

# **NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services**

## **600 East Boulevard Avenue – Department 325, Bismarck ND 58505-0250**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contacts: LuWanna Lawrence, Public Information Officer, 701-328-1892 or Heather Steffl, Public Information Manager, 701-328-4933

## **Hart Counseling Services of Jamestown to Provide Adult Protective Services for Vulnerable Adults**

Bismarck, N.D. – The N.D. Department of Human Services' Aging Services Division has contracted with Hart Counseling Services of Jamestown to provide the Vulnerable Adult Protective Services Program in Barnes, Dickey, Foster, Griggs, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Stutsman, and Wells counties. The program provides protective services to vulnerable adults who are at-risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

“Protecting vulnerable people is important work,” said Jan Engan, director of the department’s Aging Services Division. “We are pleased to be working with a partner in the Jamestown region that has experienced staff and is familiar with services that can help vulnerable people maintain their health, safety, and independence.”

Hart Counseling Services will be responsible for the overall administration and implementation of the Vulnerable Adult Protective Services Program in the region. Five staff members that include licensed independent clinical social workers and licensed social workers will respond to reports of possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation, conduct home visits to complete assessments, and make appropriate referrals for supportive services to help reduce or eliminate any risk or harm to a vulnerable adult.

As part of the contract, Hart Counseling Services will also be responsible for providing education and training about the program to community partners and other organizations.

Individuals living in the nine-county region can voluntarily report possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult by calling 701-952-8277 or [region6vaps@daktel.com](mailto:region6vaps@daktel.com). If a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, law enforcement should be called immediately. A reporter may remain anonymous.

A new North Dakota law requires certain professionals and other individuals to report possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult. Information on the mandatory reporting law, including reporting procedures, is online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/reporting.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/reporting.html).

The Vulnerable Adult Protective Services Program serves vulnerable adults age 18 and older or minors emancipated through marriage who have substantial mental or functional impairments. The program is offered statewide through either the N.D. Department of Human Services regional human service centers or through local partner agencies. Information about the program is online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/vulnerable.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/vulnerable.html).

In FFY 2013, the Vulnerable Adult Protective Services Program in the Jamestown region received about 180 reports of possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

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