

Early Intervention Support Service- The Wellness HUB

Description

The Wellness HUB, an Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) Program, provides high-quality mental health services to adults 18+ in Sussex County experiencing mental health exacerbations. Designed as a welcoming 'living room,' it offers a comfortable space for individuals, friends, and family during crises. Operating with extended hours, including off-peak times, the HUB functions as a mental health urgent care clinic, providing immediate crisis intervention without hospital reliance. Services include assessment, medication monitoring, therapy, crisis prevention, family and substance use counseling, referrals, peer support, and transportation. Its goal is to deliver rapid, personalized support to prevent hospitalization, ensuring accessible, barrier-free care in a calm environment dedicated 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), and licensed therapists. The Case Management team includes Case Managers, BA level Substance Use Specialists 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.

Caseload

Of the 1003 walk-ins served at the Wellness HUB in FY2025, 621 consumers were provided emergency Psychiatric Evaluation, Medication Management, Crisis Counseling, and Case Management for a period of thirty days or more. This represents 3% increase in the number of people treated compared to FY2024. Consumers who walk in for care and are not opened, for a variety of reasons, are assisted with walk in case management, crisis care and immediate linked to an appropriate community program. This fiscal year, we found that some walk-ins were only looking for immediately support to curb their crisis and did not require the full spectrum of services provided at the HUB.

Demographics

Of the 1003 walk-ins at the Wellness HUB, 85% identified as White/Caucasian, 8% as Black/African American, 6% as Asian, and 1% as "other". The ethnicity breakdown included 88% non-Hispanic and 12% Hispanic/Latin. Among those identifying as Hispanic, five consumers were exclusively Spanish-speaking.

The Wellness HUB consumers identify as 47% Male, 50% Female, and 3% as Gender Non-Conforming or transgender.

Of those served in FY 2025, 16% were 18-24 years old, 26% were in between 25 and 34, 38% between 35 and 54, and 20% were 55 years old and older. The outliers include 32 consumers 18 and 19 years old and 23 consumers were 75 years old or older. Our youngest consumer was 18 years old and oldest was 92 years old.

Performance Outcomes

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. Additionally, 99% of walk ins were offered an appointment with a psychiatric provider within 24 hours of walking in for treatment. There remains no wait for care at the Wellness HUB (0 days). We work to assist our consumers engage in immediate counseling and medication evaluation to prevent the need for psychiatric screening at the hospital for a higher level of care or inpatient psychiatric treatment. In FY 2025, 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 Surveys

MHAEM is continuously refining services based on consumer input. This is received through various methods, including the annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey. Thirty-four (34) Wellness HUB consumers responded to the survey.

Of the consumers surveyed, 100% strongly agree or agree that they were satisfied with services at the HUB. Additionally, 100% felt initial services were received in a timely manner. All consumers (100%) felt that HUB staff were respectful of their cultural background and that appointments were scheduled for convenient times and days. All consumers (100%) felt their therapist included them in setting goals for their treatment, and all felt their case manager was available to assist with linkages and referrals. In addition, 100% of consumers felt the treatment team worked collaboratively to provide the best treatment. Overall, 92% of consumers felt they have made progress in dealing with their identified problems, and 100% would recommend this service to another. Those surveyed responded to two open ended questions: "How has the Wellness HUB improved your life?" and "Additional Comments."

- Helped me cope with problems that have plagued me for years. The availability of walk in was really helpful and convenient too.
- It saved my life!
- I am able to talk about my problems with someone that doesn't judge outside the situation.

Program Highlights

The Wellness HUB biggest achievement in FY2025 was supporting 1003 consumers with acute mental health and substance use needs with immediate assistance. In recognition of this effort, the Wellness HUB was acknowledged by our funder, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, as one of the top-performing Early Intervention Support Services in the state.

The Wellness HUB Director was a key participant in a system performance improvement plan led by Rutgers, aimed at enhancing the mental health acute care system in Sussex County. Through this plan, we have ensured that our system of care is efficient, supportive and provides comprehensive services to Sussex consumers.

Wellness HUB staff also participated in health fairs at Project Self-Sufficiency, Sussex County Community College, and local schools. We took part in Overdose Awareness Night and the CFPC Annual Recovery “Changing the face of Addiction” Walk, showing support of local agencies and our consumers in sustained recovery. Additionally, staff attending Sussex Vo-Tech’s Game of Life to provide mental health resourcing to a group of graduating students.

Advocacy Activities

Advocacy at the Wellness HUB means that the HUB is not just providing treatment and support to those in need but being serving as a vocal and steady member of the Sussex County. The Wellness HUB Director is the chair of the PAC/PACADA meetings, a monthly meeting where mental health and substance use providers come together to ensure delivery of quality care. Also, the Director is a member of the Sussex County Overdose Fatality Review Committee, in effort to reduce stigma and lower the number of Sussex residents lost to an accidental overdose.

FY 2026 Goals

During Fiscal Year 2026, the Wellness HUB will:

- Place a strong focus on increasing community awareness and expanding outreach to the residents of Sussex County.
- Continue to ensure timely and easy access to services.
- Continue to provide high-quality, evidence-based interventions that meet the diverse needs of individuals and promote positive outcomes.
- Continue to strengthen partnerships among providers, community agencies families and individuals to create a comprehensive support network.