



JULY 4, 2018

CONNECTIONS

the newsletter for **Thrive Behavioral Network, LLC**

ADVOCACY MATTERS!

By **JEFF BRADLEY** • President

As a follow up to last quarter's legislative update, the 2018 legislative session ended with a frustrating **thud**. Overall, the governor signed a bonding bill and a pensions bill as well as some smaller standalone bills. Unfortunately, as is typically done during the legislative session, many key bills were placed in a very large "Omnibus Supplemental Budget bill" and there was also a Tax conformity bill that was put forward by the legislature to bring Minnesota in line with the recent Federal Tax changes. Unfortunately, Governor Dayton vetoed both bills due to concerns from his administration about certain pieces of these bills. There has been much frustration and blame expressed on both sides regarding so many issues/bills with bi-partisan support that were vetoed in a dysfunctional process that resulted in these key provisions/bills not being signed into law.

Here is an update on two key legislative items from last newsletter:

1. **Mental Health Workforce Staffing Solutions** – This was a smaller standalone bill that Thrive was a key driver of along with other providers and other provider associations. Governor Dayton signed this bill into law and the final version was essentially the final agreed language with some minor technical fixes. Overall, this bill opens up the pool of qualified experience and background for our mental health workforce that we feel will ultimately provide better client service and quality programming. We are extremely happy that all of Thrive's efforts/participation contributed to this bill being signed into law.
2. **CMS/DHS Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) 7% Rate Cut** – The bi-partisan legislation that was passed to delay/defer this cut for a year was included in the "Omnibus Supplemental Budget bill" that was vetoed by Governor Dayton. While there were no concerns/issues from Governor Dayton or his staff on this particular bill, the overall bill was vetoed due to concerns from his administration on other bills in the Omnibus bill. This is a significant blow to HCBS providers across Minnesota. Since the close of the session, provider organizations ARRM (of which Thrive is a member) and MOHR filed a federal lawsuit against the Minnesota Department of Human Services seeking an injunction to stop the implementation of this 7% cut. We are supportive of this lawsuit and the legal argument that DHS and the federal government are legally obligated to pay the rates already established and not implement this 7% cut. It is uncertain if the lawsuit will be successful, so all HCBS providers across Minnesota will be taking steps to prepare for the worst-case scenario of a 7% rate cut.

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ASK THE ADMIN TEAM

Do you have questions you would like answered by the Admin Team in the next newsletter? Submit your questions to:

Jody.Langer@thrivebehavioralnetwork.com

and look for responses in the Q4 Edition of Connections!

FACILITY SPOTLIGHT • Central Office

By LISA GASNER • Program Administrator

Most of you have heard of the “Central Office” at Thrive but aren’t sure what it does or who works there. The office is our Administrative HUB located in St. Cloud, MN. Why St. Cloud? In relation to all of Thrive’s programs it’s in a central location in the state, which is also where the office got its name. We recently moved offices in 2016 to accommodate our expanding team. Lisa Gasner and Jeff Bradley oversee the Central Office Team, although they receive most of their day-to-day interaction with direct care employees all around the state. Let us introduce you to the team!



Jenilee Erickson – Human Resources Manager

Hi everybody! I started with Thrive Behavioral Network in May of 2016 as the Human Resources Specialist for Benefits and Compensation. In the Fall of 2017 I was promoted to the Human Resources Manager and was thrilled to take on this new responsibility. I have a Master’s Degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology. My previous employer was a company that also operated Adult Foster Care homes. I was there for 7 years and was the Human Resources Manager. I also worked as a PCA during college for 5 years, so you could say I have a little experience in this field. I love working here where I truly believe in our Mission and what we are doing!

Susan Suska – Payroll/Accounts Payable Assistant

Greetings! My name is Sue Suska and I have been with Thrive for one year now working in the payroll and accounts payable departments. After work and on my weekends, I enjoy working outside on our farm and being with my family going to sporting events, playing games and cards and just hanging out with friends

Chrissy Johnson – Payroll Supervisor

Hello! My name is Chrissy Johnson and I am new to the central office team here at Thrive! I’m so eager to be starting this new opportunity with such a great group of people as Payroll Supervisor. I have worked for the mental health field for the last 6 + years and come from another mental health facility in St. Cloud as a Senior Accountant. In my free time I love to hike, travel and explore new places with my daughter. We both love Art and Expression and whenever we have the chance we take time to do that. Music is like air to me and the 90’s is the era I love the most and go to concert’s as much as possible. Looking forward to working with everyone here more and getting to know you all!

Dusty Bolstad – Billing Manager

Hello Thrive, my name is Dusty Bolstad and I am the Billing Manager here at the Central Office. I started working for Thrive in November of 2015. I have 15+ years of working in the Medical/Mental Health industry. Most of my position is working with Credible with billing and insurance companies. Away from work my family and I love to go camping and enjoy the outdoors as much as we can.

Aimee Hardison – Billing Specialist

My name is Aimee Hardison, I am a Billing Specialist working with the Central Office even though my location is in sunny Arizona. I have been working for Thrive since January of 2006. I have 23 years of experience in the billing industry. I work with insurance companies and all billing matters. I also work with Contracts and Credentialing. I enjoy working for Thrive and getting to know all of my coworkers.

Stephine Dahl – Billing Associate

My name is Stephine Dahl and I work in the Central Office as a Billing professional. I joined Thrive Behavioral Network team in October of 2017. My position helps with claims and insurance companies. I previously worked as a PCA around Minnesota for 10 years.

Alex Smith – Human Resources Hiring and Retention Specialist

Hey everyone! I’m Alex Smith your Human Resources – Hiring and Retention Specialist. A bit about me: I’m newly married (with a much easier last name!) and currently working on earning my Master’s Degree in Public Administration. I spent 8 years in the military, but now that I’m out I spend my free time reading books, writing, learning and trying new things, and volunteering with the Red Cross. Life is too short not to enjoy it to its fullest.

PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING

By ROB BENNER • Director Of Program Management – HCBS

It's important to remember that providing services in a person-centered manner to the people in our care isn't an optional approach or something that can be done only sometimes. It's demanded of us, as well it should be. What follows is an excerpt from the DHS Guidelines for Positive Supports related to what's required of us when it comes to providing person-centered services:

Person-centered planning (PCP) is a collection of models that provide a way to get to know a person and their "story". This helps you know what they want in life, where they prefer to live, what makes them happy, and how to balance what is important for them with what is important to them. PCP is a planning process useful for all people, regardless of ability, that addresses all areas of their life, including community participation, relationships, work, and aspirations. It is a collaborative process to help people identify the supports and services they need to live a quality life based on their preferences and values. The person served drives the planning process and those who know the person best are important supporters in the planning process.

PCP is a shift from the old treatment paradigm of creating goals and plans for a person. In the past, many plans focused on a person's weaknesses and created treatments and supports to address these weaknesses. Old plans often focused only on what was important for a person (e.g., their health and safety). First and foremost, PCP seeks to create plans with a person and focus on what is important to them, attention to what is important for them, and the creation of a balance between these two. Balance can be achieved by using what is important TO a person as context to address what's important FOR them. Old plans used a 'readiness model' where fully addressing important FOR was prerequisite to addressing important TO (e.g., once the person stops touching others he can seek the community employment he wants). Now we think of that supported job as the right context in which to address and expect a lower rate of touching.

The PCP process starts with listening to the person and honoring their vision. A person-centered approach asks us to remember people as whole human beings with dreams, hopes, preferences, and desires like everyone else. Support and encouragement is required in order to realize their wishes and potential. Person-centered planning focuses on identifying and maximizing the strengths and preferences rather than creating lists of what the person cannot do.

A person-centered approach for developing positive support strategies is similar in that it requires listening to the person to gain an understanding of who the person is, the person's wishes and hopes for his or her life, honoring his/her vision, understanding his or her strengths and challenges, and giving consideration to the context of his or her social and environmental setting, including any relevant medical or psychiatric conditions. It requires listening to the person through their words and actions so that the meaning and significance of their behavior(s) can be understood. Person-centered planning informs and contributes to the development of positive support plans that lead to improvements in the person's quality of life, acquisition of valued skills, and access to desired settings, activities and people. It is most important to identify the gaps between the person's life and how he/she wants his/her life to be. The person-centered planning process may include strategies for minimizing situations that cause stress for the person and maximizing the person's control over their life. Some essential characteristics of person-centered planning, adapted from Eber and Nelson (1997) and Kincaid and Fox (2002) are:

- People are encouraged to direct their own meetings and select team members
- Meeting length, location, and processes are organized to meet the preferences of each person
- Assessment and goal development focus on strengths and team-based problem solving
- The team identifies natural supports, rather than over-relying on existing services
- Strategies focus on community-based supports that help people make important contributions to their communities
- Choice making and opportunities for self-expression and self-determination are embedded in planning meetings
- Goals include creating steps for creating a positive future and are based on the person's preferences, interests
- Interagency collaboration is a valued process, with attention placed on streamlining supports
- Supports are provided to the person in an unconditional manner
- Developing and maintaining significant relationships with others are important considerations in planning processes

Really engaging the individuals we serve and working to discover what truly matters to them, then educating other support team members about what our person-centered requirements are, is much tougher than just giving orders and measuring compliance, but it's what we need to be doing.

**Adapted from the DHS Positive Supports Manual that is Applicable to Providers Licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services*



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT · Getting to Know Arlyss Johnson...

By MARY JOHNSTON · Director of Program Management - HCBS

Arlyss Johnson has been employed by Thrive Behavioral Network since June 2004, total of 14 years of dedication to our organization. Throughout these years she has seen the company grow and expand from Rule 36 Group Homes, to Corporate Adult Foster Care, to Thrive Behavioral Network Home and Community Based Services. She has been a valued employee, working part time, and has always been extremely active with residents in the home and in the community. Arlyss has been known to take the residents each Sunday to the 2pm Old Time dancing and listening to the band at a nearby Bar and Grill. If there is an event in the community or nearby she will encourage and involve the residents who are interested in attending. She has been dedicated to promoting each person's chosen activity and involvement. The residents look forward to seeing her each week and rely on her taking them out to have some fun. Arlyss creates a family atmosphere at New Castle with her added touch, and this includes her great cooking and baking for and with the residents. She has been a great team member with coworkers, and is dependable, dedicated, patient, outspoken, active, kind and always willing to "go the extra mile" when needed.

Coworkers have often described her as: fabulous, thoughtful, always cheerful and positive, a team player, always leaves her work area neat and orderly for the next shift, communicates well at shift change, and very active. So, it's no wonder that when Arlyss celebrated her 80th birthday last summer, her family threw an open house celebration. The event was attended by coworkers and residents who came out to wish her a Happy Birthday.

We asked Arlyss to tell us a little more about herself:

Personal and professional experiences that lead you to your current position

I was retired and looking for a part time job. A coworker at the café I worked at mentioned that "Red Castle" was hiring, so I checked it out. Eventually, I applied at Red Castle and went to an interview. As I was being interviewed, I commented that I didn't think I could do the job. The director interviewing me asked "You are a mother, aren't you? You can do this job." That was the beginning of my years with the company.

What do you like most about your job?

I have really learned so much about mental illness. It has been rewarding to see how far some residents have come in reaching goals. I get to see each person's individual needs and assist them.



ARLYSS JOHNSON

Direct Support Professional - New Castle - Litchfield

What are your two favorite cities in the world?

Mesa, Arizona and Backus, Minnesota

What is something about you that would surprise people?

I was very shy until I graduated and had my first job.

What values are important to you?

Honesty, respectfulness of others, and patience.

Arlyss, you are much appreciated by Thrive and your team in Litchfield. Thank you for being such a positive role model for us!

PROFESSIONAL MILESTONES

Celebrating our dedicated staff

Each newsletter we would like to acknowledge work anniversaries that fall within the quarter. Specifically, employees accomplishing major milestones at 5, 10, 15, and 20+ years!

Check out the dedicated employees celebrating an upcoming work milestone, and please wish them a happy anniversary!

- **Loren Ritzer** - Willow Haven - **20 years** (July)
- **Sharon Gilbert** - New Castle - **15 years** (August)
- **Raven Chirpich** - Hillside - **15 years** (August)
- **Karen Maiers** - Willow Haven - **15 years** (September)
- **Peya Mobmay** - Eastern Star - **5 years** (September)
- **Sheila Graten** - Bayview - **5 years** (September)

MAKING MENTAL HEALTH A SOLID CAREER OPTION

By LISA GASNER • Program Administrator

Pursuing a career in mental health can make a positive change and have a lasting impact on human lives. Sounds inspiring, right? Then why is Minnesota experiencing a critical shortage in Mental Health Workers? With one and four people suffering from a mental illness, the shortage of qualified staff becomes a matter of life and death for some.

Along my career path I have heard more stories similar to mine where we stumbled upon a career in mental health because we are “good listeners” and “like taking care of people.” Most of us did not set out after high school or college dreaming of a future focused on working in mental health, and that’s the problem. RIGHT. THERE. In most cases students are not exposed to career options in Mental Health, Social Work, Counseling, and Psychology. The career path for a person curious about care-giving and counseling professions is often confusing or can falsely appear non-existent.

Good news! There are, in fact, several paths you can take to advance or even begin your career in Mental Health. Even Better News... Thrive offers several of these careers and entry level/internship opportunities throughout the state! The path you choose depends on what type of helping career you’d like. Popular career options in mental health are:

COUNSELING: Mental Health Counselor, Addiction Counselor

PSYCHOLOGY: Clinical Psychologist, Neuropsychologist

PSYCHIATRY: Mental Health Psychiatrist, Psychiatric Technician

SOCIAL WORK: Mental Health Social Worker, Health Care Administration

NURSING: Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse, Substance Abuse Nurse

Once you have a specific career in mind seek out a professional who has a career similar to the one you want to pursue and ask if they could sit down with you to help you understand the course you might take to reach that career goal. Regardless of which option you’re interested in it will require you to have some entry level direct care experience with individuals experiencing mental health issues. This can be accomplished either through paid work, volunteer, or an internship position.

If you are thinking of making mental health your career choice ask yourself these five questions:

**Five Questions adapted from learnhowtobecome.org*

Do you work well with others?

It takes a lot of communication amongst professionals to develop care plans.

Are you highly organized?

Detailed note taking and caring for multiple people at once is a daily part of these jobs.

Are you compassionate?

Having empathy is essential.

It’s about listening and relating to others feelings.

Can you reserve judgment?

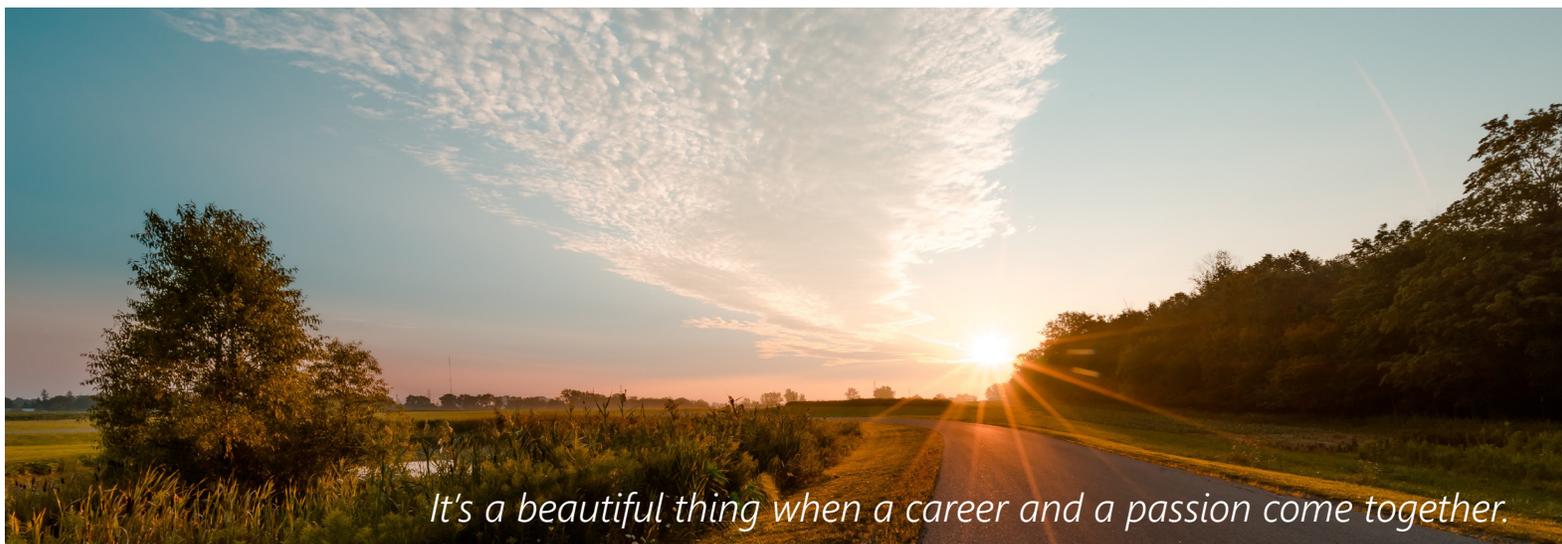
Focus on helping others despite your personal opinions.

Do you have ways to decompress?

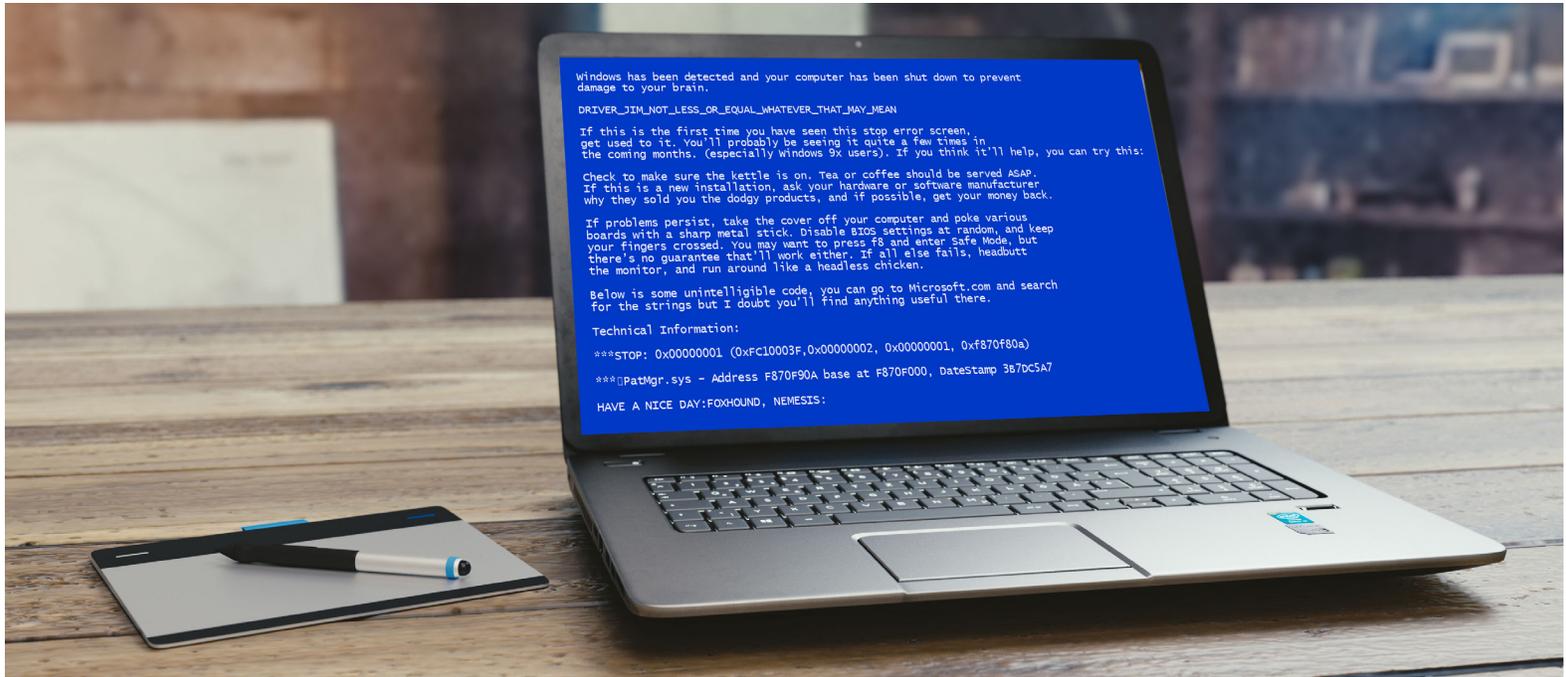
Having a personal tool-kit of self-care skills with help you be happy and successful in this profession long-term.

Seeking out a mentor to discuss a path that would work for you to accomplish your career goal will contribute to your success in accomplishing that goal and your happiness with your chosen field. I would, personally, be happy to discuss this with you or I will set you up with one of the many dedicated helping professionals that work for Thrive. Each one of us who is already active in our careers in mental health has started with the same questions you probably have as you are reading this, “How do I increase my options with my job?” “How long will it take?”, and “How do I even start?” As an employee of Thrive you are already leaving a positive impression on individuals who are vulnerable to mental health issues and addiction, I’d like to offer you encouragement as you think about a long-term career helping profession.

The future is bright!



It's a beautiful thing when a career and a passion come together.



How many times have you asked someone for assistance with a computer issue, only to be asked, “Did you try rebooting it?” Although rebooting a computer is not the solution to every problem, it can help in many ways. So how can rebooting a computer solve your issue?

PROBLEM: Windows seems to be running slower than normal.

CAUSE: This can be caused by running multiple programs and software at the same time.

REBOOT: Rebooting your computer releases your computers allocated resources, starting back up with a fresh clean slate.

PROBLEM: Slow performance in your web browser.

CAUSE: Opening multiple tabs in Internet Explorer or Google Chrome requires memory (RAM), and the more tabs you open, more of your memory is used. Does this mean you shouldn't open multiple tabs in a web browser? No, you absolutely can. Just be mindful of the amount. Your computer should easily be able to manage 1-6 browser tabs. Beyond that, you might see some decline in performance and speed.

REBOOT: Rebooting your computer will release all of the consumed memory.

PROBLEM: Windows crashing or the well-known “blue screen of death”.

CAUSE: Are you working when suddenly windows gives you a blue screen with some error messages on it? This is what is known as the blue screen of death to the computer community. This can be caused by software malfunctions such as a bad/hung driver, or hardware issues.

REBOOT: You have no choice but to reboot at this point. Rebooting after the blue screen may not fix every issue caused by a crash, but it's definitely the first thing you should try before contacting support.

Although it's not required, **I highly suggest that you reboot your computer once a day**, even if you're not having a problem or issue. Rebooting a computer is like taking a nice, fresh shower in the morning. You may not have needed to take that shower, but you always feel better and ready to start your day after you have. Your computer will feel the same way after rebooting!

reboot

[verb ree-boot; noun ree-boot, ree-boot]

1. to restart (a computer) by loading the operating system; boot again
2. to produce a distinctly new version of (an established media franchise, as a film, TV show, video game, or comic book)
3. to make a change in (something) in order to establish a new beginning