2015
Annual Report
Mission Statement

Connections Case Management, through leadership and advocacy, shall promote and support quality comprehensive community services for persons with developmental disabilities, and their families in Jasper County.
Each year, I keep a manila folder in my desk. I use it to collect stories and other information about successes and events throughout the year involving our organization. At the end of twelve months, I look at the information and a common theme is usually apparent. Sure enough, when I looked through my folder this past summer, I saw a theme coming together.

This year’s theme is collaboration.

Throughout this report, you will find stories about members of our organization working with others in our local community, as well as across the state, to improve services for people with developmental disabilities. Typically, the tasks these colleagues took on involved months of meetings, often travelling across or around the state to share ideas, find common ground, and forge solutions. In addition, they were continuing to complete all of their other expected duties. The results of their efforts were beneficial to us, as well as to the organizations we partnered with and ultimately to the individuals we serve.

In this report, I tried to capture as many examples of our collaboration with others as possible. However, I see this type of partnership here every day as our case managers bring together individuals, families, providers, and other stakeholders to identify needs, set goals and determine courses of action. Working in cooperation with others to solve problems is just basic to what we do. I’d like to take this time to express my thanks to all of our employees for their efforts. I hope that as you read this report, you will see the impact they are making in our community.

Cindy Langford, Program Director

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

- Helen Keller
History

On October 2, 1998, the Jasper County Sheltered Facilities Board entered into an agreement with the Department of Mental Health/Division of Developmental Disabilities which provided the option for our board to provide case management services in Jasper County. Prior to this agreement, all case management services were provided through state offices operated by the Department of Mental Health. Connections Case Management opened their doors on December 7, 1998 with four employees serving 149 persons.

Initially, the Department of Mental Health, through the Joplin Regional Office, provided case management services to persons living in Jasper County in cooperation with Connections. Our organization grew steadily and consistently and demonstrated quality services. After several years, the Department of Mental Health determined that state-operated case management was no longer needed in Jasper County. On April 1, 2008, the Jasper County Sheltered Facilities Board entered into a new agreement with the Department of Mental Health that charged Connections Case Management with providing case management services to all persons in Jasper County who were qualified for services.

On October 1, 2010, the Partnership for Hope Medicaid Waiver was implemented. This is a matching funds agreement between various Missouri Senate Bill 40 counties, the Missouri Department of Mental Health, and Medicaid to provide funding and reduce waiting lists for services. Within five days of implementation of the Partnership Waiver, Connections Case Management secured the first two waiver slots in the state for persons to be served in Jasper County. Demand for this waiver continued to grow so in July 2012 the Partnership for Hope agreement between Missouri Senate Bill 40 counties and the Department of Mental Health was expanded. This allowed for hundreds more individuals across the state to participate in the waiver. From the time that the Partnership Waiver started until now, our board has funded a total of 91 slots. Currently, 54 people in Jasper County are participating in this waiver.

The need for case management services in Jasper County continues to grow. As the needs increase, Connections Case Management continues to grow. By June 30, 2015, we were serving 805 individuals and had a staff of 41 employees.
Our Services

**Who We Served:** Connections Case Management serves people of all ages. The average age of the people we serve is 28. Sixty-four percent of persons served are over the age of 18.

**Services Provided:** During this past year, our case managers provided over thirty-eight thousand hours of services. Case Management is used to help people in a variety of ways. Some of the services provided by our case managers include: helping people to develop a plan for themselves that identifies their needs and wishes, as well as strategies to achieve those needs and wishes, linking people to needed resources, investigating new avenues for resources, monitoring services to insure that the persons served are having their needs met in the manner they prefer, informing individuals about their rights, supporting individuals in efforts to be more independent and have greater control of their lives, and advocating for inclusion of all persons served in the community.

**Regional Transition Network**

Martha Tabb represents Connections at the Regional Transition Network meetings and events. This group works together in order to find ways to get information and resources out to students, parents and educators regarding preparing for life after graduation. During the year, they provide educational opportunities to school professionals in the area. They also look for ways to involve businesses and the entire community in transition-related activities. Each fall they hold a Transition Fair. During this event, high school students have an opportunity to visit informational booths so that they can gain knowledge about finding employment, post-high school education, career-planning and other topics that will help them prepare for life as an adult. The Fair also provides educational opportunities for parents on topics such as special needs planning and guardianship.
Quality of Services

Satisfaction of Persons Served: Each year, we send a satisfaction survey out to the responsible party for everyone we serve. This year, we received back responses from 163 people. Our average satisfaction rating was 94%. Below is the breakdown of each question asked on the survey and the individual score:

- My Case Manager values my ideas and opinions 94%
- My Case Manager is sincere and respectful 96%
- My Case Manager treats me like a partner 93%
- My Case Manager listens to me 95%
- My Case Manager responds to my concerns 93%
- My Case Manager sees me as often as needed 95%
- I trust my Case Manager 95%
- My Case Manager advocates for my family 95%
- My Case Manager helps me locate needed services 93%
- My Case Manager helps me to negotiate 93%
- My Case Manager helps me develop an effective plan 93%
- My Case Manager gets me the information I request 92%
- I feel welcome at CCM 94%
- When my Case Manager is unavailable, another Case Manager assists me 91%

Timeliness: When someone is new to our services, it is our intention to make contact with them right away and get a plan in place. Our goal is to never go more than two working days without establishing contact. We met this goal 99% of the time this past year.

Medicaid and the Department of Mental Health mandate that once a plan is in place, it must be renewed within 365 days of implementation. This year, we met this requirement 98% of the time. On average, annual plans were completed 22 days before the deadline.

Part of the planning process is to complete assessments. These are needed in order to identify strengths and abilities. They are also necessary to identify areas of need that should be addressed. Both Medicaid and the Department of Mental Health have some basic assessments that they require case managers to complete for people utilizing services. We completed all required assessments, while meeting the designated timelines 99% of the time.
Prioritization of Need Work Group

Before state or federal dollars can be used to fund a service, the case manager must complete a Prioritization of Need (PON) assessment and submit it to the Division of Developmental Disabilities to demonstrate the need for resources. Prioritization of Need is used to provide a comprehensive description of a person’s support needs; identify needs that are not being met and may put the person at risk of illness, injury, or harm; and document why support needs are not being met or why the current support cannot be sustained. Debbie Metcalf is our Assistant Director of Case Management. She participated in a statewide work group to modify the manual that case managers can use to guide them through the PON assessment. Debbie worked with a combination of county-based case management professionals as well as staff members from the Division of Developmental Disabilities. This group re-wrote the manual and then made sure that case managers were properly trained on its use by conducting training sessions at five different locations around the state and they provided training through a webinar. The group continues to meet in order to address questions and issues as they arise.

Service Coordination Manual Committee

Debbie is also our representative on the Service Coordination Manual Committee. This committee consists of 13 members throughout Missouri. The members come from a combination of county-based case management agencies and employees of the Division of Developmental Disabilities. This group meets throughout the year to update a state-wide training manual for service coordinators and case managers.

MOCABI State Training Committee

MOCABI stands for “Missouri Critical Adaptive Behaviors Inventory”. This assessment is used to determine if someone is eligible for services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities. It is also used to determine if someone is eligible for a Medicaid Waiver slot. Last year, the state of Missouri mandated that those administering the MOCABI must be certified. This was determined in order to ensure consistency and reliability of the assessment as it is conducted throughout the state.
Quality of Services (continued)

Megan Davis is one of our Program Coordinators and our representative on this committee. This group met for several months to develop training on administration of the MOCABI. They also developed a computer-based course and test so that those taking the training can demonstrate competency in administration of the tool. Once the training was completed, this group travelled around the state to provide training to case managers and service coordinators. This group continues to meet in order to provide training and support as needed to both county-based and state operated agencies. Next year, the group plans to develop a checklist to be used across the state when reviewing samples of MOCABI’s to ensure consistency in administration and interpretation.

**Accuracy:** Information recorded in the records of the person served must be accurate, timely, and complete. Audits of log notes indicated that we met these requirements with a score of 93%. Our official record set is audited each month. A total of 649 records were audited. Required documentation was located 96% of the time. Each month, our Quality Assurance staff members take a sample of the plans written and review them to make sure all required components are in place and that the plans are written in a clear manner. This past year, they audited 344 plans. The average score for the plans was 97%.

**Effectiveness:** After a plan is written and services located, the case manager monitors the service to make sure that it is effective and that the person is being served in the manner that they described in their Individual Plan. Part of this is accomplished through Service Monitoring and Quarterly Reviews. Our case managers completed 96% of the service monitoring goals set for them. They met the Quarterly Review requirements 99% of the time.

**Utilization Review Budget Committee**

Kristy Nagle is another of our Program Coordinators and is also our Compliance Coordinator. In March, she volunteered to participate in the Utilization Review (UR) Budget Committee. This group was initially made up of only employees of the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH). Their goal was to develop an efficient
way for case managers to enter a services budget for individuals on the DMH database. Once they defined the scope of their project, they asked for help from case management agencies throughout the state. Kristy volunteered to test adding budgets to the database’s test site. The group expects that the project will be completed by March 2016. It is their hope that the new system will allow quick access for case managers to report on services encumbered. In turn, this will allow providers to more easily determine services that they are authorized to provide. Finally, when a person served moves to a new area of the state, the new system should provide a more consistent and efficient process for transferring resources to their new Regional Office, preventing a gap in services.

Individual Support Plan (ISP) Guide

Last year, the federal government issued new rules regarding planning for and providing services for individuals when using federal funds through a Medicaid Waiver. Since then, Missouri, along with every other state in the nation has been looking at how we plan for services. Currently, the Division of Developmental Disabilities has an ISP Guide on their website that case managers can use when planning with individuals. When the new federal rules were issued, the Division put together a workgroup in order to update the ISP Guide to include the new rules. Cindy Langford, our Case Management Director, volunteered to participate in this group. The ISP Guide work group meets once a month for face to face meetings and also participates in telephone conferences. They are looking at the federal rules and are also looking at how other states develop plans. The updated ISP Guide should provide case managers with information about all required components for the written ISP, as well as assistance in facilitating planning meetings with a multi-disciplinary team and ways to support the person served in advocating for themselves. It is anticipated that the ISP Guide will be completed by the end of December 2015. After that, the workgroup will develop and implement training for case managers and employees of Regional Offices throughout the state.
Quality of Services (continued)

**Waiver Manuals Committee**

This year, the Department of Mental Health/Division of Developmental Disabilities formed a state-wide committee to review and modify the Technical Assistance Manual for Targeted Case Management and the Developmental Disabilities Waivers Manual. Our Board Director, Alecia Archer was asked to serve on this committee. Alecia traveled across the state several times and met with other Senate Bill 40 Board Directors, providers, and personnel from the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Within just a few months, they were able to update the manuals and modify them so that the language is clearer and they are easier to use.

**Southwest Missouri Alliance**

The Southwest Missouri Alliance is made up of professionals in the area that cover many different disciplines. Their goal is to provide resources and advocacy for at-risk families. When the group meets, they learn about services and resources in this area and pool those resources to help the families they have identified. Jason Pierce and Teresa Askren are two of our Case Manager III’s. They represent our agency at the Alliance meetings. Through their participation, they have educated our case managers on resources in the area and they have also educated other Alliance members about the services Connections provides. In addition, they have shared information about some of the things our Board funds, such as the Cab Coupon program which provides transportation services at a reduced rate for people who have a developmental disability.
Highlights of the Year

September 16, 2014
The Regional Transition Fair was held at the Independent Living Center. Connections was able to reach out to students and parents to help prepare for the transition from high school to post-secondary school life.

December 08, 2014
The Joplin Chamber of Commerce conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate our new Chamber membership, our new location, and the 16th anniversary of Connections Case Management.

January 23, 2015
Mission accomplished! Our Records Technicians, Linda Mayo and Linda Parker are seen celebrating that they scanned our final paper record of persons served into our electronic records drive.
April 25, 2015
Case Managers Laura Stiles, Jennifer Eye, and Jessica Currier volunteered at the Walk for Autism Awareness event hosted by the Bill and Virginia Leffen Center for Autism.

May 2015
Caleb Swaim is a young man who has autism. He graduated from Webb City High School in May, 2015. Prior to graduation, Caleb won the Webb City Lego Competition by building a replica of his high school’s clock tower. Caleb donated the $500 prize to Webb City’s Bright Futures program. Also while attending high school, he was the second male ever at the school to make the Webb City Cheer Squad. He then qualified for the All-American at Cheer Camp. This gave him the opportunity to travel to London to participate in a parade. Caleb now attends Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College. He is on the NEO cheer squad and is focusing on general education courses.
As we begin our new year, we look forward to more opportunities to partner with our community and colleagues. As always, we will strive to maintain or enhance our quality of services. In addition, we are making plans for the following projects:

♦ Exploring ways to reach out to our community through social media. We will launch our first Facebook page this year. It is our hope that we can share information and resources through Facebook as well as letting people know about our services.

♦ Enhancing our Mentoring program. Our Case Manager III’s will expand mentoring activities with our newer Case Managers by providing them with more job shadowing, training and feedback than ever before. It is our belief that effective mentoring will provide consistency in service delivery as well as enhance job satisfaction for our Case Managers.

♦ Providing intensive training for our Case Managers on planning for services by investing in Charting the Life Course Training. This cutting-edge training was developed in Missouri and viewed nation-wide as a model for supporting individuals and families by developing plans that enable them to live the good life. All of our Case Managers will participate in this training throughout the year.
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