

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 19, 2012

Contact: LuWanna Lawrence, Assistant Public Information Officer, 701-328-1892

**N.D. Department of Human Services Awarded Second Crisis
Counseling Grant to Support Flood-Affected Residents**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The federal government has awarded the N.D. Department of Human Services a \$2.54 million grant to continue providing confidential outreach crisis counseling and emotional support to flood-impacted residents of Barnes, Burleigh, McHenry, Morton, Ramsey, Renville, Richland, and Ward counties and the Spirit Lake Nation. In July 2011, the Department applied for and received an initial \$817,611 federal grant to begin counseling services in these counties and tribal area.

The continuation grant extends the funding for counseling services and will also expand services to residents living in Benson County, which has also been affected by flooding.

“People who experienced loss and distress from this summer’s flooding will be able to access longer-term counseling and emotional support thanks to this new funding,” said Lauren Sauer of the Department’s Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division.

The Department of Human Services contracts with Lutheran Disaster Response to provide crisis counseling services through Project Renew. Trained outreach workers go door-to-door and help individuals improve their coping strategies, and connect them with agencies and services that can assist as they recover from the disaster.

The grant funds were provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and FEMA, and will pay for services through October 2012.

Anyone interested in contacting an outreach worker from Project Renew is encouraged to call 1-701-630-2276. All calls are confidential and anonymous.

To date, nearly 31,000 individuals have received services through the federally-funded disaster crisis counseling grant.

Individuals can also contact the Department of Human Services’ Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services at 1-701-328-8920, toll-free 1-800-755-2719, ND Relay TTY 1-800-366-6888 or dhsmhsas@nd.gov.

###