



Behavioral Health Town Hall

Marissa Eyanson, Director of
Behavioral Health, Iowa HHS

October 23, 2025



Health and
Human Services



Overview

- ▶ Iowa HHS Updates
- ▶ District Profiles and Plans
- ▶ Iowa Overdose Deaths
- ▶ Iowa PCA Updates
- ▶ Questions – *please use QA function throughout*

Iowa HHS Updates

Marissa Eyanson

Opioid Settlement Funds

- ▶ FY25 funded projects total: \$29M, mostly directed to fund specific projects.
- ▶ Opioid Settlement Funds – Recovery Housing Project RFP.
- ▶ November 1st - Iowa HHS' first annual report to the legislature.
- ▶ Anticipate announcement of FY26 funding opportunities, beginning in November.

Exceptions to Policy

Exceptions to Policy

- ▶ Use when needing an exception to Iowa Administrative Code.
- ▶ Applies to requirements found in rules.
- ▶ For example: Chapter 24 accreditation exceptions for staff training.

Policy Variance

- ▶ Use when needing an exception to payment policies.
- ▶ Applies to specific people in unusual, time-limited circumstances.
- ▶ For example: individuals with no participating providers in the area to refer to.

Website: <https://hhs.iowa.gov/appeals/how-appeal/exceptions-policy>

Email: appeals@hhs.iowa.gov

HHS, BH Division Email: bhassistance@hhs.iowa.gov

Upcoming Training

Medicaid B3 Services

Iowa HHS' Medicaid team alongside the Medicaid Managed Care Organizations will host a virtual B3 Training on Thursday, October 30th.

Agenda

- ▶ 2pm-3pm B3 Substance Use Disorder treatments
- ▶ 3pm-4pm B3 Community Based Services

How to Join

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1610406725?pwd=ZPtAmLasQ7F7p81YFGa0sJNAZHfx7n.1>

- ▶ Meeting ID: 161 040 6725
- ▶ Passcode: 124228

Medicaid B3 Services Provider Manual

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/17242/download?inline>

Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health

LivingWorks Start is a 90-minute online training intended to equip you to save a life if you believe someone may be thinking of suicide.

- ▶ Training is available and free now through November 30th.

More Information and Enrollment

<https://www.iowacebh.org/livingworks-start/>

Please contact iowa-cebh@uiowa.edu with any questions.

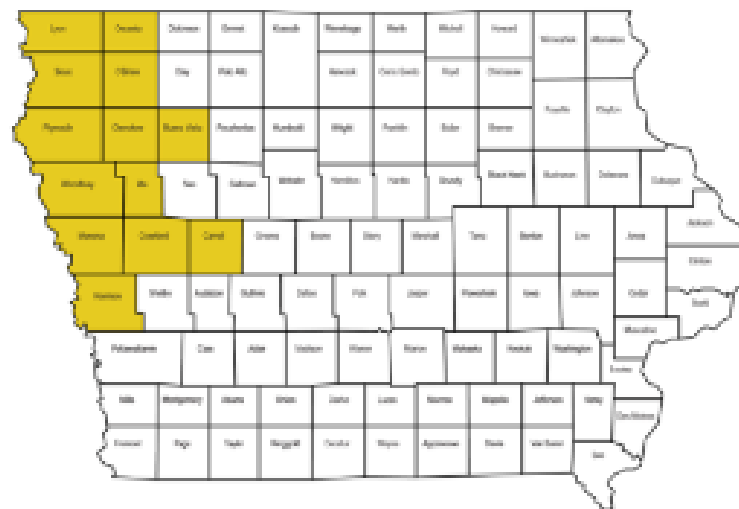
District Profiles and Plans

Marissa Eyanson

District 1

District 1: Geography

- District 1 encompasses 13 counties across Northwest and West Central Iowa.
- Population: 298,936



District 1

County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	8
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	4
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	1

District 1: Risk Factors



Over half of counties (54%) in District 1 have a higher percentage of people living below the State of Iowa's average poverty rate.



Five counties (38%) in District 1 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.



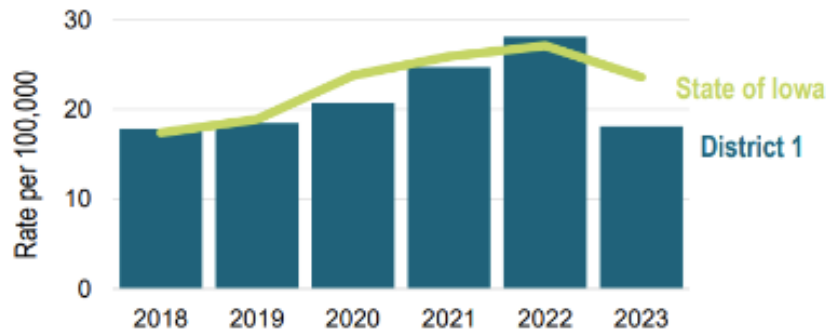
Four counties (31%) in District 1 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.



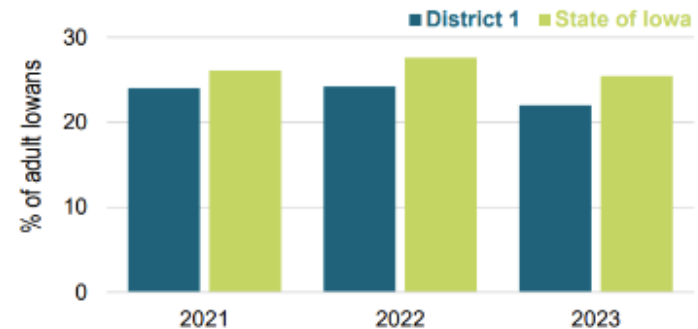
Almost all counties (92%) in District 1 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 1: Breakdown

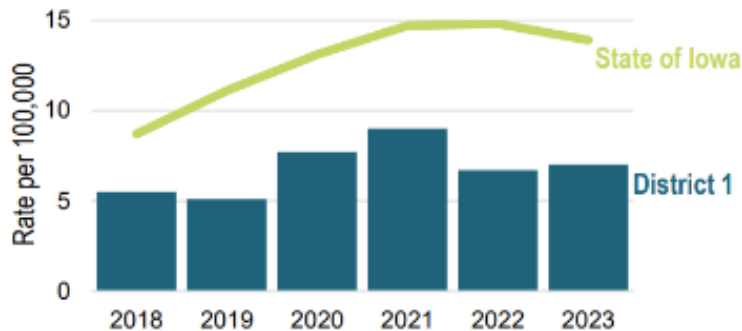
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



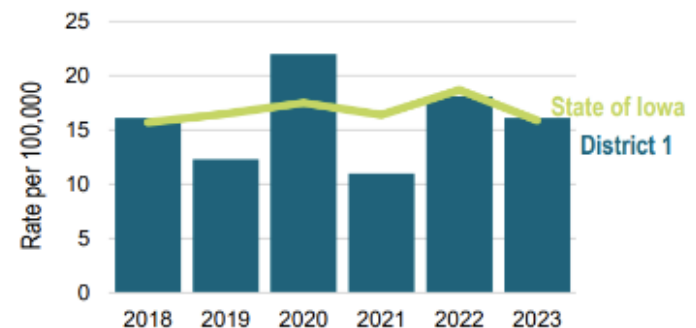
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



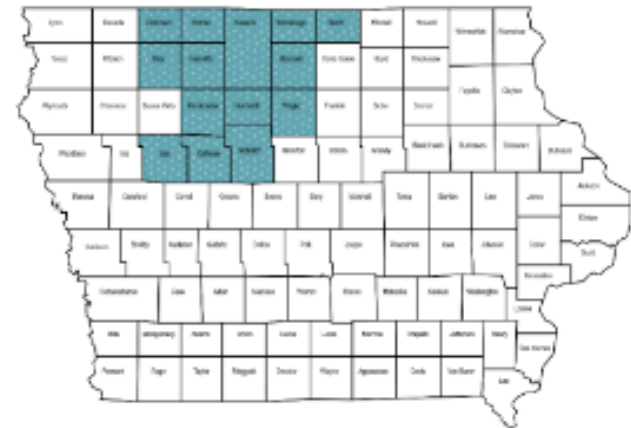
Source: Iowa HHS, Bureau of Health Statistics, 2018-2023. *Some rates may be unstable due to counts less than 16.

Source: Iowa HHS, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2021-2023

District 2

District 2: Geography

- ▶ District 2 encompasses 14 counties across North Central and Northwest Iowa.
- ▶ Population: 180,551



District 2

County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	13
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	1
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	0

District 2: Risk Factors



Over one-third of counties (36%) in District 2 have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty rate compared to the State of Iowa.



Five counties (36%) in District 2 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.



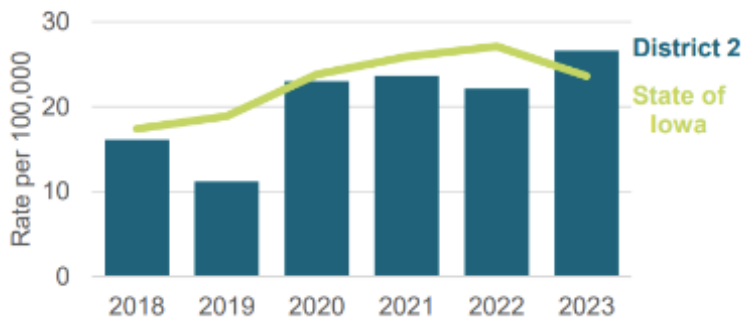
Three counties (21%) in District 2 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.



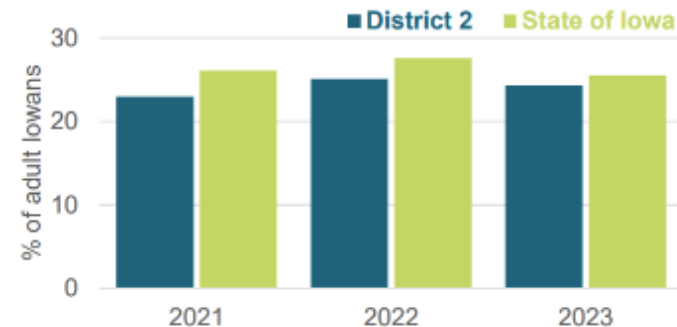
Almost all counties (93%) in District 2 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 2: Breakdown

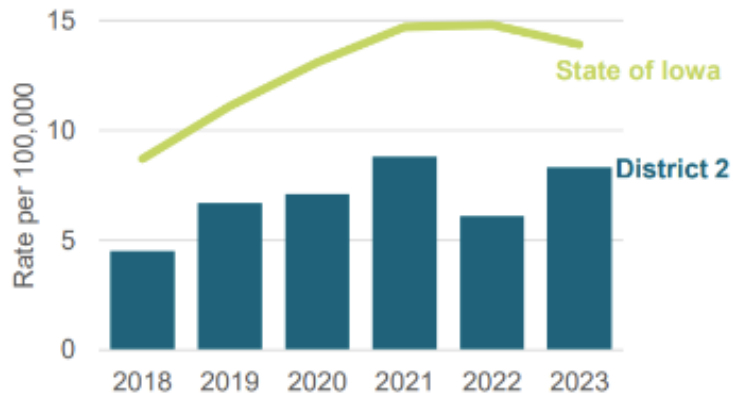
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



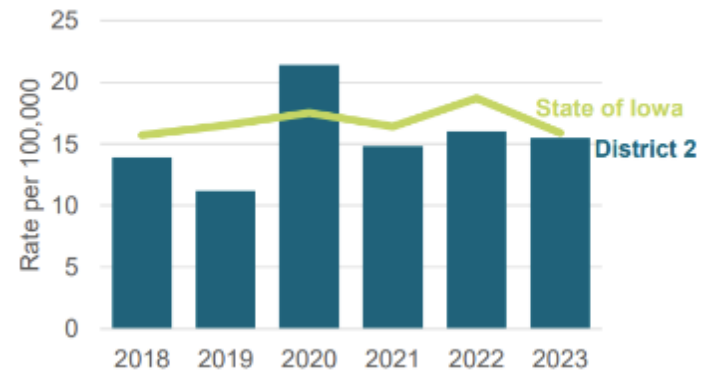
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



District 3

District 3: Geography

- District 3 encompasses 16 counties across North Central and Northeast Iowa.
- Population: 294,400



District 3

County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	13
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	3
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	0

District 3: Risk Factors



Almost half of counties (44%) in District 3 have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty rate compared to the State of Iowa.



Half of counties (50%) in District 3 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.



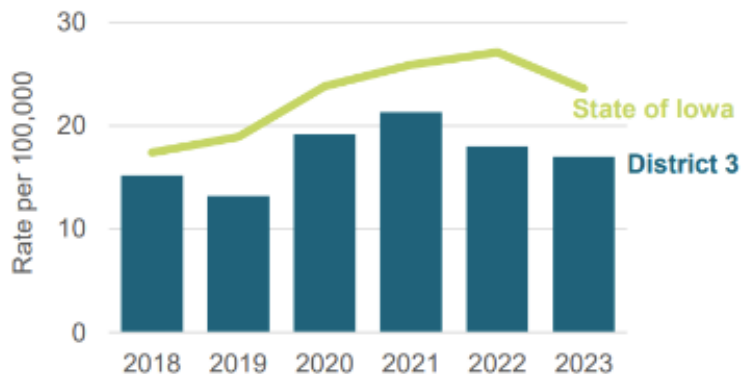
Five counties (31%) in District 3 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.



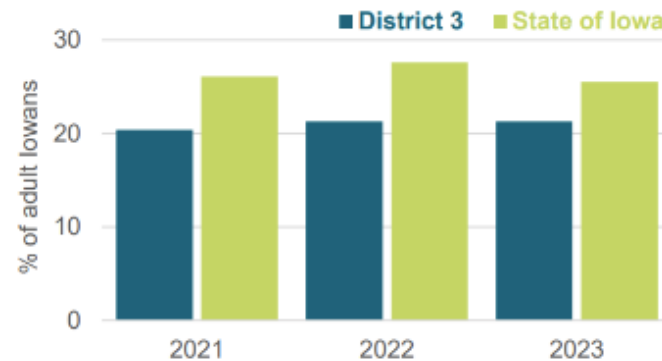
Most counties (88%) in District 3 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 3: Breakdown

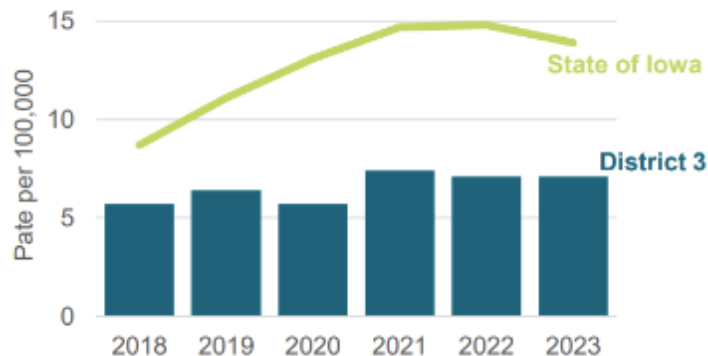
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



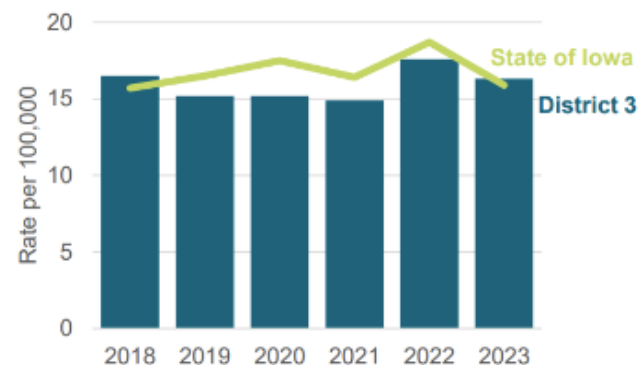
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



District 4

District 4: Geography

- ▶ District 4 encompasses 14 counties across Southwest and West Central Iowa.
- ▶ Population: 214,020



County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	13
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	0
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	1

District 4: Risk Factors



Almost half of counties (43%) in district 4 have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty rate compared to the State of Iowa.



Over half of counties (64%) in district 4 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.



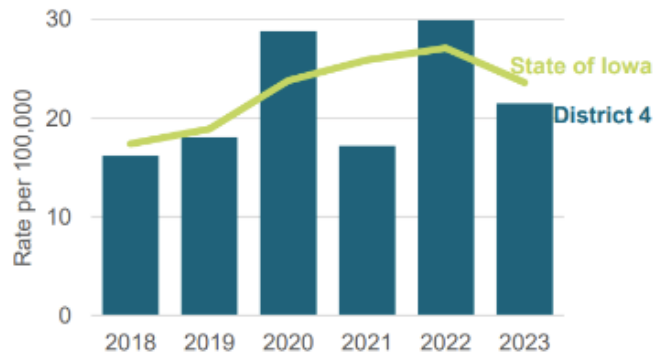
Almost half of counties (43%) in district 4 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.



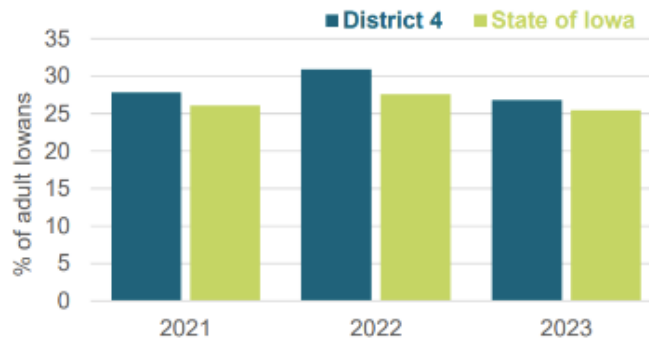
Most counties (93%) in district 4 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 4: Breakdown

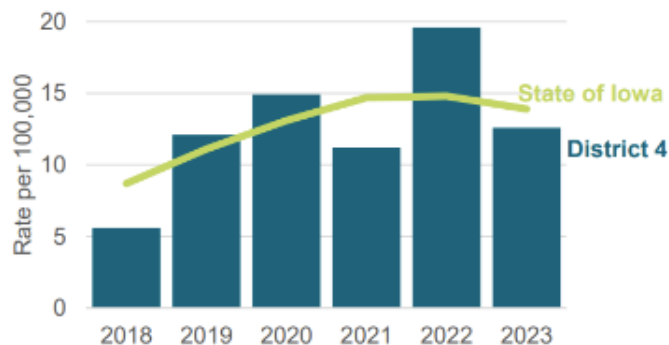
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



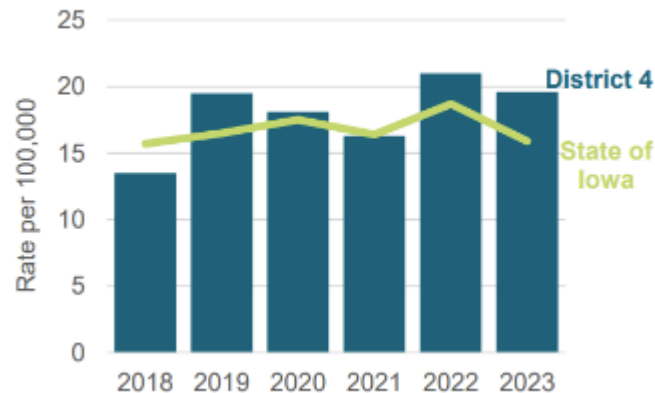
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



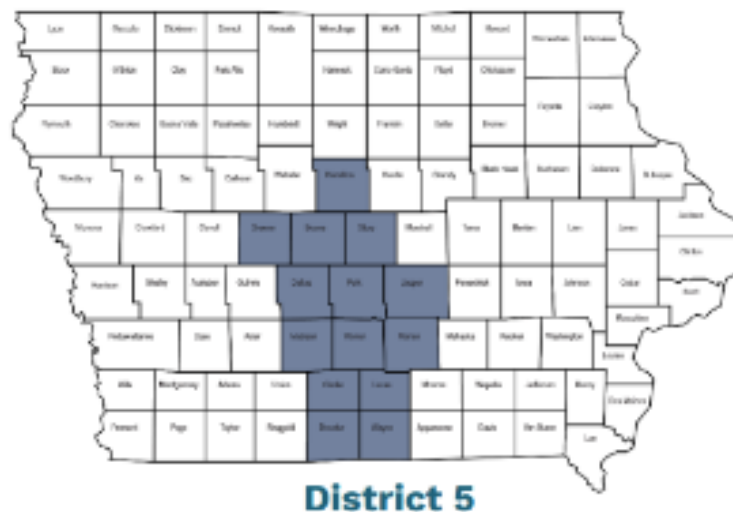
Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



District 5

District 5: Geography

- District 5 encompasses 14 counties across Central and South-Central Iowa.
- Population: 941,238



County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	7
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	3
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	4

District 5: Risk Factors

Nearly half of counties (43%) in District 5 have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty rate compared to the State of Iowa.

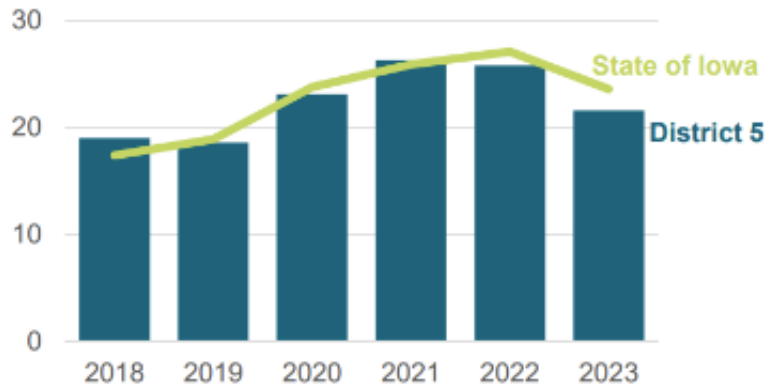
Over half of counties (64%) in District 5 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.

Six counties (43%) in District 5 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.

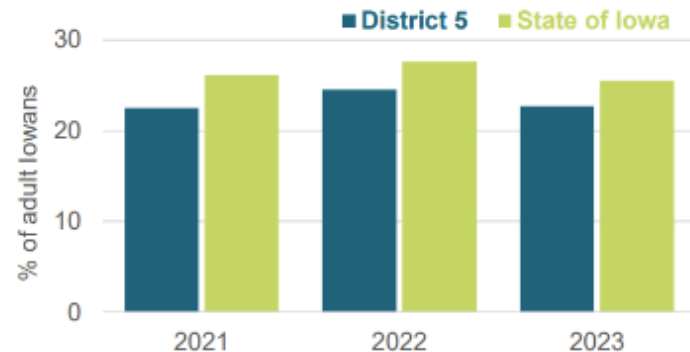
Most counties (86%) in District 5 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 5: Breakdown

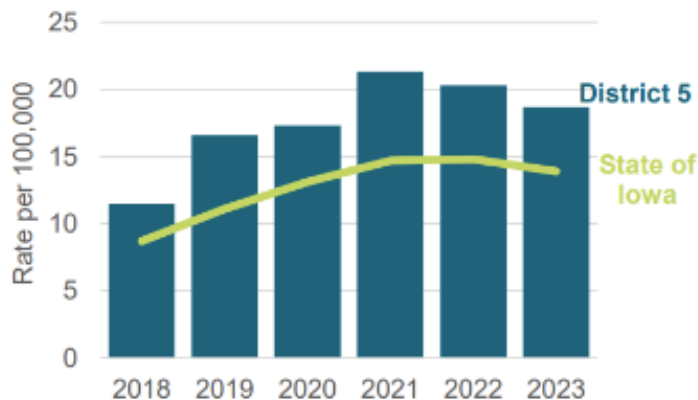
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



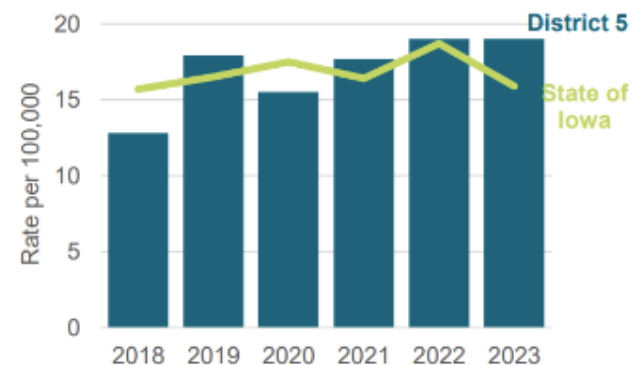
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



District 6

District 6: Geography

- ▶ District 6 encompasses 14 counties across Southeast and East Central Iowa.
- ▶ Population: 253,754



District 6

County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	9
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	5
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	0

District 6: Risk Factors

Half of counties (50%) in District 6 have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty rate compared to the State of Iowa.

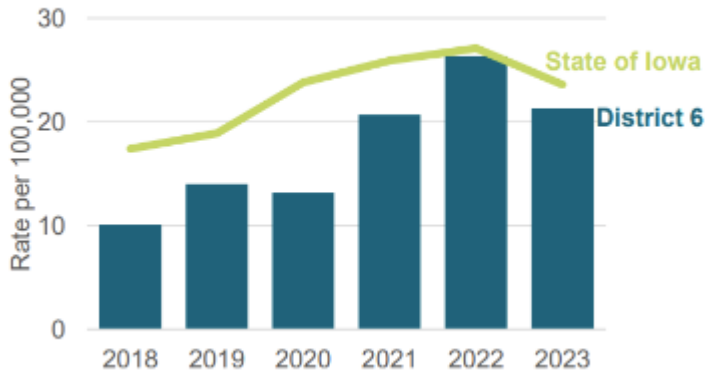
Ten counties (71%) in District 6 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.

Half of counties (50%) in District 6 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.

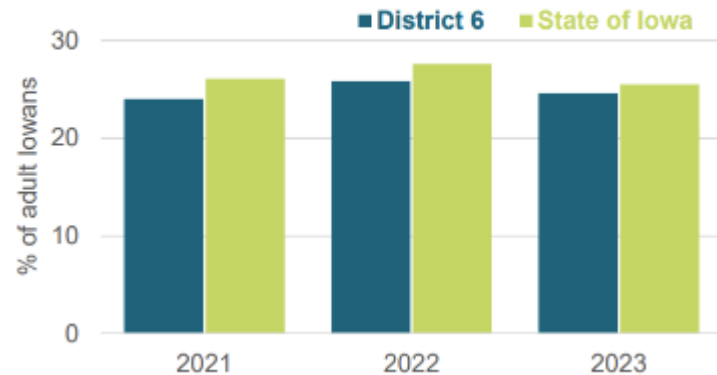
Most counties (86%) in District 6 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 6: Breakdown

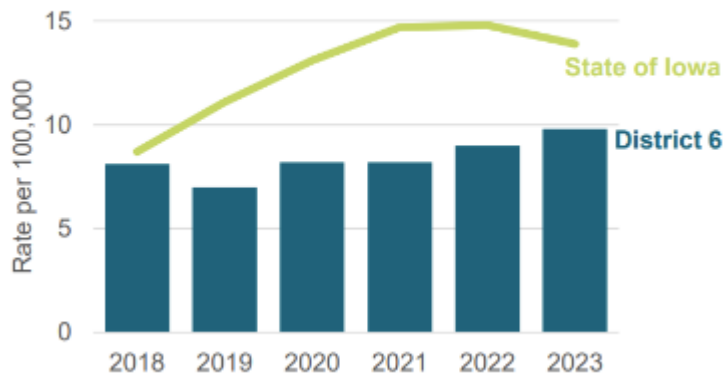
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



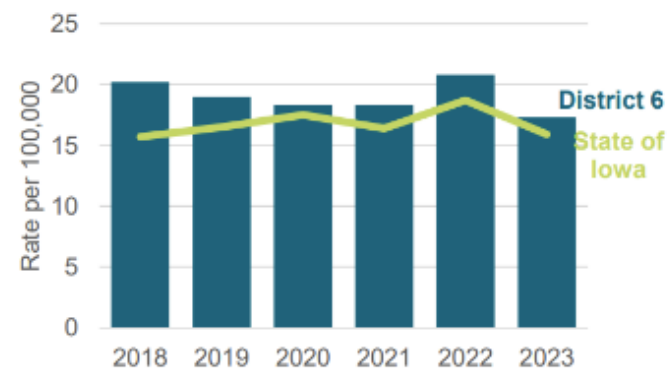
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



District 7

District 7: Geography

- ▶ District 7 encompasses 14 counties across East Central and Southeast Iowa.
- ▶ Population: 1,024,105



District 7

County Classification	Total
Rural County (fewer than 20,000 people)	4
Micropolitan County (20,000 - 49,999 people)	5
Metropolitan County (more than 50,000 people)	5

District 7: Risk Factors



Half of counties (50%) in District 7 have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty rate compared to the State of Iowa.



Over half of counties (64%) in District 7 report a higher number of poor mental health days per month compared to the State of Iowa.



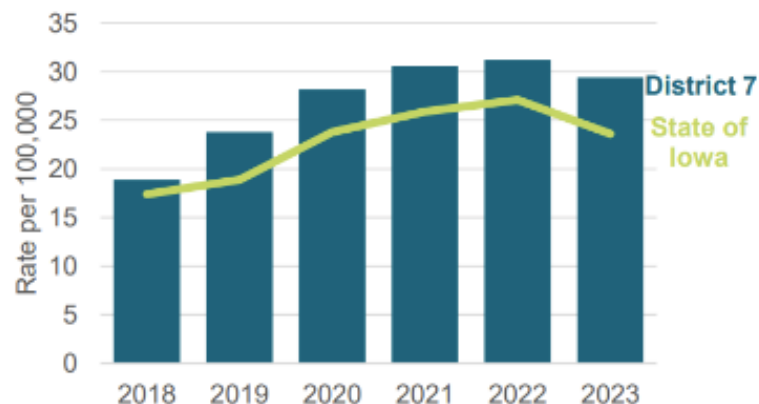
Over half of counties (57%) in District 7 report a higher number of households with no vehicles compared to the State of Iowa.



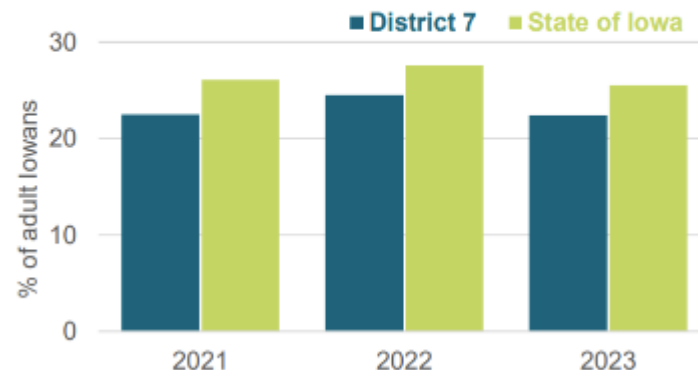
Most counties (86%) in District 7 have a shortage of mental health professionals.

District 7: Breakdown

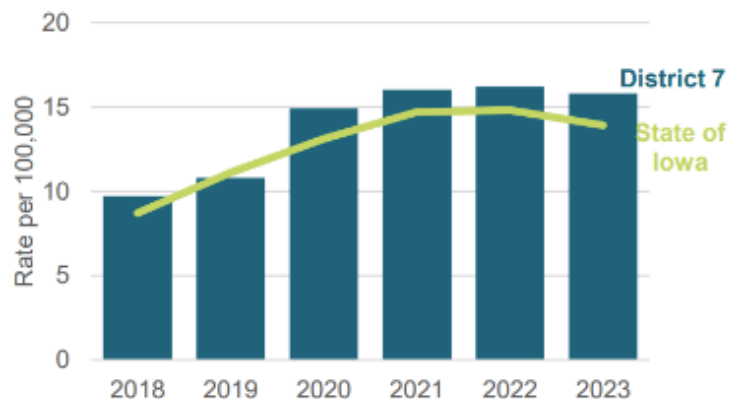
Alcohol-involved mortality rates, 2018-2023



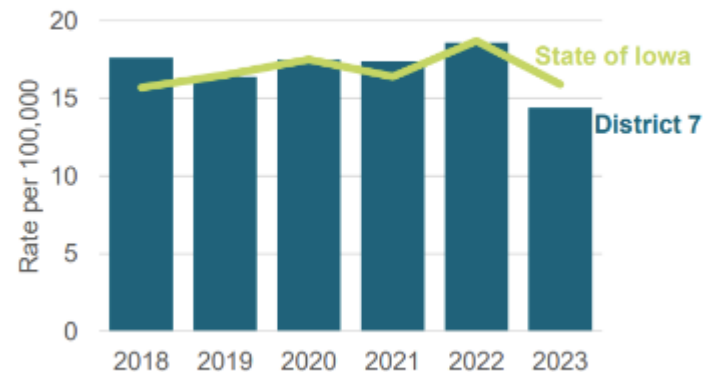
Percent of adult Iowans who report any current tobacco use, 2021-2023



All drug-involved overdose mortality rates, 2018-2023*



Suicide mortality rates, 2018-2023



Iowa Overdose Deaths

Krishna Akondy

Iowa Overdose Deaths: Who

Who is most affected?

- Men died from overdose 2x more than women.
- Black, non-Hispanic people died from overdose 3x more than White, non-Hispanic people.
- People aged 25-34 had the highest rate of 23 per 100k, which is the highest among all the other age groups.

Iowa Overdose Deaths: What



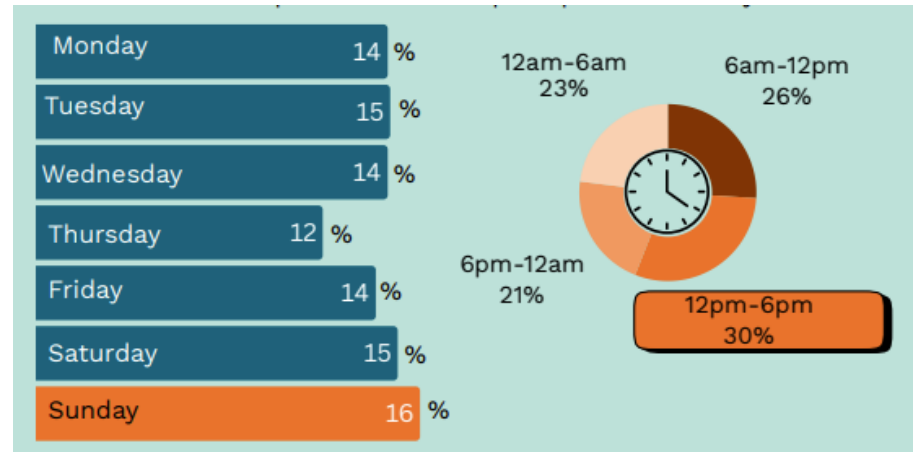
► What substances are involved?

- Meth: 49%
- Opioids: 58%
- Stimulants: 57%
- Heroin: 8%
- Illegal Fentanyl: 49%
- Cocaine: 8%

Iowa Overdose Deaths: When

When do overdoses happen?

- Of the deaths with time and day information available, most deaths took place between 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. and Sundays.



Iowa Overdose Deaths: Where

Where are Overdose Deaths Happening?

► Urban:

- 14 per 100k
- Opioids: 62%
- Stimulants: 56%

► Rural

- 8 per 100k
- Opioids: 47%
- Stimulants: 61%

More than two-thirds of deaths occurred in a house or apartment setting.

Iowa Overdose Deaths: Why

► Why did overdose deaths occur?

85% of deaths had at least one opportunity for intervention.

Only 33% of opioid-involved deaths had naloxone administered.

62% had a potential bystander present.

25% of deaths involved both opioids and stimulants.

52% of people had evidence of a mental health diagnosis.

14% had a prior overdose.

Iowa PCA Updates

Abbey Ferenzi, LMHC

Senior Director of Behavioral Health Services

Iowa PCA Behavioral Health Services Leadership



Abbey Ferenzi, LMHC

Senior Director of Behavioral
Health Services
aferenzi@iowapca.org



Emma Hall

Director of
System Navigation
emma.hall@iowapca.org



Liza Maxwell

Director of District
Operations & Strategy
liza.maxwell@iowapca.org

District Leaders



Brandi Steck
District 1
brandi.steck@iowapca.org



Melissa Loehr
District 2
melissa.loehr@iowapca.org



Ashley Umberger-Marciniak
District 3
ashley.marciniak@iowapca.org



Miranda Wachter
District 4
miranda.wachter@iowapca.org



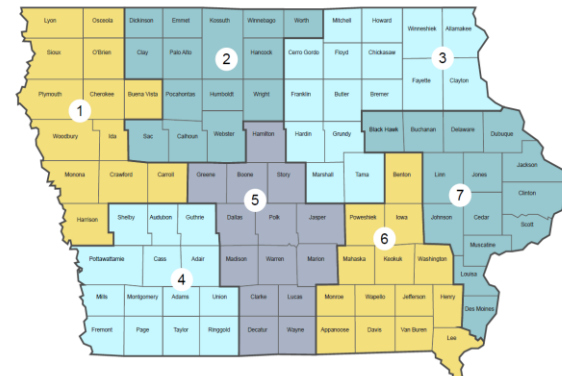
Open Position
District 5
*Liza Maxwell remains the
District 5 contact until the
position is filled



Sarah Berndt
District 6
sarah.berndt@iowapca.org



Jeremy Mask
District 7
jeremy.mask@iowapca.org



Senior Lead System Navigators



Ethan Price
District 1
ethan.price@iowapca.org



Shawna Kalous
District 2
shawna.kalous@iowapca.org



Sarah Janssen
District 3
sarah.janssen@iowapca.org



Bryant Kucera
District 5
bryant.kucera@iowapca.org



Rebecca Bolton
District 5
rebecca.bolton@iowapca.org



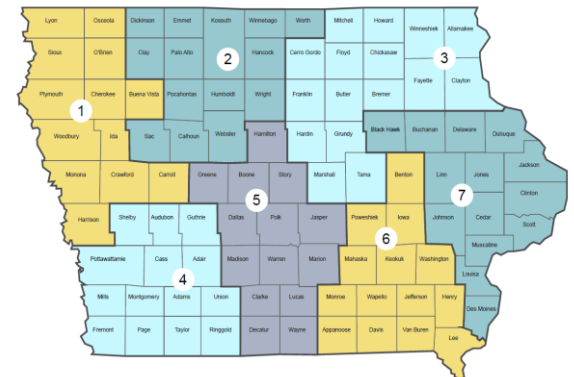
Unity Stevens
District 6
unity.stevens@iowapca.org



Kaitlyn King
District 7
kaitlyn.king@iowapca.org



Nicole Watters
District 7
nicole.watters@iowapca.org



District Leader Outreach

- **242 total meetings and events by District Leaders**
- Meetings with providers, community stakeholders, Mental Health Advocates, coalitions, law enforcement, conferences, boards of supervisors, county attorneys, local initiatives, school counselors, and hospitals.
- Continuing to actively connect with providers and stakeholders— please reach to us with any questions or requests!



We want to hear from you!

If you have an upcoming event or meeting you would like us to attend, let us know.



District Advisory Councils

Next Steps:

- Next round of meetings will be held in early December with a focus on district assessments and planning. Anyone is welcome to attend District Advisory Council meetings.
- Meeting details, recordings, and slides can be found at iowapca.org/district-advisory-councils
- We still have open seats in:
 - District 1 (northwest) for lived experience (2 open seats) and an elected official (1 open seat)
 - District 5 (south-central) for elected official (1 open seat)

Behavioral Health System Navigation

Two Main Entry Points:

General Public; Individuals and Family Members



Call: (855) 581-8111

Text: (855) 895-8398

Chat: yourlifeiowa.org

Providers and Community Partners

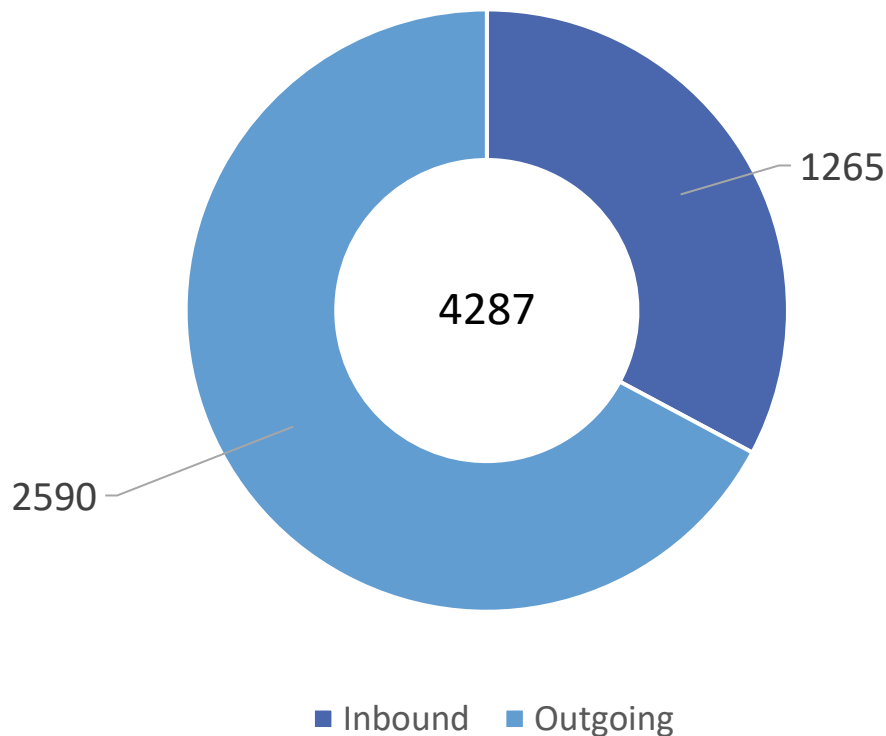
Providers and Community Partners can coordinate directly with Iowa PCA System Navigators by calling **(515) 505-8988**.

Behavioral Health System Navigation

- Behavioral Health System Navigation is a **non-crisis, but time-sensitive** behavioral health service that helps individuals, families, providers and other “helpers” understand and access behavioral health services in Iowa.
- Provides brief, accessible support and guidance through information, education, referral, and coordination to connect people to the right services or support.
- System Navigation is available via phone (community locations to-come)
- Available Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm via two methods:
 - Warm Handoff via Your Life Iowa (call, text, or chat)
 - Direct System Navigation Line (515-505-8988)

System Navigation Calls To-Date

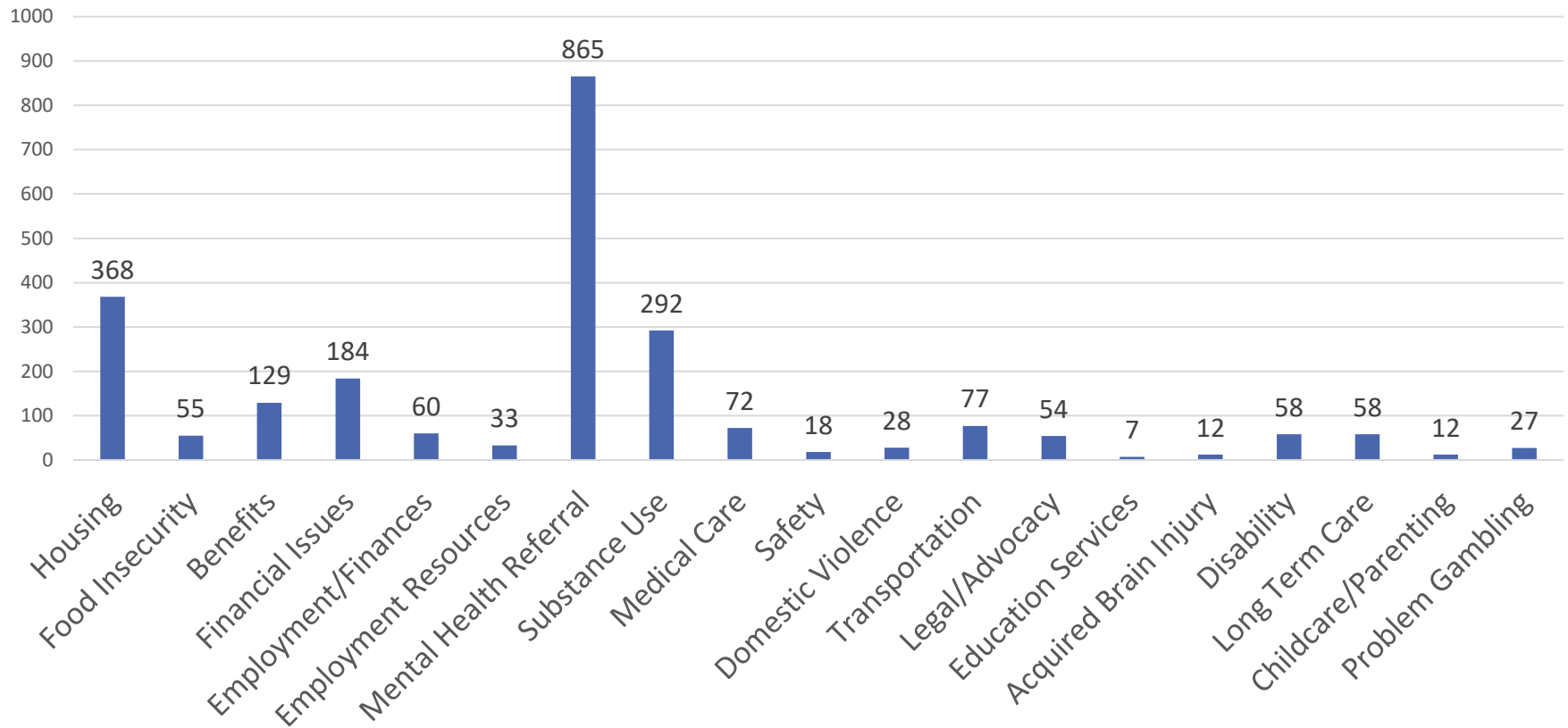
Total Calls July 1, 2025 – October 17, 2025



Inbound calls include the community partner line and referrals from Your Life Iowa.

Outgoing call include referrals and community connections by System Navigators.

System Navigation: Presenting Needs/Concerns



Supporting Roles: Integrated Health Team

Goal: Ensure delivery of high-quality person-centered evidence-based practice of behavioral health services and integration models.

Advance service delivery models and best practices across the provider network through program development, partnerships and collaboration, and coordination with the Quality Team.

Director of Integrated Health: Allison Moses

Lead Behavioral Health Services Consultant: Joe Criger

Behavioral Health Services Consultants:

- **Prevention & Promotion:** Christine Kempker
- **Early Intervention & Treatment:** Nicole Kehoe
- **Recovery:** TBH
- **Crisis:** Kaitlyn Humpal
- **Justice Involved:** Junior Jaime
- **Pharmacy Consultant:** Jessica Nesheim

Supporting Roles: Quality Team

Goal: Ensure delivery of high-quality person-centered evidence-based practice of behavioral health services and integration models.

Drive high quality service delivery across the provider network through development and execution of data-driven quality improvement strategies, training, technical assistance, and performance reporting.

Director of Value-Based Care and Quality: Tory Schrock

Lead Quality Consultant: Marlene Wozniczka

- **Quality Consultant:** Katie Weiss
- **Quality Consultant:** Komal Maniar
- **Quality Consultant:** TBH
- **Learning & Development Consultant:** Kylie Gottschalk

Year 1: Engagement & Discovery

Goal: Establish provider relationships, assess needs, and lay the groundwork for effective training and support to advance quality and outcomes.

Key Activities:

- Provide forums for early engagement of providers to build relationships, gain understanding of service delivery, and offer essential system training.
 - Preliminary priorities include crisis, school-based, and jail-based services.
- Conduct a network-wide Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) needs assessment as a component of district assessment and planning process
- Map training assets (programs, partners, systems, capacity), data use, and quality improvement (QI) readiness
- Define TTA approach and finalize roadmap for Y2 launch



Questions



Health and
Human Services