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**Sponsor:** Social Services

**Meeting Date:** 6/27/2023

**Title:** Grant Agreement with Minnesota Department of Human Services for Mental Health Urgent Care for Youth in Crisis Pilot Project

**File Number:** 2023-230

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**Background and Rationale:**

Children and youth who are experiencing a mental health crisis are often unable to find care. Unless they are a danger to themselves or others, they are not assigned to an open bed that may be needed for “critical care” patients. The shortage of beds for those who need intensive care leaves many waiting in the emergency room for hours or winding up in jail.

The 2022 Legislature passed a bill that required the commissioner of human services to establish a pilot project that would address emergency mental health needs for youth who experience a mental health crisis. Ramsey County was given the right-of-first-refusal to receive funding and operate the pilot project.

The law provided the following guidelines for the pilot project:

- Ramsey County may partner with:
  - (1) a medical provider, including hospitals or emergency rooms;
  - (2) a nonprofit organization that provides mental health services; or
  - (3) a nonprofit organization serving an underserved community that will partner with an existing medical provider or nonprofit organization that provides mental health services.
  
- The partnering entity or entities must have the capability to:
  - (1) perform a medical evaluation and mental health evaluation upon a youth's admittance to the facility;
  - (2) accommodate a youth's stay for up to 14 days;
  - (3) conduct a substance use disorder screening;
  - (4) conduct a mental health crisis assessment;
  - (5) provide peer support services;
  - (6) provide crisis stabilization services;
  - (7) provide access to crisis psychiatry; and
  - (8) provide access to care planning and case management.
  
- Ramsey County and/or its partners must have staff who are licensed mental health professionals as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 2451.02, subdivision 27, and must have a connection to inpatient and outpatient mental health services, including the ability to provide physical health screenings.
  
- Ramsey County must agree to accept patients regardless of their insurance status or their ability to pay.

Ramsey County accepted the pilot project opportunity and has developed a detailed plan of services

that will be provided and the staffing required to provide them, as well as estimated costs for the pilot project.

Proposed services will be provided at 402 University Avenue, a building that currently houses Ramsey County's crisis services for adults, youth and children. The pilot project will add services targeting African American males ages 13-18 to improve mental wellness by providing timely assessments, triage and supportive interventions that are culturally responsive and family-centered. Program staff will partner with family and community members to determine the appropriate level of care and immediate intervention option.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services will provide \$1,000,000 for the pilot project that will run through June 30, 2024, and Ramsey County staff will be shifted from existing positions to provide services during this period. The pilot project will provide an opportunity for the county to determine the level of community need and use of extended services for youth, the demographics of those served and whether the target population is served, and the actual cost of operations. A program evaluation at the close of the pilot project will determine actual revenues and costs and the feasibility of continuing operations without continued grant funding.

**Recommendation:**

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Accept a grant award and approve a grant agreement with Minnesota Department of Human Services for a pilot project to expand the Mental Health Urgent Care Facility to provide mental health services for youth in crisis during the period of June 27, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the grant agreement.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Frethem, MatasCastillo, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By:   
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Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board