with services or help social workers reunify children quicker as services can be implemented in the home to mitigate safety concerns. CPS also applied for and was awarded the Relative Caregiver Support grant. The Relative Caregiver Support grant can be used to assist relatives with extra fees they may incur due to daycare, sports, or other activities for the children in their care. The grant can also be used for concrete supports (gas gift cards, grocery gift cards, and clothing gift cards) at the discretion of CPS to support children placed with relatives.
- CPS was also awarded the Family First grant. This grant, similar to the Relative Caregiver Support grant, can be used to help keep children in their relative caregivers’ homes or be used for services to move families towards reunification more quickly.
- CPS spent a significant amount of time on community education throughout 2024. Presentations were given on Mandated Reporting and the CPS Process, which has led to increased collaboration and access reports that embody the information needed to make solid screening decisions.

- CPS added a part-time Family Interaction Worker LTE. This position is partially funded by grant funding and has saved CPS a significant amount of money due to the high costs of contracted fees for family interaction services. This is a necessary/mandated service, and the increased collaboration and communication between CPS and the Family Interaction Worker has had a positive impact on cases.
- CPS stayed relatively stable in 2024. Caseloads finally reached a manageable number, and the team has grown to have a healthy and open culture. This has been imperative in helping workers feel supported and preventing burnout, therefore, making CPS an area where workers want to stay. Historically, CPS has seen position turnover after working in the unit for approximately one to two years.

Challenges

- Chippewa County is in dire need of foster homes for teenagers. The county has many foster homes willing to take infants or children from ages zero to five; however, there is currently only one foster home willing to take teenagers, and they are at capacity due to current placements, as well as relative/adopted children residing in the home.

Service Delivery Data

CYF Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2024
Birth to Three Program	237
Child Protective Services	310

CHILDREN WITH DIFFERING ABILITIES

Children with Differing Abilities (CWDA) is the unit that provides services and support to children who have been diagnosed with a physical, developmental, or mental health disability and determined to be functionally eligible in accordance with federal and state standards. Services within the Children with Differing Abilities Unit are voluntary and designed to assist families to maintain their children safely in the community and at home.

The Children with Differing Abilities Unit is comprised of one manager, one supervisor, three Children's Long-Term Support Waiver (CLTS-Waiver) Support and Service Coordinators, and nine Children's Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Service Facilitators.

Achievements/Successes

- Due to the substantial growth in this unit, we were approved by the County Board to hire two additional supervisors. There will be three supervisors in 2025 to meet the needs and demands of providing Children's CCS and CLTS-Waiver programs to Chippewa County residents.
- We successfully transitioned staff to telecommuting status due to outgrowing space available at the Courthouse.
- From July to December staff worked diligently to significantly reduce and eliminate our waitlists in both programs.

- Our partnership with Public Health as our Single Point of Entry (SPOE) continues to be strong. A new initial screener was successfully onboarded after a retirement in that position.

Challenges

- Provider waitlists continue to impact our ability to provide services to consumers in a timely manner.
- Despite reducing and eliminating our waitlists to enroll children into CLTS, we have been asked to complete a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) as our rolling 6-month average as of this fall, did not meet expectations of the State. We expect to successfully complete our CAP no later than June 2025.

Service Delivery Data

CYF Service – CWDA/Program	Consumer Data for 2024
Children’s Long-Term Support (CLTS)	109 Cases Opened
Children’s Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) (Includes children dually enrolled in CCS and CLTS)	114 Cases Opened

YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICES

Youth Justice is the unit that works with youth referred to court under Wisconsin Statutes 938. These youth have either committed a delinquent act, are habitually truant from school, or have uncontrollable behavioral issues. Youth Justice social workers work in conjunction with the legal system, the youth, and parents by developing a plan to reduce risk factors such as substance abuse, negative peer associations, truancy, and other risk factors that negatively influence youth behavior and provide the youth with competencies for a successful future.

Chapter 938 or 48 are the only statutes that allow for placing children out of the home in foster care, group home, or residential treatment level of care. When complex needs youth require one of these out-of-home placements, they typically come through the court system in our unit via Chapter 938-Juvenile in Need of Protection and/or Services-Uncontrollable. Ongoing Youth Justice workers work diligently with families and service providers to keep youth in the community.

The Youth Justice Unit is comprised of one Juvenile Court Intake social worker, plus three full-time social workers and one half-time social worker providing ongoing services.

Achievements/Successes

- We were awarded the Community Intervention grant again, continuing and enhancing our ability to deliver Aggression Replacement Training (ART) and Girls Moving On (GMO) skills group for medium to high-risk youth. Additionally, with this grant, we have been able to continue to support our partnership with Restorative Justice to provide more services to Chippewa County youth.
- We were also awarded a \$100,000 innovation grant for 2025 to work on reducing the number of youth justice referrals. Through this grant, we are building a county-wide coalition with the school districts and law enforcement to implement a consistent practice of behavior threat assessment within the schools of Chippewa County.
- Youth Justice out-of-home placements met a milestone “all time lowest” out of home placements for 4 months during the 2024 calendar year! We demonstrated that with a caseload size of 12-14 per full time worker, that staff had the time to successfully case manage, build relationships to

keep kids in the community and out of placement.

Challenges

- Statewide, we continue to see youth being served in the youth justice system, when their needs are mental health. This is primarily because in Wisconsin, Chapter 938 (the Youth Justice code) is the only means for placing youth out of their home when and if the need arises to that level.
- Staff spend a significant amount of time addressing truancy matters with minimal success, as there is yet to be identified an evidence-based intervention to address high need truancy behaviors. For this reason, it is important for multi-level prevention and engagement to occur at home, in the community and at school.
- Contrary to our success with low out-of-home placements in the first half of the year (highlighted above), as our caseloads increased, so did our out-of-home placement numbers. This can be devastating to the Department budget as these placements range in cost from \$450 per day to \$950 per day. Historically, we have not been able to bring forth an opportunity to acquire sufficient staffing levels in Youth Justice, therefore that will be a primary focus of 2025.

Service Delivery Data

CYF Service – YJ/Program (Juvenile Court Intake Referrals)	Consumer Data for 2024
Total Referrals	227
Delinquents	191
Truants	62
Runaways	22
Uncontrollable	2
Total Citations	80

ECONOMIC SUPPORT



The Economic Support Division administers programs and services that assist eligible Chippewa County consumers, empowering them to achieve positive outcomes when they face economic challenges. The Economic Support Division helps families in need become self-sufficient and independent from public assistance. This is done by assessing each family's financial situation to determine eligibility for public assistance programs. Chippewa County Economic Support is part of the Great Rivers ten-county consortium (GRC).

Achievements/Successes

Operations

- Continued efforts to improve accuracy and consistency in Lead Teams through regular meetings and Policy, Procedure, Process manual updates.
- Successfully migrated to the Genesys Cloud CX platform (call center) for all staff.
- Conducted quarterly reviews of training opportunities (errors) creating a "TO page" to display important information for staff.
- GRC staff completed the ProQOL (Professional Quality of Life) Assessment and participated in a Start, Stop, Continue activity with a goal to improve staff satisfaction.
- Removed No call No show appointments in the call center time (linked to ProQOL).
- GRC call center performance was impressive, ranking 4th in answer rates for 7 out of 12 months, 5th for one month, 3rd for one month, 2nd for two months, and 1st for one month statewide.
- Average Speed of Answer for the GRC Call Center ranged from 2.88 minutes to 7.71 minutes, outperforming the state performance standard of 10 minutes.
- Wisconsin continues to be a nationwide leader in timeliness and accuracy, with the state being the only one maintaining a low FoodShare Active error rate and case and procedural error rate. GRC played a key role in this success.
- Held two GRC All-Staff Q&A sessions presented by Leads.
- Completed the COVID policy unwinding process.

Staffing - Across the GRC

- GRC currently has 129 total positions.
- Resignations: 13 (9% of total positions)
- New Staff: 13
- Promotions: 0
- Chippewa County Economic Support had one retirement in 2024

Benefit Recovery (BR)

- Implemented Compromising Claims policy
- Completed BRITS Phase II (fraud and overpayment system)
- SWICA (case discrepancies) saw an increase, leading to more referrals.

Childcare

- Successfully completed the Annual Subsidy & Certification Review.
- Rolled out Child Care Phase 2 PT/FT subsidy
- Navigated a shift in thinking regarding authorizations for staff, caretakers, and providers.

IM Programs

- Successfully passed the Foodshare Management Evaluation Review (MER), with an Active Error Rate of 1.67% and a Case and Procedural Error Rate of 20.37%.
- Developed a Hub “TO page” for staff to track current trends.
- Conducted a staff survey on training topics.
- Rolled out DEAR (36-month Foodshare eligibility for certain households)
- Reintroduced MAPP premiums.
- Resumed FoodShare interviews.
- Added “*Katie Beckett*” program to CARES worker Web, introducing more alerts and manual processes.

Challenges

- Increased number of reports to process due to system issues.
- External federal/state policy changes and their impact on technology and procedures.
- Inefficient systems that are unable to accommodate policy changes.
- Integration of additional programs (e.g., Katie Beckett) into CWW, requiring staff to adapt.
- Potential changes to federal funding match.

Service Delivery Data

Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2024
FoodShare	6,191
Medical Assistance	13,546
Child Care	348
Total	20,085

RECOVERY AND WELLNESS CONSORTIUM

Chippewa County Recovery Wellness Consortium (RWC) is a part of the nine county Western Region Consortium. The RWC is a resource hub for individuals experiencing mental health emergency (crisis), mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Programs available include Crisis Services (including case management of mental health commitments), Community Support Program (CSP), and Comprehensive Community Services (CCS). A service facilitator is assigned to each consumer who becomes their advocate and assists them in their recovery journey. Functional and financial criteria determine program eligibility. Based on assessed need, the following are examples of some services available: psychiatry, mental health and substance abuse counseling, supported employment and individual skill development. Chippewa County maintains a collaborative relationship with Buffalo and Pepin Counties. Referred to as regionalization, this collaboration means we all act as one entity with Chippewa (Lead County) providing administrative and clinical oversight of the Medicaid certified programs (CSP and Crisis). This relationship allows citizens in Buffalo and Pepin counties access to these certified programs.

Achievements/Successes

- Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) and Community Support Program (CSP) are psycho-social rehabilitation services that promote personal recovery, successful community integration and improve the quality of life for persons with mental health struggles. In 2024 CCS had 17 participants graduate from the program and CSP program had 2 participants graduate. Graduation references that the participant no longer qualified for services as determined by the mental health functional screen. These participants have sustained the skills and resources to increase their capacity to be successful and satisfied in the living, working, and social environments of their choice.
- In 2024 service facilitators began implementing wraparound principals in their practices. This included the use of meeting agendas, frequent recovery team meetings, identifying short term goals with assigning tasks to team members to report out at the next recovery team meeting. Any changes in the recovery plan are discussed with the entire team before implementing any updates/changes.
- In December RWC began implementation of rotation with staff to take shifts for handling initial mental health and APS referrals. This allows staff to schedule time in their calendar for this purpose and avoids the disruption that happens when a particular staff person is asked to complete unscheduled intake. Additionally, this allows APS staff to be out in the field completing investigation in a timely manner. Implementation of this process is a clear example of the level of commitment and teamwork by each member of the RWC team.
- The Chippewa Valley has seen a drop in the number of drug overdoses after years of steady increases. RWC partner with Public Health Department to pay for the installation of vending machine in the lobby of the Chippewa County Jail. Along with Narcan, fentanyl and xylazine test strips the vending machine will distribute gun locks.

Challenges

- In 2023, Chippewa County's total population was 66,558, 19.1% of this population is 65 years or older. Adult Protective Services (APS) field 218 referrals of which 92 were for self-neglect, 52 for financial abuse, 39 neglect by others, physical abuse (16), emotional (10) and sexual (9). A total of 67 guardianships were completed, of which 19 were result of emergency protective placement. Every action taken by APS must balance the duty to protect the safety of the vulnerable adult with the right to self-determination. All competent people have the right to self-determination, choose their own values, principles and lifestyle. All adults are presumed to have competency unless determined differently by the court.
- The Chippewa Valley lacks psychiatric hospital beds, resulting in 43% of all emergency detentions placement at Winnebago Mental Health Institute (WMHI). The daily rate is \$1632. RWC actively pursues reimbursement for patients that do not have legal residency in Chippewa County. 47% of detentions are dismissed. There has been an increase in court approved Settlement Agreement. In essence the participant agrees to participate in recommended mental health services for 90 days. In 2024 there were 29 orders with need to revoke 4 cases due to poor compliance and elevated safety risk in the community. Community resources to manage someone experiencing a mental health crisis are needed.
- Mental Health service needs in the county jail are lacking. In 2024, 31% of all adult crises calls to Northwest crisis line originated from the county jail. Of the 212 crisis calls 81 required clinical follow up by the RWC and 6 admissions to WMHI.
- People who use drugs and those struggling with addiction face multiple challenges including the harmful effects of the drug themselves, stigma and discrimination they endure, and often harsh and ineffective response to their situation.

Service Delivery Data

Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2024
Adult Crisis Services	690
Adult Emergency Detentions/Petitions	125
Adult Protective Services	218
Comprehensive Community Services (Adults)	72
Community Support Program	43
New Guardianships	67
Protective Placements	14
Substance Abuse Services	37
Youth Crisis Services	133
Youth Emergency Detentions	20
Total	1266

WESTERN REGION RECOVERY AND WELLNESS CONSORTIUM



Lead County Agency - The Western Region Recovery & Wellness Consortium (WRRWC) is a nine-county consortium that provides Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Program Services.

The WRRWC is comprised of Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, and Washburn Counties. Chippewa County is the Lead County Agency which supports the overall program operations, fiscal and quality assurance/quality improvement processes for the consortium.

Chippewa County also is a part of a collaborative partnership with Buffalo and Pepin Counties for the provision of Crisis, Community Support (CSP), Community Recovery Services (CRS) and Coordinated Services Teams (CST) Program Services. This relationship allows citizens in Buffalo and Pepin Counties to have access to these certified Medicaid and grant funded programs.

What is CCS? Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) is a voluntary, state Medicaid-funded program directed under the DHS 36 Wis. Admin Code, which defines what services are CCS-appropriate and outlines the rules and regulations required for service reimbursement. CCS is a recovery-focused, integrated behavioral health program for adults and children with mental health and/or substance use conditions. CCS provides a coordinated and comprehensive array of psychosocial rehabilitation services (designed to facilitate recovery by achieving the highest possible level of functioning, stability, and independence) which is authorized by a mental health and/or substance use professional. Coordinated efforts include utilizing professional, community, and natural supports to address consumer's needs. The program is person and/or family-centered and uses a consumer directed approach to recovery services. Each CCS consortium in the state of Wisconsin is led by a CCS Coordinating Committee that provides oversight and direction to the program. The Coordinating Committee has representations from consumers and their family members, individuals with lived experience, county personnel, community members, and service providers. Their role is to give service recipients a voice by providing input in the development of policies, procedures, and quality assurance.

Achievements/Successes

- The Lead Agency was excited to add two new positions in 2024. An Administrative Specialist and a Contracts Management & Provider Relations Coordinator. These new positions have allowed for increased program support for program staff and providers. Processes have been implemented to have more streamlined communication within the program, and increased provider support during the initial onboarding, contracting and contract renewal process.
- WRRWC implemented the Wisconsin Wraparound Model of System Care. Wisconsin's system of care is a way of helping children, youth, their families, and adults receive the right help, at the right time, in the right amount by connecting and coordinating the work of:
 - Individuals, Families, youth, and advocates
 - Counties, tribes, and Coordinating Committees
 - Care providers (physical health, mental health, education)

- Health plans and coverage
- Child-serving and adult-serving agencies
- Officials who influence or make acts, laws, or rules
- All the participants focus on community-based and culturally responsive services while prioritizing and intentionally eliciting individual, family and youth voice and choice.
- WRRWC launched new policy and procedures to support provision of quality services to consumers, ensure state requirements were being met and to support good stewardship of Medicaid dollars. Some of these policies and procedures include a Provider Travel Policy, Provider Incident Reporting Procedure and the Clean Claim Policy.
- The “Clean Claim” initiative was implemented the end of 2023, to ensure state requirements were being met before paying providers. There was a drastic improvement in providers uploading their training and certification documents as required. The total number of payments withheld started at \$100,501.04 in December 2023 and decreased to 1,078.15 by December 2024.
- In 2024 WRRWC across the nine counties served a combined total of 934 adults and children.
- In 2024, WRRWC contracted with 102 Service Providers across the nine counties, and Medicaid reimbursed providers \$16,818,485.57 for costs of services.

Challenges

- The WRRWC experienced several changes in leadership in 2024. The Lead Agency Operations Administrator position was vacant twice. The Lead Agency Director and other Director positions within member counties also had vacancies.
- WRRWC identified the continued need to improve quality assurance and fiscal systems. Some of these needs include more efficient ways to bill Medicaid for provider billing. The current process requires many steps and is time consuming. Continued work is being done to upgrade WRRWC’s current electronic health record system (AVATAR). This upgraded system will mitigate risk for billing errors and increase process efficiency for fiscal and quality assurance staff. It is anticipated that full implementation will occur mid-year 2025.
- To address challenges identified by program staff, a Score Card Project was conducted, which involved participation by providers, member counties, fiscal and quality assurance staff. The outcome of this project did result in some provider contracts ending. Overall, this project allowed the team to identify which providers needed more support with meeting program requirements in addition to those who were contracted but no longer providing services.
- The consortium continues to experience a shortage of clinicians and mental health providers. This has resulted in some counties needing to utilize providers outside of their typical geographical area, or consumers being waitlisted for psychotherapy services. The WRRWC continues to seek additional psychotherapy providers.

Alisha Meinen	English Lutheran Church of	One Fest
BD Angel Packs	Bateman	Other Chippewa County
Blue Diamond Family	Family Fare	Staff
Dental	Family Support Center	Our Saviors Lutheran
Cailyn Rykal, FBLA	Fill Inn Station	Church Quilters Auction
Camp Nawakwa	Forgotten Initiative	Rachel Faber
Central Lutheran Church	Fries Financial	River Country Co-op
CESA Head Start	Hewlett Packard	Rock 'n Roll To Go Plus
Chi Hi FBLA	Employees	Royal Credit Union
Chippewa County Bar	Howard/Wheaton 4-H	Sam's Club
Association	Human Services -	Sarah Severson, FBLA
Chippewa County DHS	CWDA/Birth to Three	Security Financial Bank
Staff	Jayna Kelley Memorial	Bloomer Staff
Chip. County Parks & Rec	Foundation	Stanley-Boyd HS FCCLA

We are deeply grateful to the many community partners who collaborated with us throughout 2024 and/or generously supported our Foster Care Program or other initiatives. THANK YOU for your commitment to the community and your dedication to serving others!

Chippewa County Public	Kiwanis Club	Tilden Lion's Club
Health	Knights of Columbus Hall	TTM Technologies Outreach
Chippewa County Sheriff's	Members	Committee
Department	Krystal's Kuts & Kurls	Twice Blessed Resale Shop
Chippewa Falls Police	Kwik Trip - Woodward Ave	Valley Vineyard Church
Department & Alumni	Lotts A Meats	We Mow Lawn Care/The
Chippewa Falls YMCA	Mason Companies	LaBelle Family
Community Members	Mayo Clinic - Chippewa	Wisconsin Foster Closet
County Board Members	Falls Staff	Zion United Methodist
Dan the Moving Man	McDonnell Student	Women
Drewmark Boutique	Ambassadors	
Eagleton Snow Flyers	Mykle Buhrow, Chi Hi	
Elaine Starck	National Honor Society	
	Northwestern Bank	