Human services budget invests in well-being of Minnesotans

**Accessible health care, behavioral health care and child care among goals**

Governor Tim Walz’s FY 2020-21 Budget for One Minnesota strengthens human services by making investments that support the Department of Human Services’ mission — to help people live in dignity and achieve their highest potential. Addressing the deep disparities in access and outcomes, long a challenge for Minnesota and DHS, is a theme across the budget.

**Provide affordable, comprehensive health care with ONECare MN**

*65.9 million in startup costs from FY 2020-23; self-sustaining on an ongoing basis*

- ONECare MN is a package of proposals that address rising health care costs and improve access to care. It includes a statewide option to buy into comprehensive health care coverage that is similar to the MinnesotaCare program and additional buy-in options in any region of the state where the individual market fails to provide coverage choices.
- It would leverage the state’s purchasing power to bring down prescription drug costs and create a simpler and more equitable model to help dentists serve all patients in their community, addressing disparities in dental care.
- In addition, the budget preserves the provider tax, a longstanding, stable source of funding for Minnesotans who need health care.

**Invest in services and oversight in programs for children and families**

*44.8 million in child care investments and integrity; 63.5 million other services, FY 2020-21*

- The Governor’s budget includes significant investments in child care for low-income families by buying down the waiting list and improving quality, while addressing continuing concerns about fraud.
- Proposals improve the child protection system by expanding the American Indian Child Welfare Initiative, creating a Child Welfare Training Academy and working toward meeting requirements in the federal Families First Prevention Services Act to enhance support for children and families.
- The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) cash grant would be increased by $100 per month, the first increase since 1986.
- The budget focuses on preventing fraud in the Child Care Assistance Program, adding staff for inspections, monitoring, data analysis and criminal investigations. It also funds planning for future improvements, including electronic record-keeping and tighter controls over provider registration.

**Bridge gaps in behavioral health care services to improve access**

*26.2 million investment, FY 2020-21; offset by savings of $31 million, FY 2020-21*

- The budget expands services to children through the successful school-linked mental health program and invests in children’s residential mental health services.
The successful Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, which provide coordinated care for substance use disorder and mental illness, would be continued and expanded.

Prevention and treatment would be bolstered to address the opioid epidemic through a new Opioid Stewardship Fee. Grants to tribal nations and five urban American Indian communities will improve access, coordination and referrals for culturally specific opioid services.

The budget also addresses underlying financing and regulatory issues to make the system work better.

Resources are included to implement a pending federal waiver to allow Minnesota to maximize federal funding for substance use disorder treatment, saving state dollars.

A new task force on competency restoration services would clarify the roles of courts, jails, counties and state-operated services.

**Strengthen services for vulnerable adults, people with disabilities**

$9.6 million to improve protection for vulnerable adults; $67.6 million in long-term care services, FY 2020-21

- The Governor’s budget works to ensure safe environments for vulnerable adults and encourages people to report suspected maltreatment.
- This includes adding staff to the Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care and making investments in the Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center. Additional information for consumers will be available through an assisted living report card.
- A proposal to reimagine how services are provided under the currently complex waiver programs would streamline services, and another would address workforce challenges.
- Nursing homes would have greater incentives to increase quality and maintain or improve property.

**Preserve and enhance services for people in our care**

$4.9 million, FY 2020-21

- Direct Care and Treatment, Minnesota’s state-operated safety-net care system for vulnerable people, would be strengthened under proposals in the Governor’s budget.
- Funding would continue for residential and vocational services for over 1,000 people with disabilities.
- Another proposal increases treatment capacity and simplifies funding for four intensive residential treatment facilities for people with mental illness.
- Additionally, the budget has measures to keep communities safe by funding Community Preparation Services and monitoring of sex offenders who are provisionally discharged by the courts.

**Improve government operations to better serve Minnesotans**

$20 million for systems modernization; savings of $274,000 for program integrity, FY 2020-21

- Funding to update Minnesota’s aging technology systems will support efforts to transform the human services delivery system to one that is more integrated and person centered.
- The budget improves oversight of non-emergency medical transportation and other providers enrolled in state health care programs, as well as bolstering county fraud prevention efforts.

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