

Engagement Findings Report

Western Kansas Stakeholder Engagement

Project Overview

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) is working towards increasing the access for children that need the highest level of acute psychiatric hospitalization in western Kansas. KDADS, the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund and the Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute (CEI) worked to engage and convene stakeholders in western Kansas to help develop recommendations for pursuing innovative and integrated solutions towards this challenge. Stakeholders identified communities in western Kansas to house acute psychiatric hospitalization services, as well as strategies to overcome the barrier of sustaining adequate staffing for these services during times of low census. This report includes initial findings.

Process Overview

During each engagement session, three areas were addressed for feedback and recommendations. Each of the three areas included specific questions that were discussed in both small and large groups. Participants were given the opportunity to vote on a location and strategy, and were provided an opportunity to ask questions and have open discussion. The three areas included:

Community Strengths & Community-Based Services

Explore community-based services and other levels of care that can help prevent hospitalizations and readmissions.

- What strengths are there currently in your community that could help prevent hospitalizations and readmissions?
- What services need to be expanded, added, and/or modified to make them more successful?
- What community-based service, if developed or enhanced, could make the most difference in addressing crisis needs?
- What barriers need to be overcome that the state can help with, for the identified services to happen?

Strategies to Address Staff Sustainability

Identify strategies to overcome utility and overhead costs during times of low census fluctuations.

- What solutions need to be in place to enable the hospital to maintain sustainability during times of low census fluctuations?
- What support would you need from the state to make this solution work?

Potential Locations & Partnerships

Identify potential locations for children's psychiatric hospitalization services and connect key stakeholders to develop partnerships in identified locations to advance the communities' efforts locally.

- What community assets should be kept in mind when thinking of places to house services?
- What communities in western Kansas should these services be housed in?
- What locations in these communities could be used to provide these services?
- What partners would be involved in delivering these services?

Webinar

After completing the community engagement sessions, the team shared information and recommendations from these events via a public webinar. Participants in the webinar were given the opportunity to provide additional feedback, ask questions, and vote on their choice for location and strategy. The information gathered at the webinar was used in addition to inform this report.

Participation

Stakeholder engagement sessions were held at four locations: Hays, Goodland, Garden City, and Dodge City. Eighty-four stakeholders participated in the conversations. Each session was conducted in the same way, including the questions mentioned previously. The following sections provide an executive summary and the detailed responses to each of the questions.

Location	Number of Participants	Stakeholder Groups Present
Hays	33	Center for Life Experience, concerned citizens, Department for Children and Families, Ellis County Health Department, Ellis County Sheriff's Office, Ellis County Attorney's Office, HaysMed, Hays Middle School (USD 489), High Plains Mental Health Center, Hoxie Medical Clinic, Kansas CASA Association, K-State Research and Extension, KVC Hospitals, Logan County Health Services, Norton County Hospital, Phillips County Health Systems, Smith County Health Department, 20 th Judicial District Juvenile Services.
Goodland	19	Cheyenne County Health Department, Cheyenne County Hospital, Citizens Health, Department for Children and Families, Goodland Regional Medical Center, Heartland Rural Co., High Plains Mental Health Center, K-State Research & Extension, KVC Hospitals, LiveWell Northwest Kansas, Northwest Kansas Juvenile Services, Sherman County Health Department, Thomas County Health Department, Wallace County Health Department.
Garden City	18	Compass Behavioral Health, Department for Children and Families, Dominican Sisters Ministry of Presence, Finney County Community Services, Graham County Health Department, KVC Hospitals, Russell Child Development Center, St. Catherine's Hospital, The Center for Counseling & Consultation, USD 457.
Dodge City	14	Catholic Charities of Southwest Kansas, Compass Behavioral Health, Department for Children and Families, Family Care Clinic of Western Kansas, Ford County Sheriff's Office, Iroquois Center, K-State Research and Extension, KVC Hospitals, Pratt Health Foundation, Pratt Regional Medical Center, Russell Child Development Center, Salvation Army, Southwest Guidance.
Total	84	

Executive Summary

Strengths in Western Kansas

Participants were asked to identify strengths in their community that could help prevent acute psychiatric hospitalizations and readmissions for children. The list below highlights the themes across the four communities.

Building strong relationships with families	Community action teams and task forces	Increased mental health awareness in communities
Strong community programs	Strong community partnerships	

Community Based Services

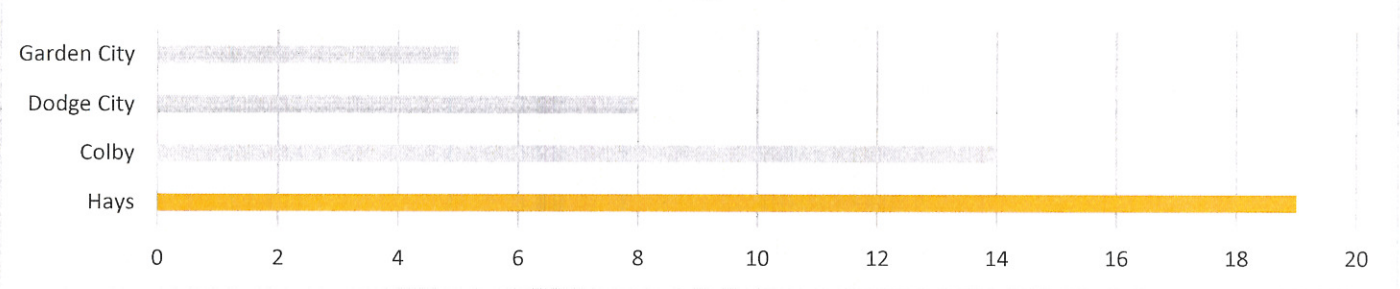
Participants were asked to reflect on their current community-based services and identify what services could be expanded and address barriers to access.

Services Needed to Expand	Barriers To Overcome	Needs For Improvement
Substance Use Disorder Services	Staffing positions and staff retention	Increase in funding and reimbursement rates
Transportation Services	Stigma around mental health	Additional and ongoing training

Communities and Locations to House Acute Psychiatric Services

Each location visited during the engagement sessions identified and voted on communities with the highest likelihood of success to house acute psychiatric services. **Hays** was the top-voted community when all votes from the in-person meetings and the webinar had been accounted for. Once narrowing the potential city to Hays, **Hays Med** was voted as the location within Hays with the highest likelihood of success. Total votes from the engagement sessions are below. Further information regarding voting by engagement, voting in the webinar, and location voting are found later in this report.

Communities with highest likelihood of success



Staff Sustainability Strategies

Participants developed and prioritized solutions to enable the hospital to maintain sustainability during times of low census fluctuations. These strategies were themed and voted on in the webinar. Below are the top three most effective strategies as chosen by participants.

1. Utilize a dual-purpose psychiatric building with other services to allow the ability to float staff during times of low census. Possibilities for other purpose(s) for the building included: adult/youth inpatient, regional outpatient unit, adult acute care, medical offices, and therapists.
2. Build the infrastructure for workforce through staff retention and reimbursement. Suggestions included offering incentives, such as tuition reimbursement, to work in small communities, providing flexible scheduling for staff, and encouraging the Board of Regents to require more classes on mental health for other professional curriculum.
3. Build a new children's hospital where multiple services can be offered. This would be a licensed hospital facility providing acute psychiatric services for youth under the age of 21. This strategy arose due to the cost of building a new hospital being cheaper than renovating an older property.