

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | Dec. 9, 2019

Human Services hires Odermann to lead Badlands Human Service Center in Dickinson

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services has hired Jessica Odermann to lead its Badlands Human Service Center in Dickinson. Odermann, who has strong family connections to the community of Dickinson and the Badlands region, has 10 years of public service experience in a variety of different roles including behavioral health and has also worked in the nonprofit sector.

Prior to accepting the leadership position at Badlands, Odermann worked for the department's Behavioral Health Division as a community prevention specialist based in Bismarck. She oversaw the Parent's Lead program and provided technical assistance to community coalitions and public health units across the state on evidence-based substance abuse prevention.

While attending graduate school at the University of North Dakota (UND) in Grand Forks, she worked for the Community Violence Intervention Center as a domestic violence advocate and community prevention specialist providing education and training. She also served on the sexual assault response team, collaborating with law enforcement, the hospital and other stakeholders.

Odermann is the first locally-based director at the regional human service center in Dickinson since L. Joe Fry retired in 2002.

"For many years, our regional human service center directors each managed two centers, and we appreciate Brad Brown's leadership at both our Bismarck and Dickinson human service centers," said Jeff Stenseth, the department's Field Services Operations Officer.

"With Jessica joining our management team and providing full-time, on-site leadership at Badlands, and Brad assuming full-time duties at West Central Human Service Center in Bismarck, both Jessica and Brad will be able to develop stronger relationships with their local partners and collaborate more effectively on community-wide solutions to behavioral health needs," he said.

Stenseth said on-site regular leadership is increasingly important as the department works with partners to strengthen the range of behavioral health services – especially crisis and outpatient behavioral health services. Badlands and West Central were the last regional centers using the shared management model.

"Through my previous position, I have already been able to establish relationships with some of the community partners and providers in the region," Odermann said. "I appreciate this opportunity to continue working with partners and the team at Badlands, as we focus on getting needed services and supports to people sooner and at a lower level of care in our community."

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Odermann has also worked providing direct behavioral health services and support to youth with serious behavioral health needs. Early in her career, she worked at Northeast Human Service Center's Ruth Meier's Adolescent Center, a 10-bed psychiatric residential treatment facility in Grand Forks.

Odermann earned a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in psychology from UND. She and her family reside in Dickinson.

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CONTACT:

Heather Steffl | 701-328-4933
hsteffl@nd.gov

LuWanna Lawrence | 701-328-1892
lklawrence@nd.gov