



*Dane County Department of Human  
Services*

*Behavioral Health Resource Center 2022  
Report*

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# Introduction

Dane County’s Behavioral Health Resource Center (BHRC) has been in operation since November 2020 and continues to serve residents across Dane County seeking resources, services, and support for mental health and substance use needs. The BHRC assists consumers, concerned others, and professionals in navigating the complexities of the behavioral health care system by providing information about local resources, referrals to providers and other support services, as well as warm hand-offs between consumers and providers. As the BHRC continues to expand their reach and connect more Dane County residents to services that match their needs, consumers, loved ones, and professionals are encouraged to reach out for consultation and partnership. For more information about BHRC’s beginnings and growth, see the [2021 Annual Report](#).

The BHRC is a voluntary person- and family-centered service designed to help any Dane County resident access behavioral health services in Dane County, regardless of insurance status, financial status, age, identity, ability, or legal status. The BHRC assists Dane County residents from all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life. BHRC services are consumer-led and consumer-driven, meaning that the individual and family are the expert regarding their needs.

Serves	Offers	Removes barriers
✓ Dane County residents	✓ warm hand-offs	✓ BHRC services are free and voluntary
✓ adults	✓ referrals	✓ confidential and have the choice to remain anonymous
✓ children/youth	✓ information	✓ get information for yourself
✓ teens/young adults	✓ service connection	✓ provide resources and ideas to help someone else you are concerned about
✓ families and individuals	✓ follow-up	✓ communicate through your preferred mode
✓ insured and uninsured	✓ support services	
✓ people of any financial status, age, identity, ability, and legal status	✓ basic assessment of needs and service eligibility	
✗ people outside of Dane County	✓ resources for concerned others	
	✗ crisis services	
	✗ direct services/treatment	

## Summary of BHRC Services



The BHRC served over **2,200 individuals in 2022**, a nearly 20% increase from 2021. Staff made nearly 6,700 referrals to resources and services in the community, ranging across the behavioral health care continuum from support groups to residential programs. Many individuals reported the BHRC staff were very or extremely helpful in connecting them with resources and information (83%), would refer someone they know to the BHRC (81%), and would reach out again in the future (84%). Overall, 84% of consumers, concerned others, and professionals reported they were satisfied with their experience working with the BHRC.

**Table 1. Summary of Contacts to the BHRC in 2022**

<b>51 % Consumers</b>	<b>31% Concerned Others</b>	<b>18% Third-Party Professionals</b>
A person seeking resources or services for themselves	A person seeking resources or services for someone they care about such as a partner, loved one, family member, or friend	A professional (case manager, healthcare provider, school staff, etc.) in the community seeking resources or services on behalf of their client or patient

When a consumer or a concerned other connects with the BHRC, staff begin by walking the individual through a general assessment to evaluate their clinical needs and barriers they are facing to accessing care. The assessment includes identifying presenting concerns (e.g. mental health, substance use, dual diagnosis, crisis, etc.), known barriers to access, and what type of service(s) the consumer or concerned other is seeking. In 2022, the BHRC prioritized revising the assessment tool used to evaluate concerns, needs, and barriers. The revised assessment improved staff workflow and consumer input into the assessment. It also allows for better data collection to get a “big picture” view of who is being served in Dane County and what needs and barriers persist for vulnerable and underserved groups.

“The employee I spoke with was extremely helpful. I wasn't sure where to start and she put my mind at ease by asking questions to get all the information I needed.” - Consumer



*Average 25 days from case open to case close*

Figure 1. Closed Cases in 2021 and 2022 by Month

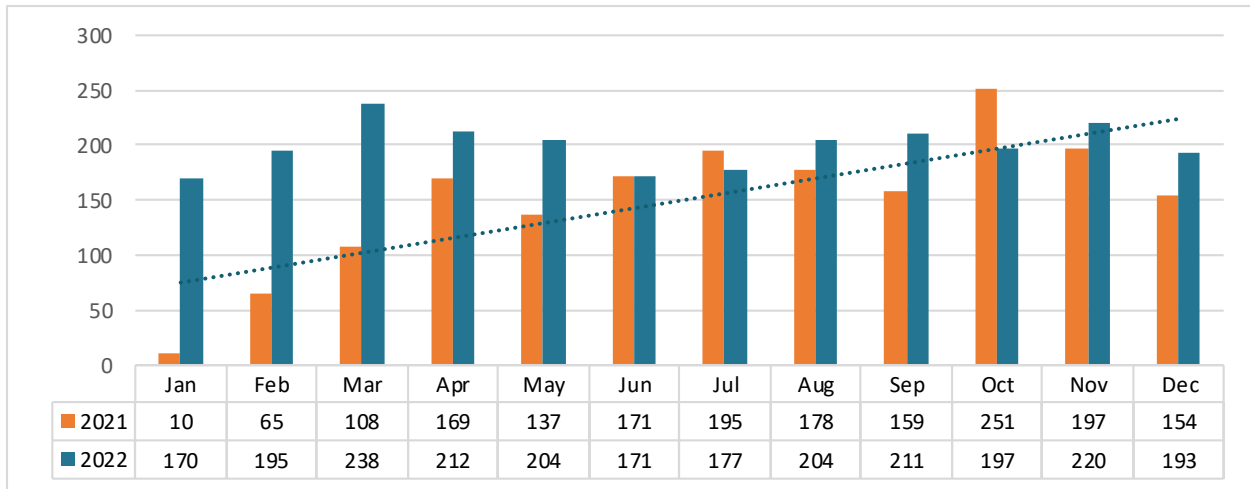
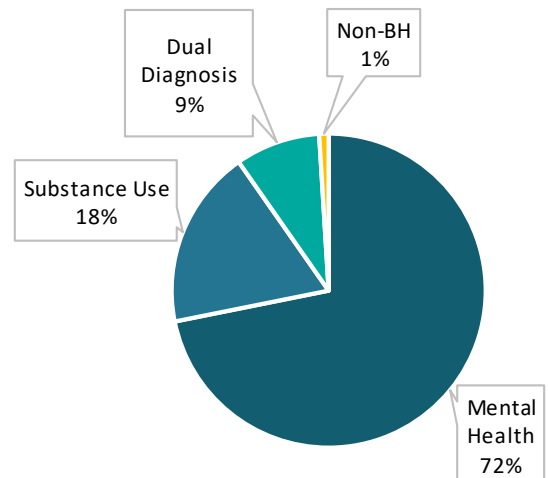


Table 2. Demographics of Consumers Served in 2022

Demographics – 2022 Cases <sup>1</sup>						
Gender (n=1,054)			Race (n=617) <sup>2</sup>		Age (n = 830)	Uninsured (n=2,242)
<u>Male</u> 42%	<u>Female</u> 57%	<u>Non-Binary</u> 1%	<u>White</u> 74%	<u>Non-White</u> 26%	Min: 14 Max: 95 Average: 43	Uninsured: 4%

Last year showed consistent contact volume for the BHRC. The number of cases closed each month varied throughout the year, with a 2022 peak of 238 cases closed in March (Figure 1). BHRC staff continue to balance a growing active case load, with an average of **192 active, open cases at a time**. This is up from the 2021 average of 175 open cases. The demographic make-up of BHRC contacts largely mirrors the Dane County population (Table 2), with more women contacting the BHRC than men. Consumers of all ages reached out to the BHRC, ranging from 14 years old to 95 years old. The BHRC served 80 Dane County consumers who were uninsured in 2022. Consumers primarily contacted the BHRC for mental health resources (Figure 2), followed by substance use (18%), dual diagnosis (9%), and non-behavioral health needs like housing support or economic or employment resources (1%).

Figure 2. Presenting Concerns (n = 995)



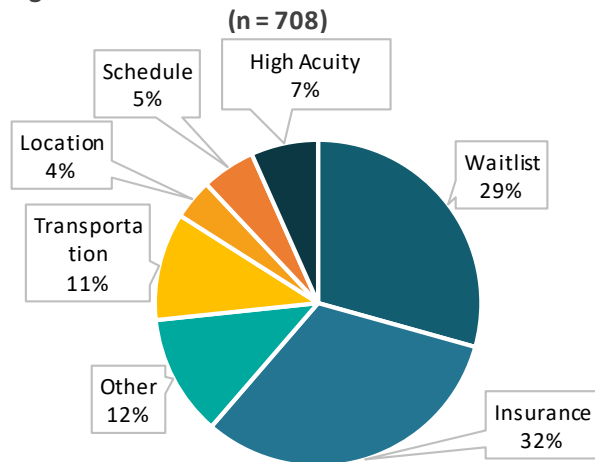
<sup>1</sup> Some clients' demographic information was unknown or clients declined to answer. These clients are not included in the denominator calculation for gender (n = 1185), race (n = 1625), and age (n = 1412).

<sup>2</sup> The non-white category is made up of consumers who identified as Black or African American (n = 96), Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander (n = 14), American Indian (n = 9), or multi-racial (n = 39).

## Barriers to Access



Figure 3. Consumer-Identified Barriers to Access



“[BHRC refers] only to places that take [your] insurance. This saves so much time and hunting! Also helping to find smaller offices that don't show up as easily in general searches.” - Consumer

“I really appreciate all your help with putting together such a detailed list of resources. I am currently seeing a therapist weekly at [clinic] and so far I've been very happy with everything. The whole process was seamless.” - Consumer

Consumers and concerned others identified several barriers to accessing care (Figure 3), including waitlists, cost and insurance coverage, and logistical limitations to access like transportation, scheduling and location, and childcare constraints.<sup>3</sup> While these barriers are not unique to Dane County residents, it's important to recognize where consumers are consistently identifying barriers and address those barriers at the system-level.

In Dane County and across the country, waitlists for behavioral health care continue to limit consumer access and choice in where they can get care. The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath have only exacerbated health care staff shortages and increased consumers' need for care. In 2022, 29% of consumers identified waitlists as a barrier to their access to care, up from 20% of cases in 2021. The solutions to waitlists are complex and difficult to change. The current health care worker shortage is a significant driver of growing waitlists, but many other factors, including the long-term impacts of the pandemic, are affecting everyone's ability to access and provide care. Financial

barriers represent another chronic barrier for consumers seeking behavioral health care in Dane County. The BHRC works with several no-cost and low-cost/sliding scale providers in the area to provide services to those who are uninsured or underinsured, but spots are limited and consumers can spend weeks or months on waitlists for these providers. Even in cases where consumers have health insurance, many times coverage and reimbursement for behavioral health care services continues to fall below the demand, leaving consumers to pay for services out-of-pocket or forego treatment altogether.

<sup>3</sup> Acuity Level means the amount of the medically related support needs of an individual. High acuity means the consumers has several needs that will need to be addressed either simultaneously or in a specific order to best meet the consumer's goals.

# 2022 Referrals Summary

**6,695**  
Referrals in 2022

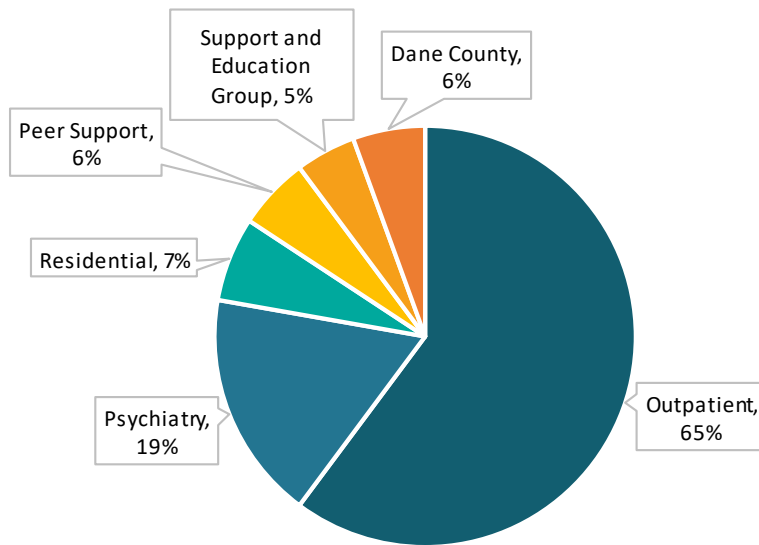
**2.68**  
referrals per case on average

**Nearly 300 Peer Support Referrals**

The BHRC made *almost 6,700 referrals to 258 organizations, agencies, and providers across Dane County in 2022*. The majority of those referrals were for outpatient services ([Figure 4](#)), followed by psychiatry services, residential treatment services, peer support services, and support and education groups.<sup>4</sup> Over 350 referrals were made to Dane County offices, including 152 referrals to [Comprehensive Community Services](#) (CCS). Referrals do not necessarily indicate that the consumer successfully enrolled with a service or provider. It simply means that the BHRC initiated a connection to a service. Waitlists and provider availability impact the success of referrals.

“Quick responses with specific provider information. That helps me support the family on getting connected with mental health services in an efficient manner.”  
– 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Professional

Figure 4. Percentage of Referrals to Service Type (n = 6695)



<sup>4</sup> Some providers offer multiple service types (e.g. outpatient and psychiatry services, outpatient and residential services, etc.) and are counted in each of the categories of service they offer.

[Table 3](#) below shows where the BHRC made the most referrals in 2022 by service type. These organizations and providers are not the only places where the BHRC referred consumers, concerned others, and professionals. In 2022, the BHRC referred to more than 250 organizations, providers, and community resources across Dane County. While these groups do not make up all of the types of referrals the BHRC makes, these service types are the most common. Referrals are also made to other resources, such as to insurance providers for consumers who are uninsured or interested in different insurance or supplemental coverage, supported employment services, crisis services, hospitals and detox facilities, and other community resources.

**Table 3. BHRC Most-Referred Providers in 2022 by Service Type**

Outpatient	Psychiatry	Residential
JMHC Oceanhawk Counseling Alternatives Lake City Counseling Reflections Mental Health Counseling Abegglen Counseling	Collaborative Solutions in Psychiatry Mercyland Psychiatry The Psychology Center Pauquette Center Access CHC	5 Door Recovery Jessie Crawford NOVA Counseling Services Rogers Behavioral Health ARC Dayton
Peer Support	Support Group & Education	Dane County Offices
Safe Communities SOAR Recovery Dane	NAMI Dane County Briarpatch Youth Services Children’s Therapy Network Agrace Madison New Bridge	CCS Job Center (JCO) Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Children Come First (CCF) General Offices

The BHRC prioritized making referrals for consumers who identified being uninsured or underinsured, making hundreds of referrals to providers that offer no-cost or low-cost services. Providers serving this population include Edgewood Family Center, Counseling Psychology Training Clinic (CPTC), Psychology Research and Training Center (PRTC), and Journey Mental Health Center (JMHC), each of whom are filling a significant gap in accessibility in Dane County.



In 2022, Dane County Department of Human Services awarded funds to providers in need of infrastructure support in order to offer outpatient services to underserved communities in Dane County, including those who are uninsured. The BHRC will be an integral component of this new open network of outpatient providers, working hand-in-hand with consumers and providers to offer warm hand-offs and follow-up support to underserved consumers across Dane County.



## 2022 Growth

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**4 Positions Added in 2022**

**Focus on Outreach**

**Peer Support Resources Expansion**

In 2022, the BHRC created a Coordination Team to work in partnership with the BHRC supervisor in supporting the growth the BHRC. Three new positions formed the Coordination Team.

**Behavioral Health Lead Position**

The Behavioral Health (BH) Lead position was filled in April 2022. The BH Lead has standardized training, onboarding, and staff development processes and procedures to ensure that all consumers who call the BHRC are receiving the quality care that the BHRC has become known for in the community. Additionally, the BH Lead was tasked with organizing and developing resources guides that will support BHRC staff in continuing to expand their knowledge and expertise about community resources that best fit their unique behavioral health needs.

**Peer Services Coordinator Position**

The spring of 2022 saw the start of the Peer Services Coordinator position at the BHRC. This is the first dedicated Peer Services role at the BHRC and the first Peer Support role housed directly within the [Dane County Behavioral Health Division](#). The Peer Services Coordinator role is held by a Certified Peer Specialist. This position gives the BHRC the opportunity to do more focused and collaborative work with Dane County's contracted peer services agencies by supporting and strengthening the coordination of peer support alongside the medical model of mental health treatment. The [Peer Services page](#) on the BHRC website provides information on peer support and answers frequently asked questions.

**Community Outreach Coordinator Position**

In 2022, the BHRC expanded its outreach efforts by adding a Community Outreach Coordinator. Since July, the BHRC participated in over 25 events ranging from informational sessions to community events and resource fairs. These events served communities across Dane County, including "back to school" fairs where BHRC provided wellness items, and a Senior Citizen Resource Event hosted by the City of Madison. The BHRC partnered with powerful community organizations such as the [Progress Center for Black Women](#) and [Public Health Madison Dane County \(PHMDC\)](#) for community dinners and community education opportunities.

**Bilingual Case  
Manager Position  
Filled**

In addition to the Coordinator positions, the BHRC hired a Bilingual Case Manager in 2022. The Bilingual Case Manager (Spanish/English) started at BHRC in June 2022, serving Latino communities in Dane County. Dane County residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino currently represent about 7% of the county population.<sup>5</sup>

The Bilingual Case Manager position has focused primarily on improving access to behavioral health services to meet the needs of Latino communities in Dane County. Latino communities are not a monolithic group with universal needs or barriers. There is no “one size fits all” solution to meet the needs of this growing community. The Latino community also faces more than typical or traditional barriers to access (e.g. cost, waitlists), such as a higher rate of being uninsured compared to other racial or ethnic groups (in 2021, the uninsured rate for those who identified as Hispanic in Wisconsin was 16.3%, compared to 7.9% of Black residents and 5.1% of White residents<sup>6</sup>), language barriers that are compounded by complex system navigation, poorer quality of care, and a lack of access to preventive care.<sup>7,8</sup> The Bilingual Case Manager has collaborated with community partners and organizations dedicated to serving the Latino communities in Dane County, including:

- The launch of a BHRC Spanish Language Line for the Spanish-speaking community to receive services in their native language
- Active partnership and direct outreach efforts with the [Catholic Multicultural Center](#), [Centro Hispano](#), “[Esperanza Project](#)” (Centro Hispano-UW Madison School of Psychology), the [Dane County Immigration Affairs Office](#) (IAO) and [Madison College](#) Immigration Fairs, [Public Health](#) and [Planned Parenthood of Dane County](#) at their open clinics at Latino grocery stores in Madison & Fitchburg, and participation on the Latinx Mental Health Coalition and [Latino Health Council](#), which partners with 60+ health care providers in Dane County.

In 2023, the Bilingual Case Manager will continue to prioritize outreach and partnership efforts with local organizations and providers, especially to those who offer specialized services to the Latino communities in Dane County.

<sup>5</sup> United States Census Bureau, “[Quick Facts](#)” Retrieved January 19, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation, “[Uninsured Rates for the Non-Elderly by Race/Ethnicity](#)” from the American Community Survey, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Wisconsin Department of Health Services, “[Hispanic/Latinos in Wisconsin: Overview](#).” March 24, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Funk, C. and Hugo Lopez, M. (2022) “[Hispanic Americans’ Experiences with Health Care](#)” Pew Research Center.

The Coordination Team was one step in forming better connection. Another effort that began in late 2022 is the Liaison Program. This initiative was created to foster partnerships with county and community organizations – big and small – across Dane County. Staff serve as liaisons who represent a “point person” to connect with community organizations and agencies and streamline communication and increase consumer access to resources through their specialized lens. Liaisons may go into the community to meet directly with consumers and/or provide a more global connection with organizations and representatives. These liaison partnerships aim to decrease barriers to access services, disseminate outreach materials, plan informational events, and assist community organizations with outreach efforts. There are six active liaison partnerships throughout Dane County including [Madison Public Libraries](#), [Outreach LGBTQ+ Community Center](#) and [Porchlight Men’s Emergency Shelter](#).

## 2023: Internal Growth and Continued Partnerships

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**Adding 5 New Positions**

**Liaison Program Expansion**

**Internship Program**

The future is bright at the BHRC! In 2023, five new positions will be added to meet the growing demand from Dane County residents navigating the behavioral health care system. Three new case management positions – including two generalist case managers and one bilingual Hmong case manager – as well as one clinical lead and one IT position will be added throughout the year. These additional staff, and in particular the bilingual Hmong case manager, will help the BHRC continue to reach underserved communities and vulnerable populations in the county.

In addition to team growth, the BHRC plans to expand the Liaison Program to build more partnerships with community organizations and continue building bridges for consumer access and choice in their care. The BHRC will also pursue implementing an internship program with the local universities to assist in training upcoming social workers and clinicians on consumer-focused access to care and how to navigate both individual and systemic barriers to access.

The BHRC continues to emphasize the importance of warm handoffs between systems of care.<sup>9</sup> The warm handoff benefits the consumer as it relieves them of the responsibility of telling their story over again to multiple agencies and providers. The concept of a warm handoff also benefits the agencies and referring parties as it allows for clear communication and a shared understanding of expectations. The BHRC prioritizes partnering and collaborating with agencies, organizations, and providers across Dane County to offer warm handoffs to consumers and concerned others seeking behavioral health services for themselves and their loved ones.

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<sup>9</sup> Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). [“Warm Hand Off: Intervention”](#) December 2017.