

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WCS: COMMUNITY BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



OUR VISION FOR A TRAUMA-INFORMED SPACE

For more than a century, Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) has served those most in need with compassion and respect. Founded in 1912 as the Wisconsin Chapter of the Society for the Friendless, WCS has since changed its name and expanded its programming in response to growing and evolving community needs. Yet the spirit of “A Friend of the Friendless” remains at the heart of the agency’s mission today, as they serve more than 17,000 individuals annually.



MILWAUKEE’S MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

In 2023, Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Services identified mental health as the #1 health issue in Milwaukee County. WCS has already been at the forefront of the response to this mental health crisis for the past 30+ years. WCS programs that include mental health services reach more than 10,000 individuals annually. Programs with a primary focus on mental health reach more than 1,700 individuals each year.

More than 400 people are enrolled in the WCS Community Based Mental Health Programs, located at 37th and W. Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee; **these services are life-changing for those with severe and persistent mental health needs.** Individuals in these programs spend 7 to 8 years on average with WCS. Approximately 100 of them visit this location daily for services such as psychiatric care, medication management, payee services, medical follow-up, group therapy, benefits and insurance assistance, symptom monitoring, transportation to appointments, socialization, activities of daily living, shower and laundry services, counseling, vision care, pharmacy services, and housing assistance.

This space also serves as a workspace for 60 staff, including program directors, clinical coordinators, case managers, nurses, consulting psychiatrists, benefits specialists, support staff, and the WCS pharmacy team. Services in this space are critical and vital and ideally are provided in an environment where those served experience this as one of the most welcoming experiences in their everyday life. More than 60% identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and most are living on a fixed income of less than \$15,000 per year.

“As a leader in the field of providing mental health services for people in underserved communities, WCS understands the importance of creating spaces that are dignified, respectful, trauma informed and uplifting.”

Clarence Johnson
WCS President and CEO

OUR VISION:

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES THAT ADVANCE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Unfortunately, the Community Based Mental Health Programs occupy space that hinders efficient and effective delivery of trauma-informed care, risking both reduced quality of service for those served in the program and lower staff morale. To address these issues, WCS plans a renovation that will:

SUPPORT SELF-RELIANCE by creating an environment that fosters physical and emotional well-being for those receiving treatment and services.

PROMOTE HEALTH through the use of natural light and biophilic design that incorporates nature within the built environment.

PROVIDE SAFE SPACES for people served who may be in distress by creating different subspaces adjacent to waiting areas and placing furniture to enhance the separation.

EMPOWER PERSONS SERVED to make informed decisions about their health care options, treatment plans, and care settings through a person-centered design that enhances communication and collaboration, thereby improving outcomes.

BALANCE SAFETY AND PROGRAM NEEDS for staff and those served by creating a safe physical environment and ensuring safety through responsible design.

PROMOTE HEALTHY STAFF MORALE through improved functionality, lighting, and overall trauma-informed design.

ENABLE THE PROGRAMS to continue to foster well-being of the individuals they serve and ensure program needs are met.

Although WCS receives government support for its numerous programs, such funding may not be used for this much-needed renovation. For the first time in its history, therefore, **WCS is asking the community to support a capital campaign to raise \$5 million to complete this project.**



THANK YOU

Your gift will make a positive difference in the lives of individuals most in need of mental health services and will contribute to the safety of our community. For the individuals served, a trauma-informed environment will reduce the risk of triggers and re-traumatization through soothing and sensory-sensitive materials (texture and colors) that positively influence mood and behavior. Thank you for supporting those in need!

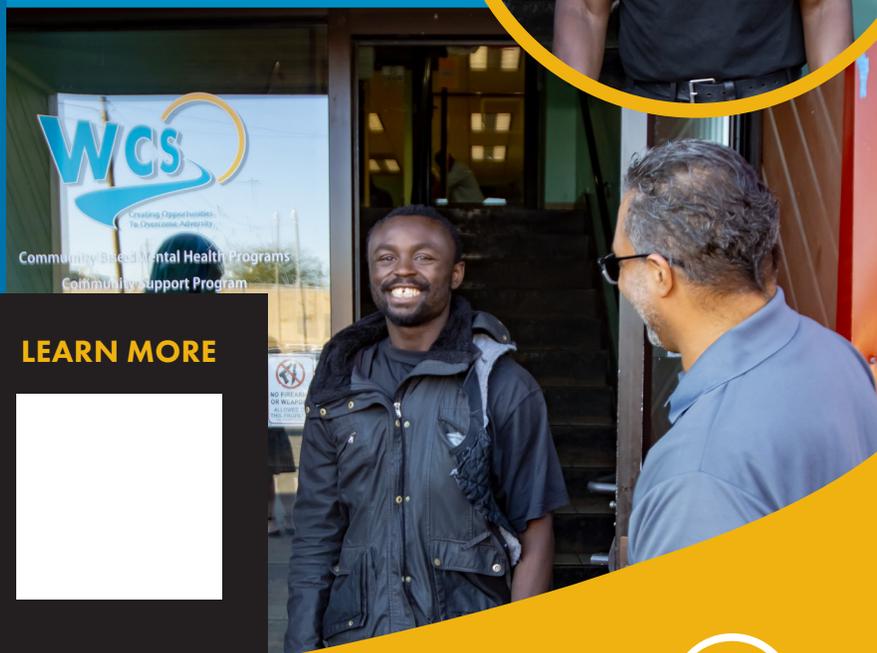
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