

**Budget Committee on Human Services  
Human Service Center Study  
Senator Dever, Chairman  
July 10, 2006**

**Senator Dever and members of the Budget Committee on Human Services, I am Marilyn Rudolph, Regional Director of Northwest Human Service Center. I am here today to provide you with an overview of Northwest Human Service Center.**

**Northwest Human Service Center provides a variety of services to the residents of Divide, McKenzie and Williams counties.**

**This presentation will focus on the Human Service Center reporting format developed by the Legislative Council.**

**Northwest Human Service Center continues to see impact from the upturn in oil activity. It is interesting to note that much of the population of this region is working; thus referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation are down. Clients who had difficulty finding a job now walk in and are immediately hired for starting wages of \$9.00 per hour and sign-on bonuses. Two businesses in Williston have closed due to lack of labor pool. We are seeing more individuals applying for services who are working with no benefits. These same individuals were covered by Medicaid previously, thus some of our revenue is negatively impacted.**

**Northwest has always promoted work as a therapeutic tool and key in the recovery process. Two examples of success are Western Sunrise, the consumer run, non-profit corporation which has contracts with Northwest Human Service Center and Williston Parks and Recreation for janitorial services, car washes and park maintenance. Recently the work crew supervised by the Club Director prepared the fairgrounds for the County Fair. This type of work instills the basic skills for work readiness and we have many individuals who have gone on to individual**

employment.

Another successful venture has been the Peer Support model. Consumers who are stable in their recovery mentor and assist consumers who are newly diagnosed or have had an exacerbation of their illness. Peer support is non-threatening and available 24 hours a day. This prevents hospitalization and allows individuals to stay at home. Both are low-cost programs which are easily sustained.

Partnerships within our community have allowed Northwest to access Federal monies for program and housing. Our partnership with Community Action has produced the funding for a HUD Section 811 supportive housing project with eight apartments for individuals with serious mental illness. This should be open in late 2007.

Our partnership with Mercy Hospital, the Prevention Coalition and the schools has allowed "Healthy Williston, Healthy Youth" to be a major vehicle for prevention education. There is no cost to the human service center.

Mercy Recovery continues to provide addiction services with the guesting option. This has proven to be both economical and extremely effective in treating methamphetamine use.

One of the challenges in the upcoming biennium will be recruitment of staff. Easily ten (10) of the current 45.5 FTEs are eligible and plan to retire. These are credentialed staff, of which half are supervisory.

Child Psychiatry is a gap in service which we hope to fill with tele-medicine. We have again partnered with Mercy Hospital to recruit a psychiatrist.

Common themes are evident. Staff retirements lead to a loss of historical knowledge and expertise. Recruiting and retaining skilled staff in a very competitive market will be a major challenge. Inflationary impact on utilities, technology and transportation are difficult to absorb.

➤ **Total Budget Overview**

For the 2005-2007 biennium the Northwest Human Service Center began with a total budget of \$7,352,302 and an authorized FTE count of 50.00. The following changes have taken place since the start of the biennium resulting in the center's budget being reduced by \$86,742 and its staff 4.50 FTEs.

- **Transfer 1.00 FTE to Centralized Billing**
- **Privatization of Infant Development Services 2.50 FTEs**
- **Transfer 1.00 FTE to North Central HSC**
- **Transfer Funding for Centralized Billing.....(\$58,437)**
- **Transfer FCSP Client Service Funding to Central Office.....(\$28,305)**

This leaves a current budget for Northwest of \$7,265,560 and 45.50 FTEs.

This concludes my testimony. I appreciate you taking the time to visit our Center.

**Attachments:**

- **NWHSC Budget – Total**
- **NWHSC Budget – Administration**
- **NWHSC Budget – Child Welfare Services**
- **NWHSC Budget – Disability Services**
- **NWHSC Budget – Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services**
- **NWHSC Budget – Older Adult Services**
- **NWHSC Budget – Older Americans Act Services**
- **NWHSC Organizational Chart**