

Recommendations for Mental Health Programs/Spending in Dane County 2019 Budget

(to support movement forward since the County study of the gaps in mental health services has not yet been contracted or completed)

From the MOSES Justice System Reform Group

October 23, 2018

1. Expand Re-entry Coordination capacity, by increasing the part-time position to full-time (Sheriff's Dept.), so that everyone being released from the jail into the Dane County community has a plan and follow-up services for a minimum of 6 months. This is especially important for people who have mental health and/or substance abuse issues.
2. Invest/focus resources on people identified as "Familiar Faces" in the Dane County jail population.
3. We support efforts to continue and expand:
 - a. Restorative Justice courts/programs.
 - b. Use of community service "sentences" in lieu of incarceration for low level offenses.
 - c. The number and reach of mobile crisis response staff/teams.
 - d. The participation of certified peer counselors (support specialists) in providing assistance to people involved in mental health and AODA programs.
 - e. Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for first responders, jail staff, and others.
4. Increase availability of addiction treatment programs--both residential and outpatient. (This is a need that has never been met and it is growing.)
5. Establish outreach and case management services for people who need assistance navigating medical and other social services, who otherwise do not qualify for case management through existing programs.
6. Continue engagement of community groups in the effort to establish best practices in our criminal justice systems to eliminate racial disparities and reduce the number of people with mental health and substance abuse issues in the justice system.
7. There is an urgent need to improve the coordination and delivery of existing mental health and addiction treatment services in Dane County. To move this forward, we recommend:
 - a. Inviting medical and mental health providers to collaborate in identifying and removing barriers to timely access to treatment services (inpatient and outpatient), eliminating waiting lists.
 - b. Convening a workgroup to identify and sustain strategies to improve processes and expedite cases for people in the jail with significant mental health, substance abuse, or developmental disability issues as may be appropriate. [Res. 556 recommendation]