

# Position Statement

## 2021

### Mental Health Support

#### Short Description

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| <b>Issue:</b>                                    | <p>The COVID-19 virus has and continues to produce unique challenges for all individuals and communities in Minnesota. The uniqueness of this pandemic puts added stress on many, especially with those living with mental illness. With social distancing, isolation and loneliness becomes a major concern. They nourish despair and discouragement ending up in one of several types of depressive disorders and potentially self-destructive acts; it can aggravate fears and precipitate one or several types of anxiety disorders.</p> <p>Grief and loss, financial stressors, and isolation have resulted in increased levels of anxiety, depression and substance use among many Minnesotans. Counties, as the mental health authority in each community, are tasked with the safety and care of our families and individuals. As mental health concerns continue to grow, additional resources will be imperative to ensure quality mental health care.</p> |
| <b>Administrative Simplification (optional):</b> | [will this position lead to a programmatic/administrative simplification? If yes, please describe.]  |
| <b>Implementation Strategy:</b>                  | MACSSA requests that there are no reductions to the mental health regional AMHI block grants. This funding is needed more than ever and continued support of this funding will allow flexibility to counties to use these in areas of need specific to their communities.  |

#### Long Description:

245.465 outlines the duties of the county board. This includes Subdivision 1. Use of mental health funds.

The county board in each county shall use its share of mental health funds allocated by the commissioner according to the mental health plan approved by the commissioner. The county board must:

- (1) develop and coordinate a system of affordable and locally available adult mental health services in accordance with sections [245.461](#) to [245.486](#);

Adult Mental Health Initiatives (AMHI) are regional organizations that oversee adult mental health services and funding to counties and tribal governments in their area. The AMHIs serve as a mechanism for regional collaboration to build effective community-based mental health services across Minnesota.

As these AMHI groups are overseeing the adult mental health services, they have historically received few increases to these block grants. Often the dollars are accounted for to maintain essential services for individuals living with serious and persistent mental illness. To adequately be able to respond to the rising mental health concerns and crises, counties will need these resources to support local providers. The models of service delivery may shift as the virus continues to spread in our communities. There will be a cost to improving infrastructure, increasing staffing where necessary, and cover unforeseen costs in service delivery.

**Additional Information:**



Submitted by: Tim Hunter

Approved by: [insert the name of the program committee] on [insert date position was approved]

Date Approved by Legislative Committee: [insert date]