

## Rapid Response: Safety Net Telehealth Initiative

1. Project Details:
  - a. Project Title Operation Zoom
  - b. Amount of Request \$50,000
  - c. Project Start Date: April 1, 2020
  - d. Project End Date: March 30, 2020
2. Executive Summary: In two sentences or less, explain why your organization is requesting this grant and the goals of this project/initiative.

The goal of this project is to increase access to mental health services by offering and expanding tele-therapy services to our clients throughout northern Michigan.

3. Target Population: All ages
  1. How many individuals does your organization serve annually for medical care?
  2. How many individuals does your organization serve annually for behavioral health? 200

Please provide a brief description of the need for telehealth within your organization: *Limit your response to no more than one paragraph.*

It has been a goal of CFS to implement telehealth services to increase mental health access across northern Michigan. The rural northern lower Michigan region we serve has limited mental health providers in the best of times and telehealth would erase geography as a barrier for services to our clients. With the current mandated shelter-in-place order in the State of Michigan, the need has risen to a critical level. We are committed to ensuring that our clients receive mental health care during this crisis, which will likely increase feelings of fear, loneliness, anxiety, and grief and depression (“Care of the Soul in the Time of COVID-19,” PsychiatricTimes.com, March 23, 2020).

Please provide a brief description of how you propose to utilize telehealth to increase your capacity to provide medical or behavioral health services. *Please limit your response to no more than one paragraph.*

Northern Michigan residents face several challenges in accessing mental health services. The distance to providers from their rural communities may require two or more hours in a vehicle. They may be juggling the schedule of several high-needs children, as is true of many of our foster families, as well as their full-time work schedule; finding the time to drive to appointments may feel impossible. To help reduce distance as a barrier we would offer HIPAA-compliant video conferencing as a therapy tool. For families in need of technology, a library will be established where Chromebooks, microphones, and cameras will be available to be checked out. Many of our clients struggle with phone and data services

as they buy minutes month by month. It is our goal to have phone cards available to them to remove that barrier.

Please indicate which activities this grant will support (drop down menu on application):

- Develop and implement new policies and procedures
- Develop billing systems and training
- Train or add staff as new services are ramped up
- Address gaps in reimbursement due to inconsistent policies or service for the uninsured or underinsured
- Educate patients about telehealth
- Procure HIPAA compliant licenses for telehealth, equipment purchases, etc

Who will provide telehealth services? (drop down menu on application):

Physicians

Nurse Practitioners / Physician Assistants

Registered Nurses

Licensed Master Social Workers - 2

Psychologists or Psychiatrists - 1

Licensed Professional Counselors - 3

For each of the providers selected above, please provide the expected number of FTEs in that category who will utilize telehealth during this project period.

Licensed Master Social Workers – 2 (Lacey, HS; Sherry B. *Limited*)

Psychologists or Psychiatrists – 1 (Diana, Gaylord)

Licensed Professional Counselors - 3 (Allison, Jessica Kelly, Marci)

Which technology platform(s) do you intend to use?

HIPAA compliant version of Zoom.

Geographic Reach: Northern Lower Michigan.

Briefly describe how the proposed activities will be sustained after the grant period.

No-show appointments have been an issue for our agency in the past. By lessening accessibility barriers, additional reimbursements gained from reduced no-show appointments would cover some of the cost of the technology to provide remote counseling options. Our development and administration teams are continuously advocating at the state and federal levels for increased reimbursements for services. We have seen some improvements in rates in recent years, but we still have a long way to go to adequately fund the work we do with vulnerable people. We continue to build relationships with insurance providers, hoping to educate them on the qualitative and quantitative benefits of providing mental health assessment and treatment, with the goal of facilitating reimbursements that cover the cost of

services. This is an unfortunate reality of nonprofit work, and it is relatively slow, unfortunately. In the short term, if we do our best to become more efficient and decrease our costs as outlined above, we will have created a sustainable model that will serve children and their families well.

Budget: This is a required section of the application.

This is a required section of the application. Do not attach a budget without filling out the budget form below. Please list the total Health Fund requested grant expenses for each category below. If there are no expenses for a category, enter "0". Please round to the nearest dollar.

Budgets may not exceed \$50,000.

Total Salary \$2238.00

Total Fringe \$447.67

Total Training \$576.00

Total Equipment (including hardware and software) (\$1999 per year for Zoom)

Total Marketing and Communications (\$2500 for marketing)

Total Consultant Fees \$0

Total Other Expenses \$40,000 (35,000 for gap funding, 5000 for gas cards)

Total Indirect Costs 2239.33

Total Amount of Health Fund Request \$50,000

Describe how each budget item relates to the project and how the budgeted amounts were calculated. Include the budget categories listed above. Alternatively, you may upload a narrative in the attachments section below.

Salaries – Costs are included for program staff directly involved in the planning and implementation of the new program. The rates were calculated based on the salary rate for each personnel category (program policies/procedures/design; billing systems; training new and existing staff) times the estimated number of hours to complete each line item.

Fringe – Costs were calculated by taking the total expected salary amount times the CFS fringe/benefit rate of 20%.

Training/Education for patients – Costs are included for initial training for patients on the new technology and providing additional/ongoing training for patients related to their mental health via telehealth services. A member of the Behavioral Health Department will spend 30 minutes with each new client to educate them on how to utilize telehealth services and providing technical assistance. Estimated 80 new telehealth clients this year, with paid staff at \$15 per hour for 40 hours of education.

HIPPA Compliant Licenses – Costs are included to purchase HIPPA Compliant telehealth services through ZOOM, for an annual cost of \$1,999 for 10 licenses for one year.

Total Other Expenses:

Telehealth reimbursement gap to assist low-income/uninsured/underinsured patients – To ensure we reach all who need us, costs have been included for client assistance that will help cover the cost of telehealth sessions for some patients who are low-income/uninsured/underinsured. This fund will be used for patients who are unable to pay for the cost of telehealth services remaining after insurance reimbursements, if any. The cost of one session is \$80, minus the average reimbursement rate of \$40, thus an average of \$40 is unfunded per session. We expect that approximately 20 sessions per week will require some type of financial assistance, or 1,040 per year. \$40 unfunded per session x 1040 sessions requiring financial assistance = \$41,600. We request \$35,000 from MHEF to support this cost and the remaining \$6,600 will be funded through CFS' development effort including other grants, donations, events, or fees-for-services from those who can afford to pay.

Phone Cards – Costs are included to support some patients who have limited phone availability, limited internet access, or neither of these options for accessing telehealth services. Estimated 50 clients will need assistance with phone minutes, providing them each a \$100 card.

Marketing/Communications – Costs are included to promote the program to new and existing patients in the community, especially those who are traditionally hard to serve or reach due to the remote, rural service area. Funds will be used for paid advertising through social, print, and digital media.

Other Sources of Funding: While revenue sharing is not required, if you will use revenues from other sources to execute this project, please describe them below. Other sources include in-kind contributions from your organization, reimbursement, fee-for-service revenue, and/or other grants. In the detailed budget attachment, clearly note which activities the Health Fund grant dollars would fund versus the activities supported by other sources.

Revenue from Other Sources:

Please describe the expected in-kind contributions and/or revenues from other sources.

There are two pending grants, one from the Biederman Foundation for \$10,000 and one from the Carls Foundation for \$30,000 that would cover the remainder of this project as well as fund other needs in the Behavior Health program.

Total Project Cost, including other sources of funding:

\$62,515.15

Attachments:

Detailed Project Budget in excel or .pdf

Budget narrative (if not provided in the application)