

**Proposals for Program Evaluations –  
Supervisor R. Andrae Proposed 12/8/2022 for Program Year 2023  
(Listed by Sup. Andrae in order of priority)**

**PROPOSAL 1: Staffing Study of Dane County Medical Examiner’s Office (DCMEO)**

- Background and Scope (Who, what, when, where, which programs, functions, people): In the last decade, DCMEO has experienced many significant changes including rapid growth and transition from a Coroner’s Office to a Medical Examiner model, new facilities, and contracting for services with both Rock and Brown counties. In 2022, DCMEO also made rapid adjustments in staffing and resource allocation due to loss of the Brown county contract for services. DCMEO has also seen significant transition in multiple leadership roles. The office relies heavily on contracted LTEs for services, including from out-of-state service experts, based on the inconsistency in cases and highly competitive employment market.
  
- Research Questions and Actionable Potential: Several key questions are outlined below. This proposal is timely in that an office-wide evaluation has not been conducted since the ME’s office was formed from a Coroner model, and since the change in contracting with Brown county occurred. Investigator staff have also been engaged with management in identifying appropriate schedules, which has also included discussions with HR and EGRs.
  1. Should any LTE positions be converted to FTE and/or should new permanent positions be considered? This should consider how roles and responsibilities are appropriately identified for LTEs and FTEs, overall expenditure on LTEs, and national models/best practices for staffing.
  2. How do turnover rates at DCMEO compare to national measures? Can we benchmark retention relative to comparable ME offices?
  3. Are shifts and scheduling meeting the needs of staff and client needs? Are there opportunities to restructure that would meet more of our goals?
  4. Is contracting with other counties for service sustainable given the high demand for pathologists and other subject matter experts?
  
- Budget Implications: I have discussed this proposal with Dr. Rogalska who is amenable to a program evaluation at DCMEO. This evaluation would be used to identify actionable decision-points for staffing models that should be considered for the 2024 budget. This office is highly public-facing and provides critical services to the public. Appropriate staffing and ensuring long-term sustainability are key to meeting the needs of the public who engage with DCMEO staff at the most challenging of life’s moments.

## PROPOSAL 2: Designing an Evaluation for the Dane County Sheriff's Office (DCSO)/Journey Co-Responder Crisis Model

- Background and Scope (Who, what, when, where, which programs, functions, people): This proposal would design an evaluation for the DCSO co-responder model in which Mental Health Deputies at DCSO respond to mental health crises in partnership with crisis responders from Journey Mental Health. This proposal would not result in the actual evaluation being completed, but could inform staff needs for ongoing evaluation of this important program. The 2023 budget invests additional crisis staff resources in the co-responder model, and also shifts DCSO resources from Community Deputies to Mental Health Deputies. The budget also includes a new position in Human Services to investigate the design of a county-wide system for crisis response, including consideration of the current co-responder model and any alternatives. To identify whether that model is meeting community needs and to inform the work of the new Human Services staff, an evaluation model would be helpful. There are many existing evaluations of similar models in other jurisdictions that could be leveraged.
- Research Questions and Actionable Potential:
  1. What qualitative and quantitative data points should be included in ongoing evaluation?
  2. How can the voice of people served be best included to understand if the model is meeting the needs of the public?
  3. What data points should be monitored quarterly, annually, and long-term?
  4. How should data be integrated and leveraged for continuous quality improvement?
  5. What downstream impacts of the model should be studied in the future?
  6. What partners may be useful for long-term evaluations (e.g., consideration of PHMDC evaluation for the CARES pilot, UniverCity resources and other local or national academic partnerships)?
  7. In what venues and forums should evaluation findings be shared?
  8. What resources will be needed for actionable, ongoing evaluation of the program?
- Budget Implications: With significant new resources deployed in the Mental Health Deputy/Journey co-responder model, it is reasonable to consider staffing needs or external resources for robust ongoing evaluation. There is also considerable interest among County Board members and the public in sustaining alternatives to traditional law enforcement response for mental health crises, and scaling successes county-wide. Understanding the successes, challenges, and opportunities related to the co-responder model is a priority, and may require additional resources for thorough evaluation.

### PROPOSAL 3: Qualitative Evaluation of Medical/Mental Health Services at the Dane County Jail

- Background and Scope (Who, what, when, where, which programs, functions, people): Dane County will begin a new five-year contract with WellPath for medical and mental health services provided for residents of the Dane County jail. This will be the third contract with WellPath, and is a significant county investment (\$38.7 million). An external audit has not been conducted to validate that services are optimally meeting resident needs. Further, there have been changes in the scope of medical services provided at the jail (e.g., the important addition of Medication Assisted Treatment, or MAT, services). In addition to GPR, grants and opioid settlement funds are also contributing to the robust services available at the jail. While DCSO went through a thorough process to produce a request for proposals and evaluate respondents in 2022's RFP process, it is important to solicit and evaluate feedback from residents and community members regarding medical and mental health services available in the jail. A future analysis could produce a thorough quantitative analysis; this proposal is for resident and community engagement to highlight the lived experiences of individuals receiving services.
- Research Questions and Actionable Potential:
  1. Are culturally-appropriate, representative providers available for medical and mental health services?
  2. Do residents feel they have access to appropriate crisis services while in the jail?
  3. Are residents transitioning to the community adequately connected with a primary care medical home before release?
  4. Are there opportunities to improve coordination with existing primary care providers while residents are in jail?
  5. How are local health care partners including hospitals impacted by staffing challenges for medical/mental health staff at the jail (e.g., have Wellpath staffing shortages at the jail resulted in more ER visits)?
  6. Assuming appropriate consents are in place, are family members of residents able to access timely information regarding resident medical and mental well-being?
- Budget Implications: With the start of a new contract in January 2023, this evaluation could provide meaningful insights regarding gaps in services and/or opportunities to supplement existing contracts with additional community partnerships. It could also inform an in-depth audit for a future budget year in advance of future contracting. The evaluation should also identify and inform programs that are grant-funded which should be prioritized for ongoing sustainability.