

**Department of Human Services
Energy Development and Transmission Committee
Senator Rich Wardner, Chairman
September 2, 2015**

Chairman Wardner, and members of the Energy Development and Transmission Committee, I am Laurie Gotvaslee, Director of Northwest Human Service Center (NWHSC) and North Central Human Service Center (NCHSC) for the Department of Human Services (DHS). I am here today to provide you an overview of the programs and services of Northwest Human Service Center, which is located in Williston.

Northwest Human Service Center

NWHSC serves Divide, McKenzie and Williams counties. Outreach offices are located in Watford City, Crosby and Tioga. Case managers, clinicians/medication providers and program staff travel to deliver outreach services to each of the three counties.

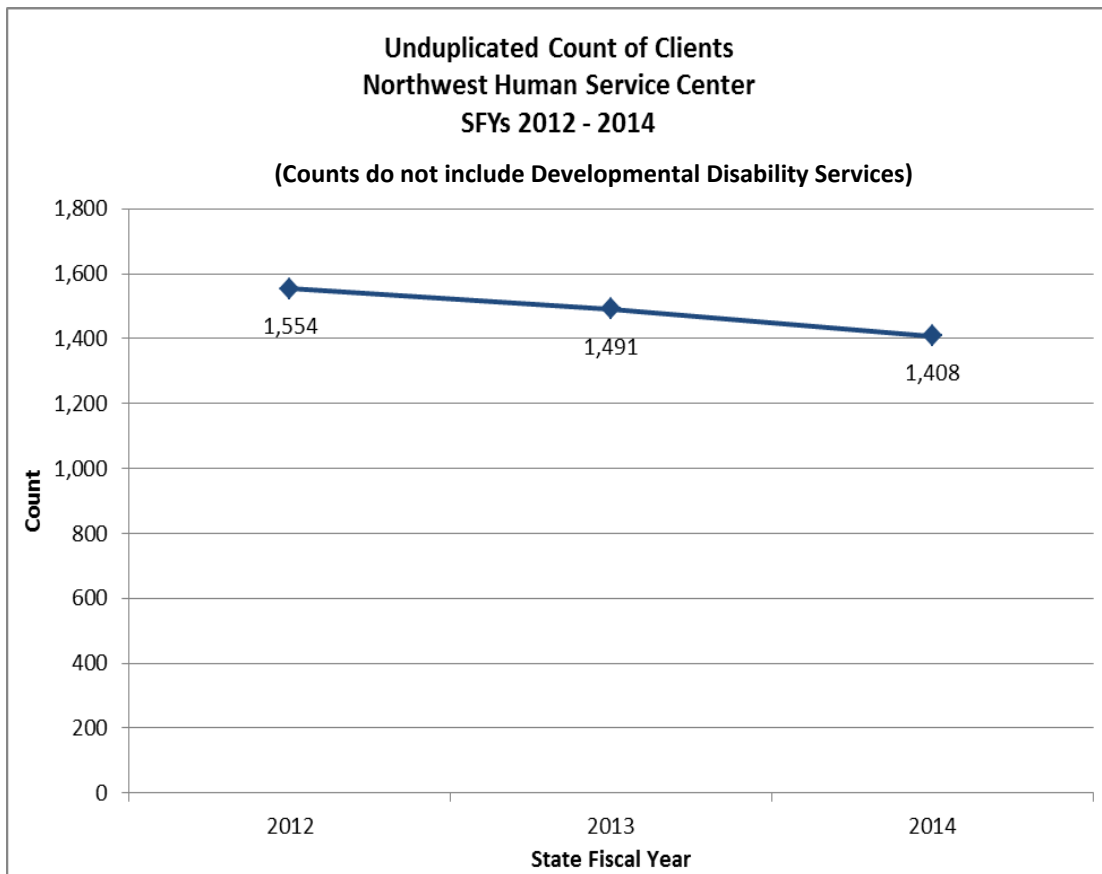
NWHSC offers psychiatric evaluation/medication monitoring and psychological evaluations, case management for individuals with a developmental disability, a serious mental illness and to families with children who have a mental illness (Partnership/Transition into Permanency-TIP). NWHSC offers evidenced-based treatment such as trauma-focused therapy for adults and children. NWHSC also offers addiction services which include: addiction evaluations, low-intensity outpatient, intensive outpatient, aftercare as well as adolescent evaluation, individual and low-intensity group.

- NWHSC is currently in the process of developing a voucher system for addiction services in Northwest North Dakota. This would allow NWHSC and eventually NCHSC in Minot, to partner with private addiction providers. NWHSC does not currently have a residential component to the addiction treatment provided; therefore consumers in need of this level of service are referred to North Central Human Service Center programming in Minot or other regions of the state.
- Northwest Human Service Center is also working toward “Open Access” services which will allow the Center to provide services to the primary populations with little or no waiting for appointments. NWHSC has been providing “open access” for addiction evaluations since the fall of 2014, which has drastically reduced the no-show rate and has increased the timely response to consumers requesting addiction services. The “open access” for mental health is being launched September 15, 2015 and is expected to be as successful as the addiction services. Future plans would be to add psychiatric care to the “open access” services also.
- NWHSC is utilizing telehealth with NCHSC, to provide psychiatric and psychological services.

The partnership NWHSC has with the North Dakota Association for the Disabled (NDAD) remains a cost effective, critical resource, as it provides a safe, supervised environment for individuals in crisis. Williston has eight beds available for crisis residential/transitional living for individuals with serious mental illness. This allows clients to maintain stability and receive the full benefit of treatment. The availability of these beds allows

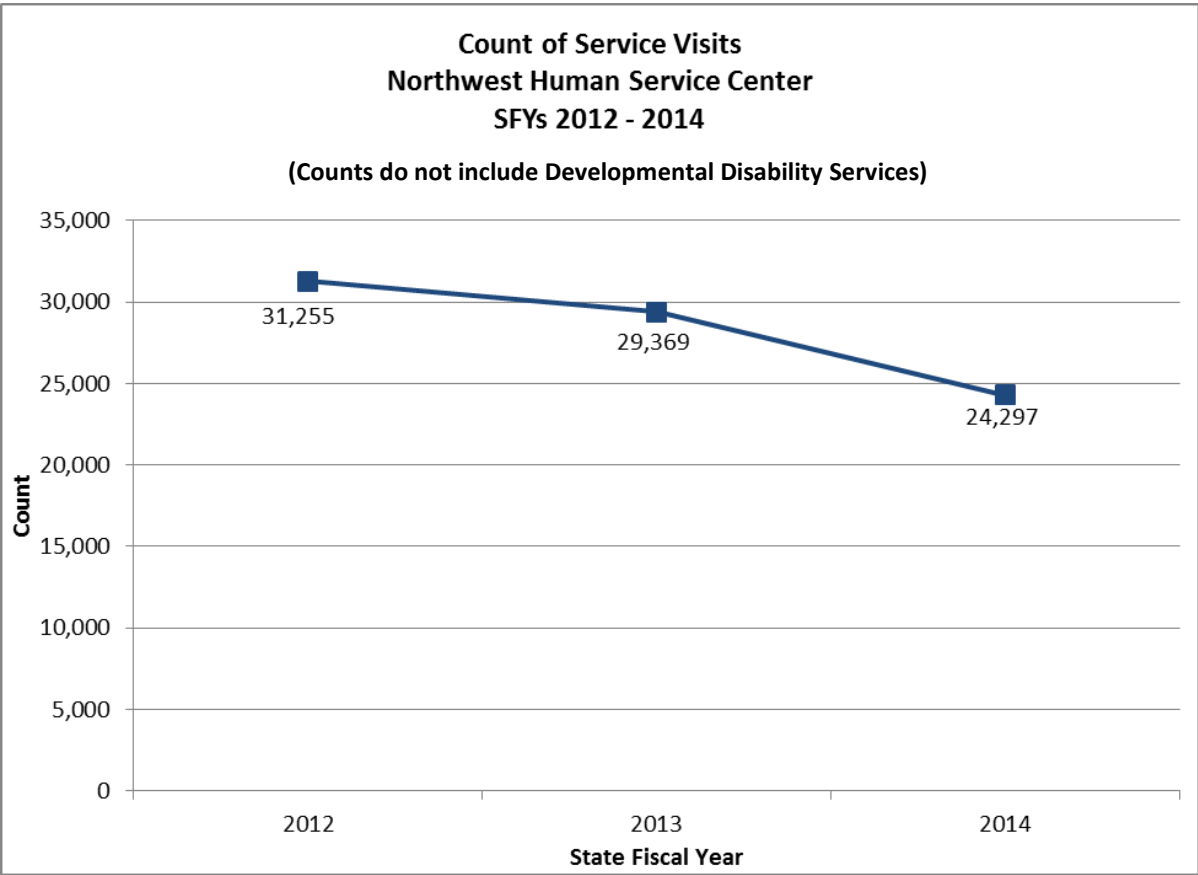
for medication monitoring, nutritional meals and the ability for community-based care, as opposed to hospitalization.

Caseload/ Customer Base:



The services included in the chart above are: individual, family and group therapy, medication management, case management/care coordination, evaluations and assessments.

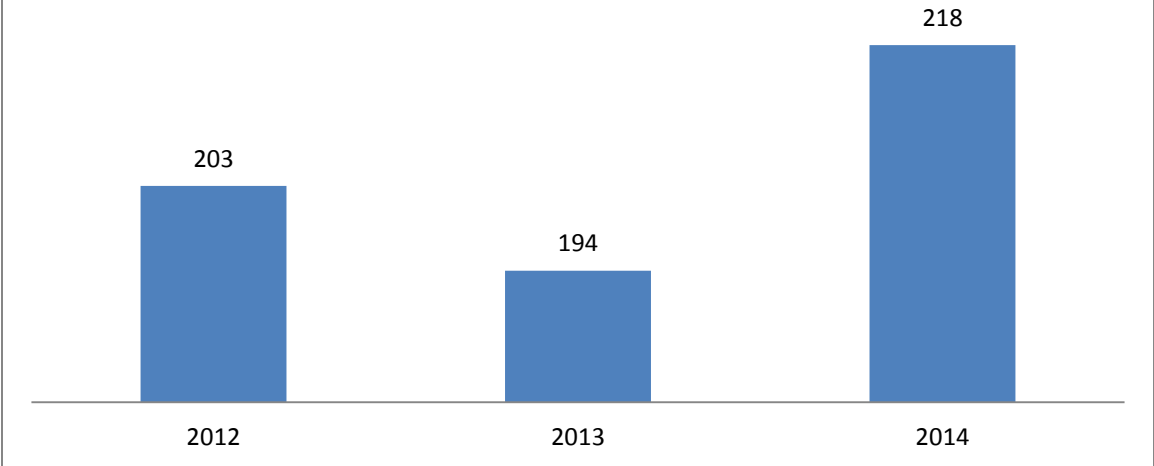
The decline in unduplicated client count can be attributed to NWHSC having limited addiction services and to the high staff turnover rate.



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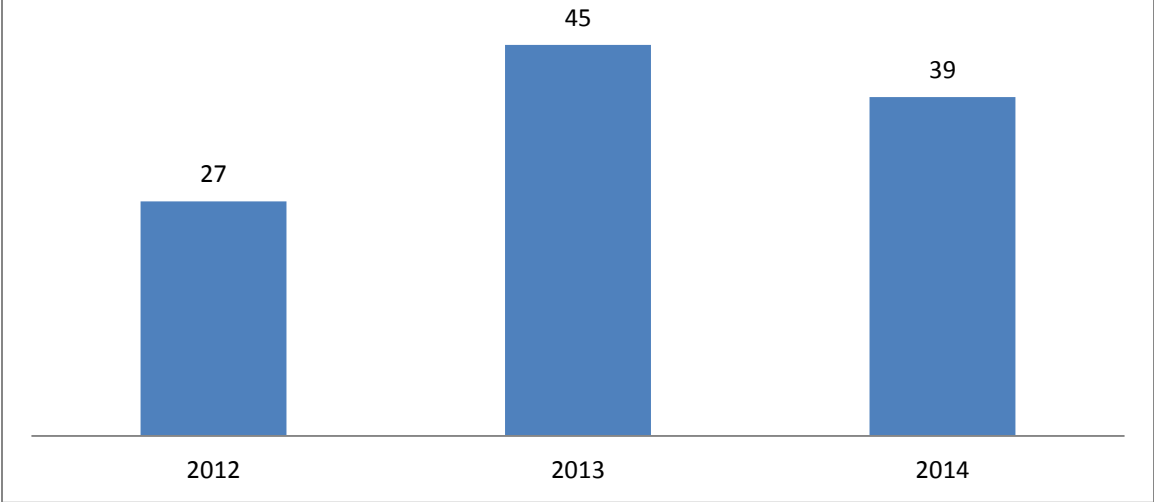
The decline in service visits can be attributed to NWHSC having limited addiction services and to the high staff turnover rate.

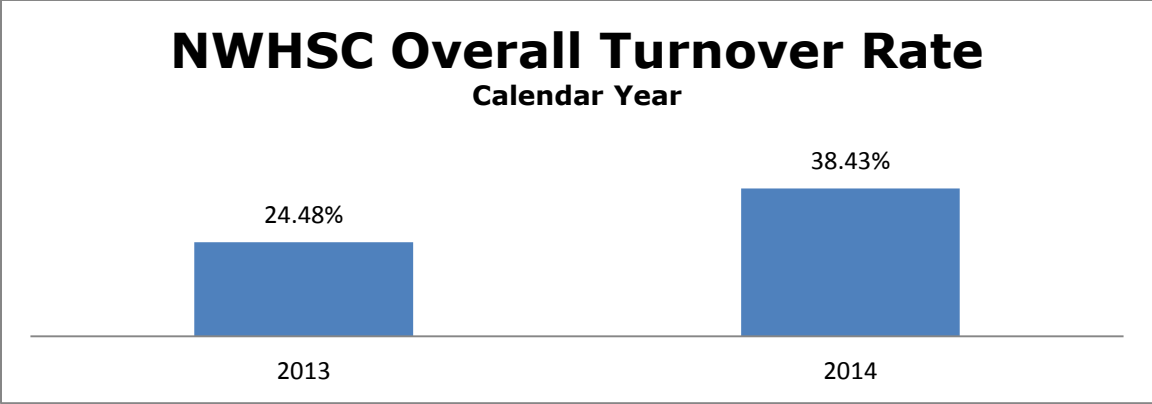
**Unduplicated Count of Clients Receiving DD
Program Management Services NWHSC
Caseload SFYs 2012-2014**



North Dakota State Hospital (NDSH) Admissions: (Through the inpatient contract the Department has with Trinity Health Care, during 2013/2014, an additional 128 consumers of the NWHSC region were able to be treated at Trinity Hospital in Minot, instead of having to be transported/treated at the NDSH).

**ND State Hospital Admissions Northwest
Human Service Center CY 2012-2014**





- NWHSC continues to have difficulty hiring staff when positions become vacant. The chart shows the overall turnover rate that NWHSC has experienced in the past two years: the high turnover rate drastically impacts services. Although this trend is across the board for all positions, the vacant positions that have had the greatest impact on services are licensed addiction counselors (LAC).
- NWHSC does utilize incentives such recruitment and retention bonuses as well as the "oil impact funding" to obtain and retain staff. NWHSC currently has open positions in medication management (mid-level medication provider), two developmental disabilities program managers, one licensed addiction counselor, one psychologist and one triage specialist (intake coordinator).

This completes my testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about Northwest Human Service Center.