PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT SUMMARY
Describe the major purpose of the project, the need and how it relates to the Health Improvement Model. Briefly describe the project’s implementation plan, methods to be utilized and involvement of affected communities. Detail the community-academic partnership plan. Specify the evaluation method that will be used to measure feasible, quantifiable and significant outcomes and the impact the project will have on the health of Wisconsin residents. Do not exceed this one page.

Manitowoc County residents who use mental health services currently navigate a fragmented system. Providers are scattered throughout the rural county and consist of the County Human Services Department, County Health Department, two hospitals, six mental health group homes, multiple clinics and several job training sites. Lakeshore Lodge will address sector organization and capacity by de-fragmenting those multiple systems and providing a centralized location where preventive and mental health services can be accessed and mental health issues can be discussed without stigma. Mental illness often prevents individuals from maintaining employment, thus job training will be available at Lakeshore Lodge to address some of the economic side effects of the disease. The Lakeshore Lodge will address the community health improvement process through the implementation of health-related programs that have been developed by the Center for Healthy Communities at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Lakeshore Lodge will have four stages of implementation. First, pre-implementation will include hiring a project director, training the project director in Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) programs, and recruiting participants to Lakeshore Lodge through networking with the local chapter of the National Association of the Mentally Ill (NAMI), and local behavioral health professionals. The second stage will feature a speaker series developed by NAMI members. Once a month, a guest speaker will come to Lakeshore Lodge to speak on a topic selected by NAMI members. Also, a job training program will be implemented, as well as CHC-developed health and leadership programs. The third phase focuses on expansion of Lakeshore Lodge programs to new participants. Finally, as the grant moves through the final year, sustainability will be explored. New grant opportunities will be explored, both locally and nationally. Also, self-funding through non-profit incorporation will be considered.

The Clubhouse Committee, which has oversight of this project, includes members from the Manitowoc Chapter of the NAMI, a membership group of mental health consumers, the Manitowoc County Human Services Department, Tamarak Behavioral Health of Holy Family Memorial Hospital, and privately-owned and corporate mental health group homes. For the past 9 months, this group has piloted Lakeshore Lodge, a clubhouse offering a social environment for group home residents and a centralized place where the fragmented mental health system in Manitowoc can be coordinated and offer resources. The committee, seeking to expand Lakeshore Lodge, contacted the CHC to join as an academic partner. Manitowoc County will hire a full-time project director who will actively recruit participants, implement programs, and manage the day to day operations of the clubhouse. The CHC will focus on training the project director in programs previously developed and implemented by the CHC and serving as both the process and progress evaluators of Lakeshore Lodge.

Several forms of evaluation will be used to measure outcomes of programs offered at Lakeshore Lodge and the operation of the Clubhouse Committee. First, we will track the number of consumers using the services at Lakeshore Lodge, and the number of practitioners, both public and private, referring consumers to the clubhouse. Outcomes associated with health and leadership programs include increased exercise, improved diet, weight loss, smoking cessation, reduced AODA issues, increased leadership skills for consumers, improved job skills, and increased employment for consumers. Outcomes related to operation of the Clubhouse Committee include private mental health practitioners and local foundations joining the committee as operations expand, reduced fragmentation among mental health providers, and Lakeshore Lodge achieving 501(c)3 status and transitioning operations costs to local foundation funding and the development of a self-sustaining small business, such as a coffee or gift shop.