

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



**MISSION STATEMENT: PROVIDING DYNAMIC, PROGRESSIVE AND DIVERSE SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITIES.**

September 2020

## Frontline Program



In an effort to provide support during the current COVID pandemic, Community Counseling Solutions is proud to announce a pilot program offering free counseling services to those medical workers and first responders that live or work in the counties of Morrow, Wheeler, Grant, and Gilliam. The **Frontline Program** provides up to four free counseling sessions. There is no lengthy assessment and no diagnosis required. The **Frontline Program** is based on the idea of offering brief supportive therapy. If further referrals or more in-depth treatment is desired, the clinician will work to make those connections.

Employees of any clinic or hospital, firefighters, emergency medical responders, law enforcement officers, and dispatchers all qualify. This program is open to all volunteers or paid staff. To access, call one of the numbers below and ask for the "Frontline Program".

Boardman Office – 541-481-2911

Heppner Office – 541-676-2961

John Day – 541-575-1466

Condon Office – 541-384-2666

Fossil Office – 541-763-2746

## IN THE BEGINNING

The story of Community Counseling Solutions began in Morrow County in the 1970s, as Oregon created mental health authorities resulting in Morrow County Mental Health. By 1996, this organization began partnering with other counties, Wheeler County being the first. In 2004, the agency name changed to Morrow County Behavioral Health along with the realization that the agency could better serve rural communities if it operated as a not-for-profit agency. By 2008, Gilliam and Grant counties joined the partnership which was successfully operating as a 501(c)3 organization. To better reflect the needs and strengths of the rural communities it served, the name of the organization changed to Community Counseling Solutions (CCS).

The mission to improve the well being of these rural communities in Morrow, Wheeler, Gilliam, Grant and Lake counties initiated the process of creating a dynamic continuum of care that serves individuals with behavioral health challenges. An agency that grew from 3 employees to 160+ has championed the creation of Oregon's first Warm Line to establishing acute care and residential care in rural Eastern Oregon.



## CCS...WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

CCS offers a wide variety of services in the state or Oregon:



- ◆ Behavioral health services are provided in Morrow, Gilliam, Wheeler, and Grant counties.
- ◆ CCS owns and operates two residential treatment facilities, one in Heppner and one in John Day. These facilities allow those needing acute residential psychiatric services a close to home option, rather than traveling to the west side of Oregon, potentially leaving much needed support systems.
- ◆ CCS has school-based counselors in Boardman, Irri-gon, Heppner, Lone, Condon, Fossil, Spray, Arlington, John Day, and Mitchel. Providing early inter-vention for mental and/or substance use disorders and related problems in youth is critical. Behaviors and symptoms that signal the development of a be-havioral disorder often manifest 2 to 4 years be-fore a disorder is present. If communities and fami-lies can intervene early, behavioral health disorders might be prevented, or symptoms can be mitigated.
- ◆ Lakeview Heights is the first facility of its kind to operate an on-site equine-assisted psychotherapy program. Residents benefit from up to twice-daily interaction with the horses of the program.
- ◆ CCS provides developmental disability service in Morrow, Wheeler, Gilliam, Grant and Lake Coun-ties.
- ◆ CCS operates the Grant County Health Depart-ment, providing a vast array of primary medical care needs.
- ◆ CCS utilizes peer support specialists as an integral part of mental health care.
- ◆ CCS operates the David Romprey Oregon Warm-line, a toll-free number to call and have a confiden-tial conversation with someone who will listen with-out judgement or criticism. The Warmline may help people decrease the need for frequent doctor's vis-its, emergency room treatment, involvement with law enforcement, and the need for more intensive care.
- ◆ CCS operates the Oregon Senior Peer Outreach program. A team of experienced Senior Peer Sup-port staff place weekly calls to connect with isolat-ed individuals (55+) in Oregon to reduce the health impacts of loneliness and social isolation.
- ◆ CCS provides drug, alcohol, and gambling treat-ment services.
- ◆ CCS has a crisis team that responds to the location of crisis situations.
- ◆ CCS operates Senior Corps Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion programs. Foster grand-parents provide support to children with special or exceptional needs, or who are at an academic, so-cial, or financial disadvantage. The Senior Com-panion program provides volunteer opportunities to low-income persons 55 years and older who serve others needing special assistance, primarily seniors who are lonely and isolated.

If you would like to access or obtain more information on any of the services we offer, please call or walk into one of our offices. Additional information can be obtained by calling **541-676-9161**.

[www.communitycounselingsolutions.org](http://www.communitycounselingsolutions.org)

## What is myStrength?

The digital revolution has allowed people with physical ailments to learn more about their conditions by visiting websites such as WebMD, for the past 10 years. As more people seek healthcare information and options online, the developers of myStrength saw an opportunity to bring self-care resources to the behavioral health community. This online platform invites users to set up an account and begin navigating topics and tools of self-care immediately. A personal myStrength account is a private and secure way to access hundreds of guided activities and tools to manage stress, boost your mood, and feel inspired to take on the day.

Tools include mood trackers, guided programs targeting anxiety, depression, sleep disturbance, stress and substance use, articles and expertly created videos. Thanks to the efforts of Eastern Oregon's own Greater Oregon Behavioral Health (GOBHI) and their provider network, this online service is offered to EOCCO members and the Morrow, Wheeler, Gilliam and Grant community.

"It's easy to set up an account, and took me less than 5 minutes", a recent user shared. Any adult with a smartphone, mobile device, or computer can use the

program with the restriction that participants must be 13 or older. This resource isn't just for people accessing behavioral health care or seeing the doctor, the licenses are also made available to the general public through a separate access code. These personal accounts are confidential, secure and only viewable by the individual who set up the account.

To learn more about this online resource, please visit: <http://www.gobhi.org/members/wellness/>. This page hosts an introduction to myStrength as well as directions. EOCCO Members and Grant County residents will simply need to enter an access code, which they can obtain by contacting Community Counseling Solutions, 541-575-1466 or Grant County Health Department 541-575-0429.

### TAKE A TIME OUT: Do the 4-7-8 breathing exercise

- ◆ Lying in a comfortable position in bed, follow this sequence about five or six times:
- ◆ Breathe in for 4 seconds
- ◆ Hold breath for 7 seconds
- ◆ Slowly breathe out for 8 seconds

Focusing on this simple breathing method actually slows the heart down and calms the thoughts in my head. It works like magic

## Congratulations 2020 CCS Scholarship Recipients!

CCS would like to congratulate the following graduating high school seniors who each received a \$1,000 dollar scholarship. They will be will be pursuing studies in either psychology, counseling, social work or nursing.

- ☆ Cami VanArsdale, Heppner High School
- ☆ Annabelle McDaniel, Ione High School
- ☆ Madison Alldritt, Ione High School

For additional information regarding the CCS scholarship program contact Kristie Bingaman at 541-676-9161

## *Giving Back to Our Communities*

How can a behavioral health provider based in agricultural communities give back? How can they help kids and impact the stigma of mental health? Executive Director of CCS, Kimberly Lindsay wanted to address these questions head on when she began a program to purchase 4H/FFA animals at local county fairs, stating, "County fair involvement is a way for CCS to show up for our kids and celebrate the roots of our communities."

Starting in 2007, CCS has been purchasing 4H and FFA animals at each of the county fairs in the counties we serve (Morrow, Wheeler, Gilliam and Grant). Successful auction bids usually results in a \$15,000 investment back into our communities, as CCS has different programs in each county. "It's important that each CCS program supports their community," states Kimberly. As a way to further give to the communities, every other year CCS donates the bounty to assisted living and nursing facilities in counties where CCS has programs. Hats off to all the folks who make 4H/FFA happen and look out for an excited Kimberly Lindsay bidding on these prized animals.

### CCS Offers Innovative Services

If you haven't heard the term "telemedicine" or "telehealth," it can be described as a technology to deliver health care, health information or health education at a distance. Telehealth can allow health care providers the opportunity to evaluate, diagnose and treat individuals without the need for an in-person visit. This happens with real time access and real time communication via your smart phone, tablet or computer. Thanks to the progress of enhancing the usability of telehealth, an innovative mobile health application called MEND, can now bring behavioral health services, or "tele-behavioral health" directly to individuals receiving services from Community Counseling Solutions (CCS).

Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc (GOBHI) was awarded a three year federal grant to expand tele-behavioral health services. CCS has partnered with GOBHI to bring tele-

behavioral health services to our offices located throughout CCS' four county region (Gilliam, Grant, Morrow and Wheeler).



The origin of this technology was used to treat individuals in remote areas, far from any health facilities, or in areas with health care provider shortages. Today with the popularity of smart phones and tablets, the application is uniquely suited to behavioral health care, where a session can happen using a link sent to an individual's smartphone. Tele-behavioral health can be appealing for various reasons; reducing a family or individual's travel burden, improving timely interventions and increasing accessibility

to behavioral health providers.

A clinician for CCS shared how this technology helped her support a client in a difficult time: "The office was an hour drive away on icy roads". "We offered the MEND technology as an alternative to having to travel - as it was a critical time". After coordinating with CCS' implementation team, the clinician was able to follow a few steps to enable the link to be sent to the client's smartphone "Within 10 minutes I was connected with this client."

In-person visits will remain as a way for establishing care with a behavioral health provider, but CCS is excited to offer tele-behavioral health visits as an option for individuals versus the potential of cancelling or rescheduling appointments. CCS hopes to improve an individual's behavioral health experience. —Chris Olwine LCSW