

**Judicial Process Committee**  
**Representative Shirley Meyer, Chairman**  
**December 14, 2009**

Chairman Meyer and members of the Judicial Process Committee, I am Tim Sauter, Director of Badlands Human Service Center (BHSC) and West Central Human Service Center (WCHSC) for the Department of Human Services (DHS). I am submitting this testimony to provide you an overview of the services provided by BHSC to the people in southwest North Dakota.

**Badlands Human Service Center**

Badlands Human Service Center (BHSC) serves the people of Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope, and Stark counties.

**Overview of Services**

- Badlands is one of eight Regional Human Service Centers that provides community based services to help individuals and families with concerns including family and relationship issues, mental health, addiction, disabilities, and other needs. (see attached brochure)
- BHSC is the primary provider of human services in the eight county service area.

**Caseload/Customer Base**

- Badlands served 1,891 individuals (1,342 adults and 548 children) in SFY 2009.
- Additionally, 288 individuals received vocational rehabilitation services.

- 93% of adults receiving services and 91% of the parents whose children receive services, report satisfaction with those services.
- 95% of clients receiving vocational rehabilitation services report satisfaction.

### **Service Trends/Challenges**

- Clients continue to present with complex problems including persons with more than one diagnosis and persons who abuse multiple drugs.
- There has been an increase in referrals to the North Dakota State Hospital (NDSH) from the BHSC, due to the closing of the psychiatric unit at St. Joseph's Hospital.
- There has been an increase in mental health crisis calls to the BHSC.
- More people are receiving medical detoxification services through our contract with St. Joseph's Hospital.
- Transportation is a challenge for individuals needing inpatient services at the NDSH or other facilities.
- The number of referrals from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has increased; this now comprises 50% or more of individuals in adult addiction programs in this region.
- Almost 100% of adolescents receiving addiction services are referred from Juvenile Court or the Department of Juvenile Services.
- There is a need for long term residential services for persons with chronic addictions and for persons with severe and persistent mental illness in the region.
- Recruitment continues to be difficult for staff with advanced credentials.

## **Accomplishments**

- BHSC, along with the other Regional Human Service Centers, has implemented evidence-based practice models.
- We increased the number of residential beds available to adults with mental illness and for those who have substance abuse problems from 9 to 16.
- We successfully contracted with an independent psychiatrist and a telemedicine provider.
- We initiated contracts with the medical centers in Bismarck to provide psychiatric stabilization of indigent clients from Region VIII.
- BHSC in partnership with other providers implemented an addiction counselor training consortium.
- In July 2007, a Mental Health Coalition was formed to address mental health crisis needs in the Region. Members include BHSC, St. Joseph's Hospital, law enforcement, states attorneys, County Social Services, Southwest Multi County Correction Center, Juvenile Court, Dickinson Area Ambulance, and others.
- To meet the need of rural areas, we have enhanced our outreach services in Adams, Bowman, Hettinger and Golden Valley counties.

This concludes my testimony for Badlands Human Service Center. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.