

FY 15 Annual Report to the Community



A Message From Our Executive Director

During this past year LifeLinks had a great time celebrating 50 years of continuous behavioral health service to Coles County and surrounding communities. Having just celebrated my 35th anniversary with the organization, I have been involved in many aspects of its evolution and the program expansion that has occurred during this time. LifeLinks has always been innovative and transformative to meet the ever-changing needs of the people we serve and that continues today.

The record setting **3,147 individuals served this year** is indicative of the growing need for behavioral health services. I've seen the growing demand for dual disorder treatment, psychiatric medication services, suicide intervention, treatment of symptoms of serious and persistent mental illness as well as less severe, yet life interfering, problems. **The 801 children/adolescents served** is indicative of the need for early identification/intervention and prevention. I've witnessed more acute and serious symptoms and the resulting need for intervention starting much earlier in the lives of children.

While the need for services across the life span and functioning levels increase, the financial assistance/support from the State of Illinois decreases. The current budget impasse threatens our existence and subsequent ability to help the people most in need. Our ability to provide **\$860,349 of free and reduced care** as we did this year is in jeopardy. You can be assured that LifeLinks is actively advocating for a budget resolution, restoration of the proposed funding cuts and adequate funding for continued service to all who are in need. If you believe as I do that behavioral health services are vital to our community please join me in that advocacy and funding battle. Your support is greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank all who have made a financial donation to LifeLinks – your generosity and support help us more than you could realize. Our thanks also to those who have donated their time and talents to benefit the organization and the individuals we serve.

Although we have much to share, our annual report to the community is shortened this year in effort to reduce costs. If you want to know more of what is happening at LifeLinks I invite you to call me at 238-5719 or stop by the office anytime.

Lynette Ashmore

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