

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

DATE: March 5, 2018

TO: Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mary Jo Meyers, Acting Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by: Mark Mertens, Division of Youth & Family Services Administrator

SUBJECT: **Report from the Acting Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting passive review of a 2018 professional services contract amendment for Multisystemic Therapy (MST) with MST Services, LLC**

Issue

Per Wis. Stat. §59.52(31), contracts, in excess of \$100,000 but less than \$300,000, require County Board passive review. In accordance with this statute, the Acting Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is submitting a 2018 professional services contract with MST Services, LLC for passive review.

Background

Since December 2015, key partners, including the County Executive, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, Chief Judge, District Attorney, Public Defender, DHHS Director, Division of Youth & Family Services (DYFS)¹ Administrator, Wraparound Milwaukee Director and other involved parties have been meeting to formulate a plan to address the crisis at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake and ensure the safety of youth. As part of this process, the development of a Residential Treatment Center (RTC) for youth is currently being implemented. The treatment component of this RTC was awarded to Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) with the Milwaukee County Board approving the contract on February 1, 2018 (File No. 18-71). Multisystemic therapy is one component of the programming and treatment provided to youth and their families in the RTC.

In February, DHHS executed an initial contract for \$99,000 so that it could engage MST Services and prepare for the estimated May 1 opening of the RTC. This amendment for passive review would increase the total contract by \$51,000 to \$150,000 starting March 22 to December 31, 2018.

¹ In September 2017, the County Board adopted Resolution File No. 17-601 which authorized DHHS to change the name of the Delinquency and Court Services Division to the Division of Youth & Family Services to better reflect the mission of Milwaukee County in serving youth in the justice system.

Discussion

Multisystemic Therapy

Multisystemic Therapy-MST is one component of the RTC treatment model for kids and their families. MST is a family and community-based program specifically designed to address the needs (risk and protective factors) of adjudicated youth diagnosed with mental health and substance use disorders. MST uses therapists to coach caregivers in establishing productive partnerships with schools, community supports, probation department, and other systems, and to help caregivers develop skills to be effective advocates for those in their care. Throughout the intervention, coaches look for opportunities to encourage youth to apply the skills they learn in real-world settings. The premise of MST is that improvement in family functioning and parent monitoring contribute to a decrease in affiliation with deviant peers leading to a decrease in delinquent behavior.

Multisystemic Therapy–Family Integrated Transitions (MST–FIT) is an extension of MST. The primary goals of MST–FIT programs are to decrease rates of antisocial behavior and other clinical problems, improve functioning (e.g., family relations, school performance), and achieve these outcomes at a cost savings by preventing the need for youth to return to out-of-home placements such as incarceration and residential treatment. MST- FIT specifically targets youth who are transitioning from residential or correctional care back home.

In this model, the youth and their family will start working with their MST therapist two months before the youth is scheduled to transition back home. The MST clinician is a part of the youth's team and will work very closely with the youth while in the RTC as well as during their transition time and will continue when the youth is back home. The clinicians will work with the whole family, including parents and siblings, for four to six months after discharge from the RTC and will gradually decrease their time with the family as their functioning improves and the family learns to advocate for themselves. The MST clinicians are on call 24 hours a day for the family and also link the families to community-based resources and supports that the family identifies as a need.

The contract with the MST Group includes the annual licensing fees for the MST, program development and start up fees, annual program support, training fees, and data collection fees.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorize the Acting Director, Department of Health and Human Services, or her designee, to enter into an amendment to a professional services contract with the MST Group for Multisystemic Therapy licensing and support in the amount of \$51,000 starting March 22, 2018 through December 31, 2018 for a total contract of \$150,000.

Fiscal Impact

A fiscal note form is attached.



Mary Jo Meyers, Acting Director
Department of Health and Human Services

- cc: County Executive, Chris Abele
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Supervisor Peggy West, Chair, Finance and Audit Committee
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