

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FY23

This past fiscal year marked a year of change and growth at The Counseling Center. In the winter of 2022, there was a transition in senior leadership, and a new CEO, Tiffanie Kestner, was hired in January 2023 and a new CFO, Jill Baird, was hired in April 2023. The new leadership team has focused on increasing staff engagement and retention, as well as learning about community mental health needs and working on increasing capabilities to meet them.

In the spring of 2023, we identified the need to increase crisis services, as well as to have a local location people can go for their mental health needs. Currently, there are no inpatient mental health facilities in Wayne or Holmes counties for adults, and so people are often transported out of the area, away from their natural supports. After input from community leaders and in collaboration with the MHRB, we wrote a grant for ARPA I monies to fund a mental health residential treatment center, which thankfully, was received! We are in the process of working on this 16-bed project, with more details in the coming year.

With the ending of the public health emergency, the Crisis team has begun to provide more mobile response services, and plans were put in place to increase staffing with crisis support assistants to increase the availability and responsiveness of the mobile crisis therapist team.

The Counseling Center worked on increasing its internal operating processes and becoming more efficient. An electronic timekeeping and human resources software was implemented successfully in the spring. We also had a thorough needs assessment of our IT infrastructure, which identified needs to upgrade technology, hardware, software, wiring, and allow the Center to work and provide increased service capacity more effectively. A grant for ARPA II funding was written in collaboration with the MHRB to facilitate this infrastructure upgrade, and the agency was notified in FY24 that it was also received!

The Center continued to provide quality care to and work with several community referral sources, including the medical community, law enforcement, schools, children's services, the courts, developmental disability boards, other community agencies, self, and family/friends. We passed our Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) fidelity review with the Center for Innovative Practices where we attained a score of Best Practice Implementation. We also received our Intensive Home-Based Treatment (IHBT) certification after passing an evidence-based standards fidelity review. These are both new, quality clinical programs.

The biggest challenge that faced the organization was the behavioral workforce shortage. This is a well-documented local, statewide, and national problem. Less individuals are entering behavioral health fields and community behavioral healthcare providers are competing with entities such as hospitals, for profit healthcare organizations, and managed care companies that are able to offer higher salaries and often times remote work.

As always, The Counseling Center endeavors to go forward with a focus on our mission and commitment to provide quality behavioral health services to the residents of Wayne and Holmes Counties. We are focused on our mission and commitment to provide excellent, efficient, compliant, data-driven clinical care to all who desire it in Wayne and Holmes counties.

With joy,

Tiffanie Kestner, President/CEO