

Wayside Youth and Family Support Network

Executive Summary:

Wayside Youth & Family Support Network (“Wayside”) is a mid-sized non-profit agency with over 40 years of serving children, young adults, and their families with our continuum of services including a full range of outpatient clinic services; in-home family treatment, counseling, and support; residential treatment; and a variety of innovative community prevention, care-coordination, and support services. Overall, Wayside serves a racially, culturally, economically and linguistically diverse population of children, young adults and their families. Across our service array, Wayside has extensive experience providing services for many different state agencies including the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Public Health (DPH), and is a primary provider for Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI) services across our catchment areas. The agency has been continuously accredited by the national Council On Accreditation (COA) since 1999.

Wayside Youth & Family Support Network is pleased to serve as the Community Service Agency for the Framingham and Lowell Areas. Wayside has served in this capacity for Framingham since the inception of the CBHI in 2009. Wayside subsequently became the CSA for the Lowell Area on 12/31/2012 when the previous CSA in Lowell opted to discontinue its contract.

Overall, Wayside’s Framingham and Lowell CSA development plans share a focus on expanding and improving timely access to Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) and Family Support and Training (FS&T) services, as well as continuous improvement in reaching high fidelity Wraparound, most specifically in the areas of strengthening community connections, natural supports, and team based collaboration. Both sites have common and unique strengths as well as needs that are being addressed on their respective development plans.

The strengths of Wayside’s Lowell CSA include a current steady enrollment of an average of 105 youth, a vibrant System of Care with a consistent membership of 25-30, and a growing team of staff that provide significant cultural and linguistic diversity. The strengths of Wayside’s Framingham CSA include a core team of staff that have been part of the CSA since its inception in 2009, and Family Partners that have various expertise in adoption, substance abuse, transition aged youth, and Grandparents as primary caregivers.

Both the Lowell and Framingham CSAs share common strengths of strong community connections and significant knowledge of community resources to support the families enrolled. In addition, both CSAs have strong partnerships with local health centers and primary care practices. The Lowell CSA has received several referrals from Lowell Community Health Center and Lowell Pediatrics and has strong partnerships with their multidisciplinary teams. In this same vein, the Framingham CSA has experience working with multiple medically complex youth and has had successful collaborations with Children’s Hospital and the UMass Hospital system.

As another area of strength, Wayside’s overall commitment to recruitment, staff retention and staff training have begun to yield successful outcomes. Since Wayside hired a fulltime staff recruiter in 2015 approximately 15 new Intensive Care Coordinators and 7 new Family Partners have been hired. Between both CSAs combined, approximately 55 % of staff have been in their positions for over 2 years. This past year all Wayside agency staff have been trained on using

Motivational Interviewing and several staff have participated in an Intensive Learning Community focused upon the ARC model. Additionally, several staff have participated in the Family Partner CBHI course through Urban College; others have completed Wraparound Tier One Certification, and various Wraparound Refreshers. Wayside also provides monthly free clinical trainings on topics such as trauma, substance abuse, diversity, and working with specialty populations such as immigration, divorce, adoption and parental mental health.

A significant area of need for both the Framingham and Lowell CSAs is to improve timely access to ICC services. Each site's development plan has a priority goal to eliminate wait times for ICC services by increasing capacity by hiring more staff. This goal also matches a key Wayside goal on the agency strategic plan. The action steps identified to reach this goal includes increased recruiting efforts through various external platforms, increasing compensation and benefits, cross-training existing staff and developing an internal career ladder to promote upward mobility into Care Coordination roles.

In addition to these existing strategies, Wayside has recently partnered with Middlesex Community College to develop a Children's Behavioral Health Certificate program that will establish a work force pipeline for Family Partners and Therapeutic Mentors. As will be outlined in one of our proposed projects in this proposal, Wayside plans to develop similar partnerships with Framingham State University and UMass Lowell to establish a workforce pipeline for Intensive Care Coordinators through internships and service learning projects.

Another area of development that both CSAs have been focusing on is increasing high fidelity Wraparound in the areas of strengthening sustainable community connections, natural supports and team-based coordination. The action steps identified to reach these goals consist of monthly focus groups within the CSA team to brainstorm new strategies and create achievable action steps; increased frequency of initial Wraparound training and regular Wraparound Refreshers on specific phases and principles.

To this end, this past year both CSAs have been active participants in their respective regional Wraparound coaching teams. Both regions have been focusing on joint initial Wraparound trainings as well as monthly joint Wraparound refreshers. All CSA staff have participated in Wraparound Refreshers within their own CSA, as well as refresher trainings hosted by other CSAs in the region.

Lastly, an area of focus for both CSAs to develop is in strengthening coordination with pediatric primary care. Although, there has been some recent success as previously mentioned through an increase in referrals and specific collaborations, more work is needed. Action steps towards achieving this goal include developing better internal systems and efficiencies, and improving technology focused upon increasing communication and ongoing planning with pediatricians.

DSRIP funds will support Wayside's efforts towards overcoming the challenges of recruiting and retaining a vibrant and well-trained workforce, ensuring maximum fidelity to Wraparound, improving overall integration with Primary Care, and increasing efficiency of all staff via mobile technology.