

Wellness HUB - Early Intervention Support Services (EISS)

Program Description

It is the mission of the Wellness HUB, or Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) Program, provides the highest quality of mental health services to any adult age 18 or older who resides, works or attends school or prefers to participate in treatment in Sussex County and are experiencing exacerbated symptoms of mental illness. The Wellness HUB is designed as a 'living room' to provide the most comfortability to the visitors, their friends and family when in a crisis. Consumers can walk in during any of the extended office hours, including normal off hours for traditional outpatient clinics. Functioning as a mental health urgent care clinic, the Wellness HUB offers immediate access to crisis intervention services without having to rely on hospital emergency departments. The Wellness HUB provides immediate access to outreach, assessment, medication monitoring, therapy and support.

The main goal of the Wellness HUB is to provide immediate support to avoid the need for psychiatric hospitalization. Our mental health urgent care is designed to provide immediate and wraparound support to those reporting exacerbated mental health symptoms. We understand that 'crisis' can look and feel different for everyone and we work to design an individualized treatment plan for each person who walks in our doors.

Types of Services Offered

- Crisis Prevention
- Psychiatric Assessment and Evaluation
- Medication Evaluation and Management
- Therapy/Counseling
- Linkage and Referral to Community Resources
- Nursing Assessment
- Co-Occurring Substance Abuse Counseling
- Peer Support and Therapeutic Groups
- Recovery Planning
- Family Counseling
- Peer Support
- Transportation to treatment provided, as needed

Philosophy

The philosophy of our mental health urgent care is to immediately provide support and treatment to those who are in need; regardless of their ability to pay, access to transportation and any other barriers in their way. We offer a comfortable, calm and inviting environment to help people on their way to recovery.

Personnel

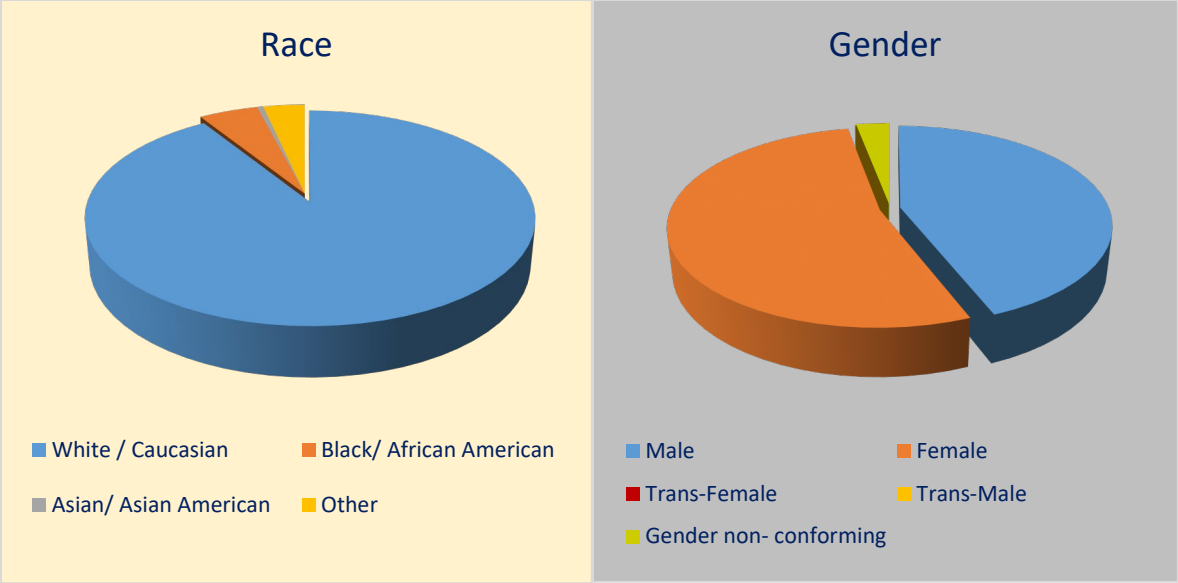
The Wellness HUB operates with a team of clinical and case management staff under the direction of a Program Director and Program Coordinator. The clinical team includes a part-time Psychiatrist, part-time Advance Practice Nurses (APN), fully licensed LCSW/LPC therapists, and Registered Nurses (RN). The Case Management team includes Case Managers and Peer Support Specialists, with lived mental health and substance use experience. The teams work closely together to ensure that all of our consumers' needs are met. There is also an administrative assistant providing support to the 'living room' and interns at different levels of education.

Consumer Demographics

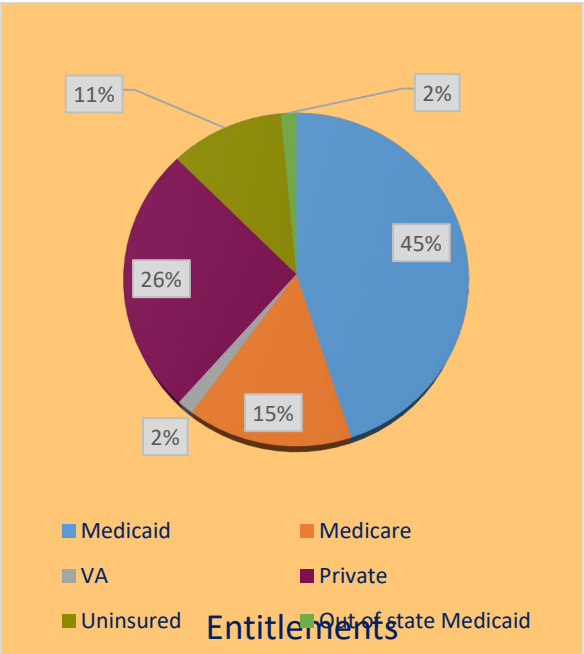
Of the 606 consumer served at the Wellness HUB in FY2023, 361 consumers were provided emergency psychiatric evaluation, medication management, crisis counseling, and case management for a period of 30 days or more. The other 245 consumers were able to be assisted with walk-in case management, crisis care and immediate linked to an appropriate community program.

The Wellness HUB is located in Newton, NJ, in the county of Sussex. Most parts of Sussex County, New Jersey are considered a rural area. To that end, the consumers in Sussex County are dealing with a number of barriers to receiving treatment. This includes a vast lack of resources, lack of employment opportunities and housing resources, as well as no access to transportation services. In regard to treatment, the County of Sussex has one hospital with limited outpatient mental health, Acute Partial/Intensive Outpatient, and one community partial care provider. Waitlists for outpatient treatment for those covered by Medicaid can be as long as a 90-day wait.

Of the 361 consumers treated at the Wellness HUB, 91% treated identified as White/Caucasian, 5% Black/African-American, 0.5% Asian, and 3.5% identified as Other. Ethnicity breakdown included 90% Non-Hispanic and 10% Hispanic/Latin, 10 consumers were also only Spanish speaking. The Wellness HUB consumers identify as 44% male, 53% female, and 3% gender non-conforming. Of those served in FY2023, 109 were 18-29 years old (30%), 127 were in their 30's and 40's (35%), 88 were in their 50's and 60's (24%), and 25 were 70 years old and older (7%).

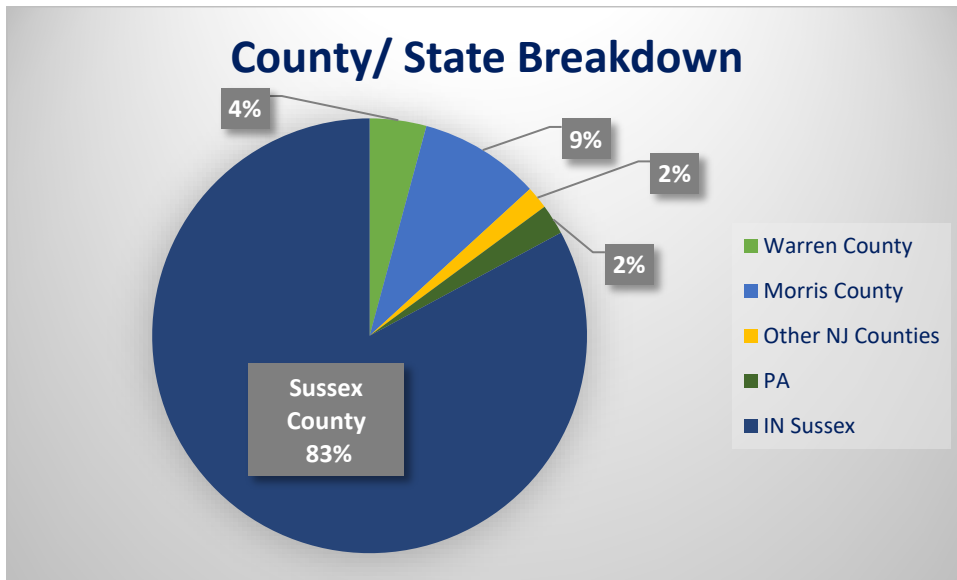


The Wellness HUB is a grant funded program that is contracted to treat all consumers regardless of their ability to pay. We have found, in the past year, a significant amount of consumers that have no insurance coverage, who are not eligible for Medicaid due to income limits but who also report the inability to pay for their own insurance coverage. This makes it extremely difficult for the case management staff to link the consumers to ongoing care and extends out length-of-stays. Insurance coverage for the consumers served include; Medicaid (164) 45%, Private Insurance (94) 26%, Medicare (55) 15%, Uninsured (43) 11%, Veterans Healthcare Coverage (3) 0.8%, and lastly, Out-of-State Medicaid (2) 0.5%.



During this first year in operation, it is important to note the need for walk-in and supportive mental health services throughout the state and surrounding states. To support this in this year,

we have treated 371 individuals, 300 individuals or 83% of those reside in Sussex County. The other individuals seen resided in Morris County, Warren County, other NJ counties, and out of state in Pennsylvania, respectively.



Performance Indicators

The Wellness HUB participates in the agency-wide Quality Assurance (QA) program which conducts monthly meetings and collects data on the utilization, quality, and effectiveness of services and treatment provided by each Mental Health Association program.

Wellness HUB’s performance indicators measure overall consumer satisfaction, access to immediate care, and quality of care. During this fiscal year, 100% of consumers surveyed were satisfied with their treatment at the Wellness HUB, 98% of walk-ins were offered an appointment with a psychiatric provider within 24 hours of walking in for treatment. We work

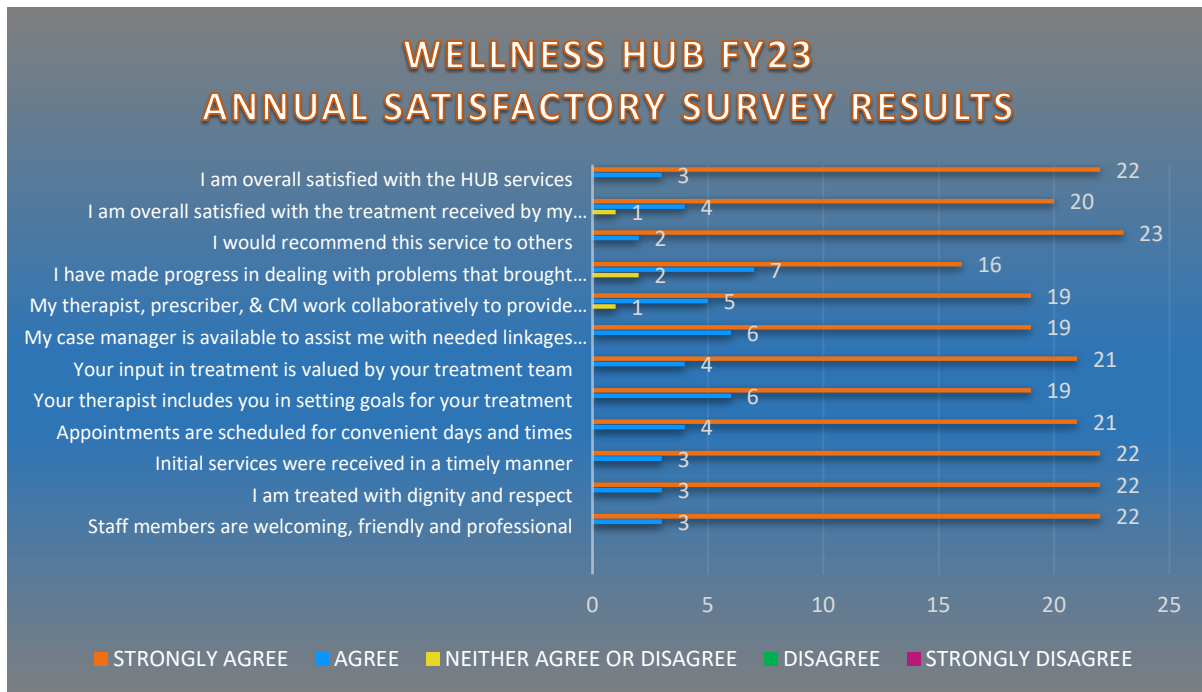
to assist our consumers, allowing them to engage in immediate counseling and medication evaluation to avoid the need for psychiatric screening at the hospital for a higher level of care or need for inpatient psychiatric care. In FY2023, only 1% of consumers walking in for care had to be referred to the local hospital to screen for a higher level of care.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey

MHA is continuously refining services based on consumer input. This is received through various methods, including the annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey. Twenty six (26) Wellness HUB consumers were surveyed during our survey period.

Of the consumers surveyed;

- 100% of consumers indicated they “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” that they were satisfied with services at the HUB.
- 100% of consumers felt initial services were received in a timely manner.
- 96% of consumers felt HUB staff were respectful of their cultural background.
- 100% of consumers felt appointments were scheduled for convenient times and days.
- 100% of consumers felt their therapist included them in setting goals for their treatment.
- 100% of consumers felt their case manager was available to assist them with needed linkages and referrals.
- 96% of consumers felt the treatment team worked collaboratively to provide the best treatment.
- 92% of consumers felt they have made progress in dealing with their identified problems.
- 100% of consumers would recommend this service to another.



Those surveyed responded to two open ended questions as follows;

How has the Wellness HUB improved your life?

- “made me see the light”
- “my therapist has made me feel at ease to open up and get my life back”
- “helped me focus on goals”
- “In so many ways, mentally, physically, medication, etc.”
- “I have only been here a few weeks and I already feel better”
- “It has provided me a safe, consistent place to work on myself”
- “Feels good to have a place to go”
- “stopped my anxiety”
- “helped me understand myself better and start moving forward”
- “helped me regain control when I felt like I was losing it”

Additional Comments-

- “Very grateful for this place”
- “This program is so vital in Sussex County”
- “I loved everyone at the HUB”
- “best practices”

Highlights

Our first year in operation was an exciting one. The Wellness HUB or Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) received the award in June 2022. By July 2022, we had leased an office space, renovated the space, and moved in. Staff also began in this month and by August 25, 2022, we were an opened licensed outpatient facility with our first walk-in for care. While other newly awarded EISS programs struggled to find office space and hire staff, we were the first new program to open with a therapist, case manager, and prescriber, fully capable to handle whatever walked through our doors.

- Named by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) as the “Rookie of the Year,” as a successful new EISS program.
- Participated in the Sussex County Community College Mental Health Awareness Women’s Soccer Game to provide advocacy and education to the students and their parents in fall 2022.
- Presented and marketed our new program to Sussex County resources including Atlantic Health - Newton Medical Center, Bridgeway Rehabilitation Services, Center for Prevention and Counseling, and NewBridge Services.
- Partnered with the Newton Police Department to provide education and advocacy, and collaborate to service the residents of Newton.
- Presented to the Sussex County Chiefs of Police at their annual meeting.
- By providing walk-in, mental health and addictions care, we worked to decrease the consumers’ need to go to the emergency rooms for care.

- Began billing therapy, group and psychiatric evaluations, and medication management for all Medicaid and Medicare consumers since the inception of the program.
- Worked with Rutgers University, New York University, and Loyola University to host MSW interns in our supportive learning environment.
- Wellness HUB therapist earned certification to supervise provisionally licensed staff within the Mental Health Association.