



1001 E. Touhy Avenue, Suite 50
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018
847.635.4600
847.635.6764
LSSI.org

Central/Southern Illinois Synod 2019 Annual Report from Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

Dear Valued Partners in Ministry:

Last year, LSSI provided whole person care to over 42,000 children, adults, and seniors—that's one in every 300 people in Illinois. Caring for the whole person goes beyond providing safety, shelter, food, and clothing. LSSI strives to view the whole person, just as God does, in order to surround people with the necessary supports to build and enhance life.

The services LSSI offers—foster care, early childhood education, mental health services, alcohol and drug treatment, affordable senior housing, residential programs for people with developmental disabilities, and programs that help formerly incarcerated individuals integrate back into society—build and enhance lives in the Central/Southern Illinois Synod and throughout Illinois. We are grateful to the congregations and individual members who make up the Central/Southern Illinois Synod who remain steadfast advocates of these services and LSSI's mission overall.

LSSI will complete its current strategic plan in June 2018. Our future focus will continue embracing a generative model of care to fulfill our human service mission and maintain financial sustainability. By addressing the *root causes* that underlie presenting problems, LSSI respects the dignity of clients and facilitates greater well-being and independence in reaching their full potential.

Over LSSI's nearly 152-year history, we have learned that we are far more successful when we provide our services in a proactive approach. In this context, we're pleased to highlight some of those programs here:

- We continue to graduate children from our **Therapeutic Foster Care Program** at offices in Aurora, Chicago, and Rockford. This pilot program is part of a DCFS initiative to place children with histories of severe trauma and emotional/behavioral needs into single-family homes rather than institutional settings or group homes, with the goal of permanency. Thirty-five children have been enrolled in the program since it began in May 2017, with 13 children having graduated to date; 80 percent of the children who graduated were reunited with relatives.
- Our **Step-Up School-Based Counseling Program** grew out of a need in our Chicago service area—children needing mental health services faced wait times up to eight months and were forced to access crisis services instead. Our staff asked the question, "How can we serve these kids better?" Step-Up embeds counselors in 26 Chicago Public Schools where students access care convenient to them in their community—a strong tenet of LSSI's whole person care. The program has more than tripled in size since it began several years ago. We expect it to grow further and expand to other school districts.

- LSSI compiled results from a pilot project called “**Day One**” that aims to help people with combined physical and behavioral health needs and whose primary health insurance is Medicaid. These individuals make up 25 percent of people receiving Medicaid, but represent 56 percent of the program’s total cost. The LSSI Day One program provides proven solutions to help those at-risk of crisis or hospitalization, while producing better outcomes and reducing the cost of care. Our Day One program provides clients with immediate access to whole-person services. This eases their risk of crisis or hospitalization, and provides them the opportunity to remain healthy and stable in the community with necessary supports and services.

In one year, 205 people were enrolled; there was a nearly 36 percent reduction in inpatient admissions/readmissions and a 39 percent reduction in inpatient days. Thirty-one percent were placed in housing or transitional housing, in addition to other services and supports.

- In the past year, LSSI’s **Prisoner and Family Ministry** formed strong partnerships with community organizations to provide additional services. In May 2018, LSSI joined with Our Brother’s Keeper, a Catholic-based organization providing cooperative re-entry services, to offer case management services to returning citizens at offices in New Life Community Church, East St. Louis. Working with the Diocese of Belleville, LSSI’s Peer-to-Peer Literacy Program launched in Centralia and Pinckneyville Correctional Facilities in August 2018. The program trains peer mentors to teach literacy and tracks progress. LSSI also started providing literacy education to returning citizens.

We wish to express our gratitude to Bishop John Roth for his leadership of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, as well as his service on the LSSI Board of Directors. We extend our thanks to Rev. Elyse Nelson Winger from the Central/Southern Illinois Synod who currently serves as Secretary on the LSSI Board of Directors.

We are grateful to the trustees of LSSI’s endowment, The Cornerstone Foundation, who are from the Central/Southern Illinois Synod: Marcia Anderson, Connie Frankenfeld, Mary Loken, Roland Person, and Lynn C. Smith.

What a privilege it is to share in life with children, adults, and seniors, as together we fulfill LSSI’s mission to bring healing, justice, and wholeness to people and communities. We remain grateful for your ongoing involvement and support.

In faith,



Mark A. Stutrud
President and Chief Executive Officer