

COMCARE of Sedgwick County

Celebrating 50 years of providing mental health and substance use services in Sedgwick County.



1961

● Resolution between a joint Board of Health of the city of Wichita, Kan., and Sedgwick County, Kan. that there is hereby established a mental health clinic for the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness.

Resolution by Sedgwick County levying an annual taxable property in Sedgwick County, not in excess of one-half mill, to pay the cost and maintenance of the establishment of a mental health clinic.

● **Commissioners**
Vernon E. Reed, Chairman
H.B. Scott, Commissioner
Floyd Schroeder, Commissioner

1962

● **January** - The first mental health clinic is located in the Wichita/Sedgwick County Department of Public Health under the administration of Leon Bauman, MD, director of public health.

● Joint Board of Health recommends hiring a director of the Mental Health Clinic and agrees to hire Edmond de St. Felix, MD for a salary of \$22,000.

Total Initial Budget \$75,000

The original psychiatric team included three staff members, a psychiatrist, a psychologist and a social worker.

Director and Medical Director
Edmond de St. Felix, MD, 1962-1969

The Mental Health Clinic was established primarily to treat patients released from Larned State Hospital. Others were seen in treatment, but the main focus was on individuals who were indigent and had a mental illness.

Community mental health centers predated Medicaid and Medicare by three years and were originally designed to be funded by third party insurers and local communities after the initial federal grants ended.

1963

● **Community Mental Health Center Construction Act of 1963** - In a joint address to Congress, President John F. Kennedy proposed what he called a "bold new approach" that replaced the focus of institutional care of the mentally ill with comprehensive community care. The act required community mental health centers that were being formed to provide core mental health services.



1964

The Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas Inc. was formed to provide legislative representation, offer leadership and professional education, highlight model practices and programs, and identify resources for addressing the challenges faced by local mental health authorities in Kansas.

1965

● Congress created Medicaid and Medicare as part of the Social Security Act in 1965 signed into law on July 30, 1965, by President Lyndon B. Johnson

1969

● The Mental Health Clinic had grown by several more staff members and relocated to the Sedgwick County Hospital, later named the E.B. Allen Hospital.

The goal of the clinic continued to be the follow-up of consumers released from Larned State Hospital, although by this time many non-state hospital patients also made up the caseload. However waiting lists continued to grow as the community became more aware of available mental health services that operated with a sliding fee scale and would accept welfare recipients for no fee as these services preceded Medicaid.

Director
Bob Anderson, 1969-1972

1970

Methadone first became available in Wichita in 1970 - a joint effort by Wesley Medical Center's Family Practice program and the Sedgwick County Mental Health Clinic.

Medical Director
Jehan Sayed, MD, 1971-1993



North MHC

South MHC



1972

● Three federal grants enlarged the Mental Health Clinic to two comprehensive mental health centers. The Mental Health Clinic, called the North Mental Health Clinic which remained at the Sedgwick County Hospital and the South Mental Health Center, was developed in one of the buildings on a campus of a grade school in Plainview where it continued to operate until 1987.

With the new federal grants and the enlargement of the mental health clinics, this would also mean an increase of services providing five basic elements of mental health service: inpatient, outpatient, partial hospitalization, emergency services, and consultations and education. Federal funding continued for 8 years.

The Alcohol Treatment Center opened up in a two story white framed house at 1234 N. Topeka. The director was H. Thomas Bruce.

Director
Clint Willis, 1972-1990

1976

Derby Counseling Center at 119 S. Baltimore opens. The center was a joint effort by three agencies: Family Consultation, Wichita Guidance Center and the Sedgwick County Department of Mental Health.

Department of Mental Health opens day treatment for emotionally disturbed children and adolescents allowing youth to live at home and attend school while being hospitalized part of each day.

1981

● Mental Health Center opens the doors to Sedgwick County's new inpatient mental health building at 635 N. Main. Programs included inpatient mental health and an outpatient drug program. Ten staff members of the department's comprehensive drug treatment program, which had been in a rented building at 2044 Wellington Place, were moved to the 635 N. Main building.

Of the 600 individuals admitted annually, fewer than 200 are referred to state hospitals for further hospitalization.



25 years later...
Silver Anniversary

Mental Health Center Opens Doors



1985

The Women's Alcoholism Treatment Services program was designed to meet the needs of women suffering from or affected by alcoholism, drug addiction or related problems.

1987

Administrative Management
Clinton D. Willis, ACSW, Director
H.T. Bruce, LSCSW, Assistant Director
Sayed Jehan, MD, Medical Director

● **Number of employees**
135 member staff

Sedgwick County Department of Mental Health Budget
\$4,830,168

Board of County Commissioners
Tom Scott, Chairman
Mark F. Schroeder, Pro Tem
David Bayouth
Billy Q. McCray
Bernard Hentzen

● In 1987, a resolution by the Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners to appoint a Mental Health Advisory Board for the community mental health center.

Sedgwick County Department of Mental Health Advisory Board

Louis Antonelli, Chairman
Mary Blankenship
Representative Wanda Fuller
Carl Gallier
Dr. Wilson Gillies
Michael Goebel
Harriet Griffith, Vice Chair
Roy Grubbs, Secretary
Bobbie Humphrey
Edward L. Keeley
Shirley Scott, Treasurer
Judge Willis Wall
Robert Weaver, MD

1988

Sedgwick County Department of Mental Health establishes the homeless program, "Center City." Programs serve adults with a serious mental illness who are considered underserved, are living in places not considers adequate shelters, and those in emergency shelters.



COMCARE
A Licensed Community Mental Health Center
*Sedgwick County...
working for you*

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Mental Health Reform Act has been acclaimed as "The Most Significant Mental Health Initiative in Kansas in Over Twenty Years" - Governor Mike Hayden



1990

Sedgwick County Youth Program (SCYP), which was operated by the department since its inception in the community, was transferred to the Department of Corrections.

Mental Health Reform Act became law in Kansas. This historic bill signed by Governor Mike Hayden designated community mental health centers as the community gatekeeper, mandated screening activities, and required specific services to be provided to targeted populations: adults with a severe and persistent mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbances.

Trivia: One of the first goals and challenges for the "Longest 15" became to convince Topeka State Hospital (TSH) staff that those people who had been there so long could, in fact, attempt and potentially succeed at community living. In one case, COMCARE worked for 3 months to get the ward staff to allow one patient a grounds pass to walk around outside at TSH with a case manager. That person did move back to Wichita and never had to return to the state hospital.

Case managers were hired to assist the consumers through their transition from hospital to community, management of psychotropic medications, education, 24-hour emergency services and assistance in securing employment and housing.

Director
Herman Bruce, 1990-1993

1992

Ushered in the implementation of a number of new community-based services and changes.

Crisis unit was fully staffed with 24-hour face-to-face capability.

Mental Health Reform for Children begins in Sedgwick County.

Family and Children Community Services was established, serving children with a serious emotional disturbance (SED).

The Alcohol Treatment Center and the Drug Treatment Center were consolidated July 15, 1992, and are known today as the Addiction Treatment Services.



1993

The Inpatient Evaluation and Treatment Center closes July, 1993. Mental Health Reform for adults began.

Community Support Services serving adults with a severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) was developed and moved to Twin Lakes, 1929 W. 21st Street North, their current residence.

ACCESS (Access to Community Care and Effective Services and Supports) grant received. ACCESS was a federal research demonstration project designed to study the impact of delivering mental health services to people who were homeless. Nine states/18 sites were awarded an ACCESS grant in a competitive application.

Crisis Intervention Services moved into the building at 635 N Main.

Director
Deborah Donaldson, 1993-2002

Medical Directors
Garry Porter, MD, 1993-2001
Linda Topping, MD, 1993-2001



1994

Mobile Crisis Services were implemented on a small scale following a series of stakeholder meetings.

"Longest 15" program initiated to bring out of the Topeka State Hospital those who had been there the longest (5-20 years) and integrate them back into the community.

Shelter-Plus Care, a subsidized housing voucher program began as part of the ACCESS Grant.

Transition Age Program (TAP) was established and focused on helping young adults who meet criteria develop their own independent living skills.

1995

North and South Mental Health Centers were consolidated. Administrative Services, which had been housed at the North Center, moved into the 635 N. Main building that once housed the Evaluation Treatment Center.

On June 1, 1995, therapist at the North and South Mental Health Centers move to 1919 N. Amidon, which to date is COMCARE's Adult Mental Health Outpatient Services (OPS).

In 1995, the Kansas Developmental Disability Reform Act was passed by the legislature and changed the Department of Mental Health's scope as it began to develop a community organization for people with developmental disabilities that later became recognized as the Sedgwick County Developmental Disability Organization (SCDDO) in 1996.

1996

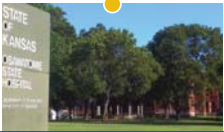
The Department of Mental Health changed its name to COMCARE - Comprehensive Community Care of Sedgwick County.

As part of clinical services, Centralized Intake was established and began providing a user friendly point of contact for consumers taking all calls from persons wishing to access mental health and substance use programs.

Community Support Services started the Supported Education and Employment Services.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) was enacted.

Telepsychiatry was introduced into the Kansas public mental health system in 1996. When completed, Kansas had the second largest telepsychiatry system in the nation for the delivery of mental health services.



1997

The SED Waiver was implemented in 1997 as a way to divert children and youth from hospitalization through the provision of community-based services from community mental health centers.

Topeka State Hospital closes and as part of the closure plan, and additional funding for resources for adults and children was available, which allowed them to remain in their home communities.

COMCARE's state hospital catchment area goes to Osawatimie State Hospital.

1998

Due to Sedgwick County's reorganization, COMCARE became a department in the Division of Human Services. This division also included Sedgwick County's Developmental Disability Organization, (SCDDO), Department on Aging, and Department of Corrections.

Addiction Treatment Services is awarded the city of Wichita Municipal Drug Court contract.

Crisis Intervention Services moves to a new facility at 934 N. Water to allow staff to provide services more effectively and to be more accommodating to consumers in crisis.

Medical Director
Jorge Beber, MD, 1999-2002

2000

Women's Alcoholism Treatment Services consolidate their services with Addiction Treatment Services.

Crisis Intervention Services also develops a new short-term crisis case management program called the Transition Team, which worked with both children and adults.

Project 275 was started which focused on keeping children with their families and out of foster care. COMCARE co-located staff at the Finney State Office Building in order to provide easy access for families and SRS social workers.

The state's Mental Health Initiative 2000 brought increased revenues to Sedgwick County by maximizing Medicaid revenues to increase access to services. COMCARE's priorities included an increase in medical staff, increase in case management and attendant care, continued funding for the homeless program, and information technology/administrative support.

In 2000, the United States Federal Court System awarded Addiction Treatment Services the contract to provide addiction treatment and mental health services to those coming out of prison and back to Sedgwick County. This contract lasted through 2006.



2001

Mental health insurance parity was passed in Kansas.

Mental Health Screening program was started at the Juvenile Detention Facility and a grant was approved to hire a qualified mental health professional and a case manager to work with individuals in the jail who had co-occurring disorders.

The tragedy of September 11 got staff focused on dealing with immediate concerns. Staff also went to Washington D.C. and New York City to help and to learn what would be most helpful in our community.

COMCARE's Family and Children Community Services partnered with USD 259 to provide mental health services in 10 Wichita schools.

2002

The foster care privatized contractor/mental health partnership between United Methodist Youthville, Inc. and COMCARE's Family & Children Community Services demonstrates the impact that a relationship between child welfare and mental health can have on the welfare of children and their families in need of mental health services.

COMCARE's Medical Services participated in two national studies: Sequenced Treatment Alternatives to Relieve Depression (STAR*D) to look for the treatment that provides the best patient satisfaction and clinical results with the fewest side effects; and the Clinical Antipsychotic Trials in Intervention Effectiveness (CATIE) a research study of long-term effect and usefulness of antipsychotic drugs for persons with schizophrenia.

Director
Marilyn Cook, 2002-present

Medical Director
Rex Lear, MD, 2002-present

Technology plays an ever-increasing role in the delivery of mental health services. New network-based telephone systems replaced old telephone systems and Psych Consult the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act compliance application resulting in a comprehensive electronic medical record. "Dumb terminals" were replaced by PCs on all desks.

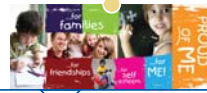
Community Support Services began developing strategies for the Dartmouth research site for implementing evidence-based practices in competitive employment for adult with serious mental illness. By December 2002, 27 percent of consumers in the Supported Employment program were working.

Addiction Treatment Services began providing on-site substance abuse assessment and treatment to juvenile offender residence of Judge Riddell Boys' Ranch.

COMCARE of Sedgwick County

Celebrating 50 years of providing mental health and substance use services in Sedgwick County.

- 1 Americans understand that mental health is essential to overall health
- 2 Mental health care is consumer and family driven
- 3 Disparities in mental health services are eliminated
- 4 Early mental health screening, assessment and referrals to services are common practice
- 5 Excellent mental health care is delivered and research is accelerated
- 6 Technology is used to access mental health care and information



2003

The president's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health Report, was published in July of 2003. The report resulted in six goals to be achieved in order to transform the mental health system in this country.

Kansas counties see a multi-million dollar reduction in financial support from the state. And closer to home, COMCARE experienced a \$1.5 million reduction in county support, a reduction in state aid, a reduction in benefits of those with Medicaid and the necessity to lay off 11 full-time employees.

To maximize resources, decrease risk, and increase efficiencies and consistency in work-flow processes, COMCARE centralized its medical records functions.

Outpatient Services experiences a 107 percent increase in therapy services in 2003. The world changed between 2001 and 2003 and it was still being felt through economic hardships, families separated by the war, heightened stress levels, cut backs in spending, layoffs and uncertainty.

Addiction Treatment Services (ATS) signed a contract with the city of Wichita Municipal Court to collect the urine drug screens for the Municipal Probation Office. ATS expands clinical services to accommodate Senate Bill 123 clientele, which offers treatment instead of prison for some offenders and with the Department of Corrections on Senate Bill 67 which offers treatment instead of prison to fourth time DUI offenders.

COMCARE's Homeless Program expanded treatment options with the implementation of a transitional housing project for homeless individuals who have a severe and persistent mental illness and co-occurring chemical dependency.

2005

COMCARE's Family and Children Community Services partners with Rainbows United, Inc to offer the first "Proud of Me" program, a therapeutic preschool for children ages 3-5 years.

COMCARE's Intake and Assessment Program adds medical staff to the program to be able to provide medication evaluations or medication reviews more quickly.

Community Support Services partners with the Department of Corrections Adult Residential Services Center (RSC) and co-locates staff at the RSC to assist residents with severe and persistent mental illness in completing their program, otherwise many of these residents would have failed and returned to jail.

A grant provided by the Department of Corrections places a mental health liaison to help with the transition of released offenders who need mental health services.

COMCARE worked with partner agencies in the Division of Human Services to formulate a budget of \$100,000 to provide dental services to adults receiving case management from any of the programs in the division.

In 2005, 62 percent of the jail population was a current or former COMCARE consumer. In 2009, the same sample was repeated and dropped to 47 percent.



2006

Family and Children Community Services made a commitment to hire and train two case management specialists to work with transitional age youth with serious emotional disturbances and who are developmentally moving towards adulthood and independence.

Sedgwick County Offender Assessment Program (SCOAP) is recommended by the Sedgwick County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to address the need of individuals with mental illness who come into contact with the criminal justice system.

The city of Wichita and Sedgwick County joined together at the urging of non-profit and faith-based organizations to form the Task Force to End Chronic Homelessness (TECH).

2007

COMCARE's Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) opened in July. The CSU provided a safe, structured environment for the provision of crisis intervention and crisis stabilization services 24 hours a day.

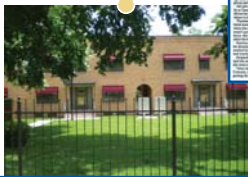
Family Prescription Shop opened a pharmacy at COMCARE's Community Support Services. The in-house pharmacy allowed for a higher level of access to medications and other pharmacy services for both consumers and COMCARE medical and nursing staff.

Kansas Health Solutions became the manager of the Medicaid State Plan in Kansas - a significant change in COMCARE operations. Value Options managed care organization began managing substance abuse treatment services for individuals and families eligible for Medicaid and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment block grant in Sedgwick County.

Addiction Treatment Services enhanced their programming by adding a Level II Intensive Outpatient Program. This program offered consumers a structured nine-hour minimum of group treatment per week in an 8 - 10 week treatment program.



2008



COMCARE participated in the community's first Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training that equipped officers with the skills needed to recognize symptoms of mental illness and to respond effectively to a wide range of behavioral crisis.

COMCARE's homeless program piloted "Housing First" connecting chronically homeless individuals to apartments and a place to call home.

COMCARE hired their first certified peer specialist. Peer specialists share their experiences of mental illness with those currently receiving treatment to provide one-on-one support to consumers who may need encouragement and guidance in their own recovery journey.

Community Support Services began the first year of a pilot project for the Strengths Model of Case Management as an evidence-based practice in conjunction with the University of Kansas. The goal of this model was to increase the focus of case management on client recovery and improving the outcomes most desired by consumers related to housing, employment, education, personal relationships and personal wellness.

The Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners approved the implementation of the 18 Judicial District Drug Court Program.

COMCARE made the decision to have their own medical staff admit and monitor COMCARE patients at Via Christi Good Shepherd (our community local inpatient psychiatric unit) instead of contracting with a local psychiatric group.

In December 2008, COMCARE received approval from the Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners to add one therapist position to work at the Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County.

COMCARE became a trainer in "Stepping Stones to Recovery" (SOAR) with the goal of providing instruction to case managers who assist consumers in applying for SSI/SSDI benefits.

2009

COMCARE opened second Proud of Me preschool in northwest Wichita for children ages 2 1/2 - 5 years that have challenging behaviors at home, preschool, daycare, or in the community.

COMCARE had staff trained to offer Sedgwick County residents, "Mental Health First Aid." Mental Health First Aid is a 12-hour training that arms the public with skills to help individuals who are developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

The city of Wichita Mental Health Court convened for the first time in 2009. The newly established court was a collaborative partnership between the judicial system and mental health, focuses on addressing the mental health issues of individuals involved in the legal system and reducing the occurrence of offending behaviors.

Children's Services completed the first summer psychosocial camp that included 36 youth with the opportunity to develop self-worth, confidence, social skills and discover personal strengths and enhance relationships in a safe, supportive and challenging environment.

2010

The Community Support Services Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment (IDDT) pilot team completed a 5-day intensive training in IDDT. With this completed, the KU consultant/technical assistance trainer guided the leadership team in the next phase of implementation. In time this team will be prepared to deliver the evidence-based practices which have been found to be most successful for people with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

The "Yes on 2" campaign was launched to protect the voting rights of our friends, family members and neighbors with mental health issues.

2011

In 2011, COMCARE served 14,000 Sedgwick County residents needing mental health or substance use services.

Crisis Intervention Services answered more than 60,000 calls.

Intake and Assessment took 9,900 calls this year from Sedgwick County residents requesting mental health or substance use services.

COMCARE's Children's Program received grants of \$95,665 to increase accessibility of social and emotional developmental assessments for young children and the coordination of needed services. COMCARE expects 800 children, 100 new mothers, and 100 pregnant women to receive a social and emotional health assessment during the first two years of the program. Grant funding will also support the development of COMCARE's third Proud of Me preschool location.

Kansas Governor Sam Brownback begins to reform the state and federally funded health care program "Medicaid" for the poor and disabled through a new managed-care strategy under what's called KanCare.



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2012

COMCARE Administrative Management Staff

- Marilyn Cook, LCSW, executive director
- Tim Kaufman, MPA, deputy director, Division of Human Services
- Rex Lear, MD, director, Medical Services
- Tom Pletcher, LCP, director, Clinical Services
- Joan Tammany, LMLP, director, Quality, Risk Management and Compliance
- Jason Scheck, LCSW, director, Crisis Intervention Services
- Jody Patterson, LCP, director, Children's Services
- Dee Staudt, LMSW, director, Adult Outpatient Services and Addiction Treatment Services
- Karen McNally, LMSW, director, Community Support Services and Homeless Program
- Mariann Bardezbain, RN, MA, director, Nursing

Number of employees
366 Full-time employees
61 Part-time employees

2012 COMCARE Budget - \$49,503.62

2012 Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners

- Dave Uaruh - 1st District
- Tim Norton - 2nd District
- Karl Peterjohn - 3rd District
- Richard Ranzau - 4th District
- James Skelton - 5th District
- Treva Licht
- Sherril Luthe
- Sgt. Dan Oblinger
- Dr. Jon Rosell
- Martha Sanchez
- Senator Jean Schodorf
- Michelle Shabben
- Tina Stevenson