



Sunflower Foundation

HEALTH CARE FOR KANSANS

April 15, 2015

Sunflower grant to help integrate behavioral and physical health care in Labette County

The Sunflower Foundation Board of Trustees has awarded \$172,635 to the Labette Center for Mental Health Services (LCMHS) in Parsons to implement their plan for integrating behavioral and physical health care delivery.

The grant is part of Sunflower's Integrated Care Initiative, which supports primary care and behavioral health safety net systems that are working to deliver health care for the whole person.

"We've treated mental health and physical health care separately for decades. But thanks to the work of dozens of partners like those in Parsons, more and more Kansans are getting the benefits of integrated care," said Billie Hall, President and CEO of the Sunflower Foundation.

"Health outcomes are improved when we treat a patient's whole being in a single clinical setting — instead of expecting patients to coordinate their own care in a complicated network of providers," Hall said.

In 2013, Sunflower awarded LCMHS a planning grant to explore options for delivering integrated care to their clients with severe mental illness. In this planning process, officials at Labette Health — the acute care hospital in Parsons — expressed strong interest in partnering with LCMHS to integrate behavioral health services into the hospital's primary care and OB/GYN clinics.

Integrating care should dramatically improve LCMHS clients' total health care, by eliminating current challenges posed by delivering physical and behavioral health care in two separate facilities, said Matthew Atteberry, LCMHS executive director.

"Most of us would rather be doing something other than going to see the doctor — and many people simply avoid going," Atteberry said. "Now add

Media inquiries:
Phil Cauthon,
Director of
Communications
(785) 232-3000,
ext. 101 or [email](#)



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into that voices you hear that others don't hear, or seeing things others don't see, or perceiving things about your body that may not make sense to anybody else — now just imagine going in alone to a doctor and trying to describe that. Many people simply won't — they'll simply avoid getting care,” he said.

“The client benefits by being able to get their point across and being understood, and the providers benefit by being able to deliver care according to their training, right there in the same room. Having everyone on site also comes with benefits like access to medical records and improved, more efficient communication. Patient care just gets better and better,” said Atteberry.

By summer, full-time behavioral health care will be available on site at Labette Health with a newly hired Behavioral Health Consultant. Services will also include psychiatric care via telephone consultation with LCMHS.

The two-year Sunflower grant will fund:

- a full-time Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker at Labette Health;
- telephonic psychiatric consultation services;
- training for staff at both partner facilities; and
- technology to support the Behavioral Health Consultant at Labette Health.

Since its inception in 2012, the Integrated Care Initiative has awarded 20 grants totaling more than \$2.2 million. It also founded the Learning Collaborative, where more than 100 participants from grantee organizations and other partners have worked to learn from each other's efforts.

For more information on this grant or the Integrated Care Initiative, please contact Phil Cauthon, Sunflower Foundation Director of Communications, pcauthon@sunflowerfoundation.org or (785) 232-3000.