



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/22/2015

[Hancock, MI] The Portage Health Foundation, a non-profit charitable foundation serving Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties, is pleased to announce it is soliciting targeted grant requests throughout the four-county area that focus on mental and behavioral health programs.

The PHFoundation recognizes the importance of addressing mental and behavioral health concerns and the need for more available care. According to the Copper Country Mental Health Services' (CCMHS) *2014 Community Needs Assessment Survey Report*, there is a substantial demand for more access to mental health services in the four counties. The report identifies the following top-five concerns among survey respondents:

1. the need for more access to mental health services;
2. the need for more access to psychiatric services;
3. the need for more mental health services for children and youth;
4. the concern over increased substance/drug abuse; and
5. the need for more local inpatient/outpatient programs.¹

Additionally, the *Western Upper Peninsula 2012 Regional Health Assessment Report* highlights many of these concerns. For instance, mental health and substance abuse issues are prevalent across the Western U.P. About 24% of local adults report a chronic or episodic depression diagnosis. From 2009-2011, alcohol was the most common substance identified as a primary reason for hospital admission in publicly funded programs followed by opiates (which includes prescription painkillers), and marijuana.² Heavy long-term drinking can raise an individual's risk of liver disease and drug abuse can lead to serious health conditions. However, with additional and/or expanded community resources to meet the gaps in available mental and behavioral health services, individuals suffering from such issues will have more access to care and opportunities to heal. Evidence has already shown that depression, for example, is a treatable mental health condition.³ Furthermore, with expanded resources, service providers can also place additional effort on preventative measures.

"Mental and behavioral health needs are not isolated to our community," said Kevin Store, Executive Director of the Portage Health Foundation. "There exists real gaps in services locally and throughout the Upper Peninsula. We hope this request for proposals will be met with innovative and collaborative proposals that will address the needs of our citizens."

¹ Copper Country Mental Health Services, *2014 Community Needs Assessment Survey Report*, <http://www.cccmh.org/agency-information>.

² Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, *Western Upper Peninsula 2012 Regional Health Assessment*, <http://www.wupdhd.org/community-health/community-health-assessment-2/>.

³ Ibid.

The CCMHS report also indicates that to meet the mental health needs of the region, collaboration and cooperation among community partners is required. To assist in meeting these needs and in creating community partnerships, the PHFoundation is now accepting grant requests of all scope and size, or applications that need partial funding, as part of this Request for Proposal (RFP) notification. Grants addressing the following will be considered under this RFP:

Community health and preventative health initiatives that address areas of critical health risks, which include, but are not limited to, behavioral and mental health and substance abuse and addiction.

Interested parties may download an application from the foundation's website (www.phfgive.org); request a grant application packet by contacting 906.523.5920; or by stopping by the PHFoundation offices located at:

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Grant requests will be accepted until Friday, September 4, 2015, and must be received at the PHFoundation Offices no later than 3:30 p.m. EST. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Portage Health Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that receives and contributes charitable donations, which support the health needs of the community through enhanced philanthropy and community collaboration throughout Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties.