

# Behavioral Health Service System Update

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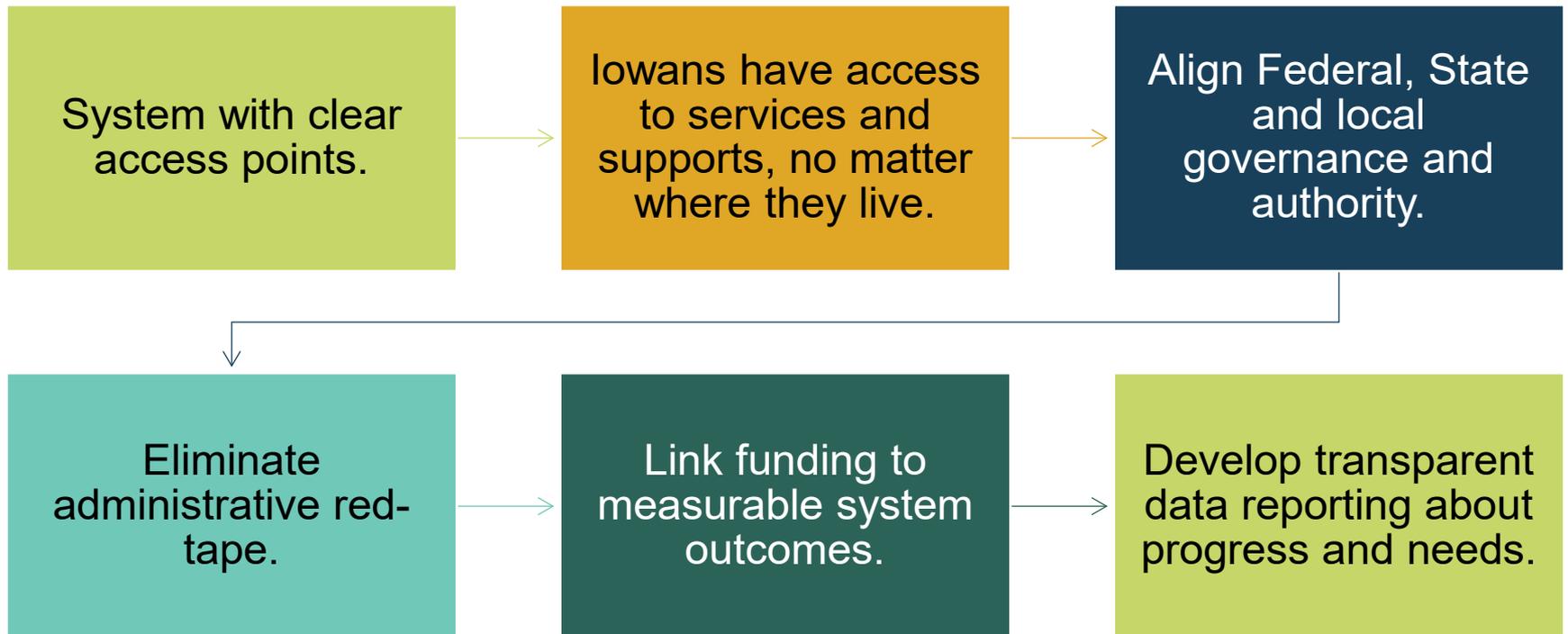
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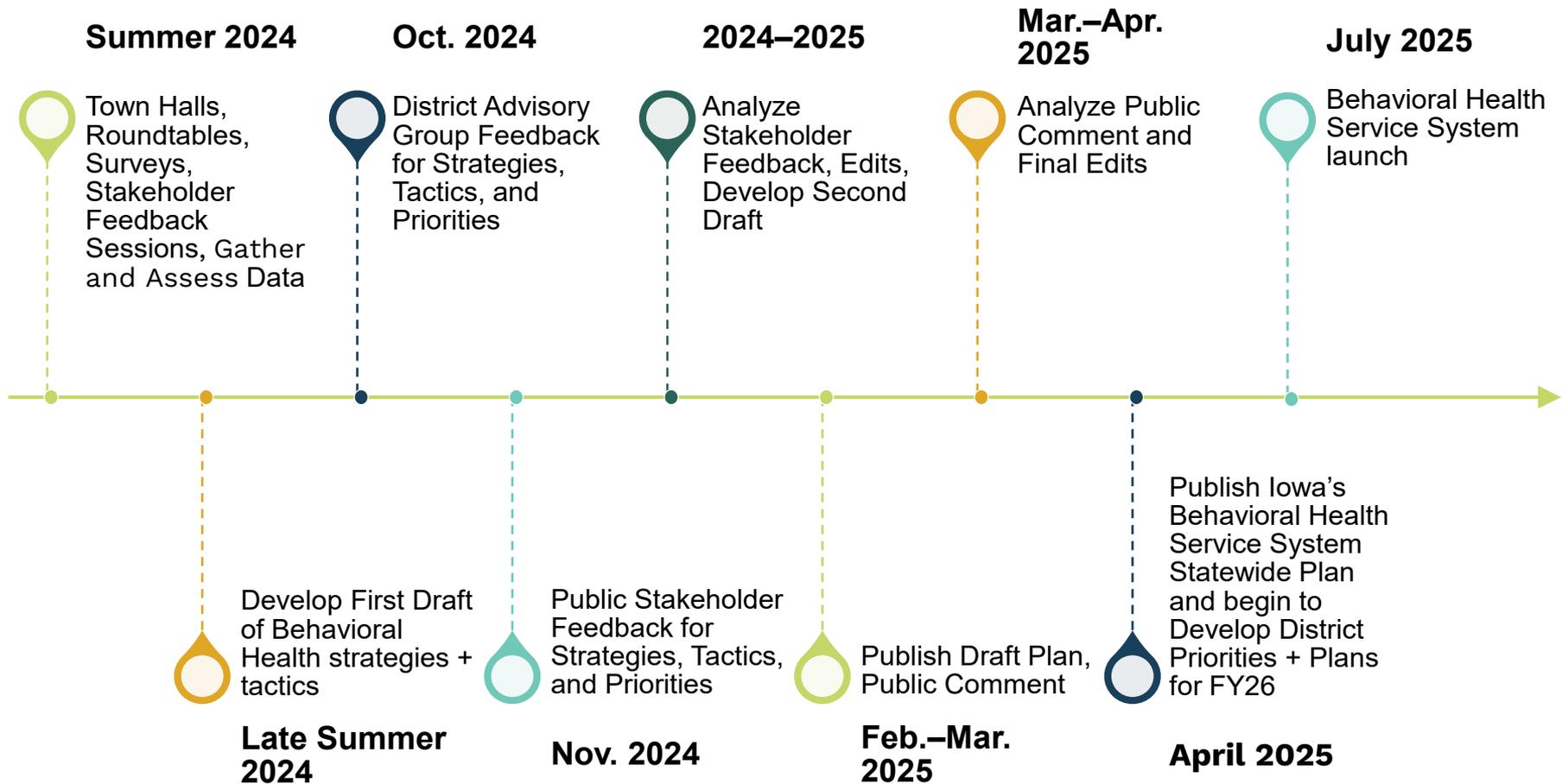
# Overview

- ▶ Behavioral Health Service System
- ▶ Statewide Plan: Priorities
  - Prioritize Prevention and Early Intervention
  - Improve System Coordination
  - Improve Access to Behavioral Health
- ▶ Behavioral Health Service System Funding
- ▶ Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization: Iowa Primary Care Association
  - System Navigation
  - School-Based Health
  - Jail-Based Behavioral Health
  - District Advisory Councils
  - District Assessment

# Behavioral Health Service System



# Behavioral Health Service System Statewide Plan: From Development to System Launch



# Behavioral Health Service System Statewide Plan: Priorities

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Prioritize  
Prevention  
and Early  
Intervention

Improve  
System  
Coordination

Improve  
Access to  
Behavioral  
Health

# Prioritize **Prevention** and Early Intervention



Create a system wide approach to behavioral health prevention



Create a communication plan



Build statewide BH prevention and promotion



Help the prevention workforce

# Prioritize Prevention and **Early Intervention**

1

Create and support an integrated, statewide behavioral health early intervention system

2

Embed low-barrier access through System Navigation and expand the behavioral health early intervention referral system

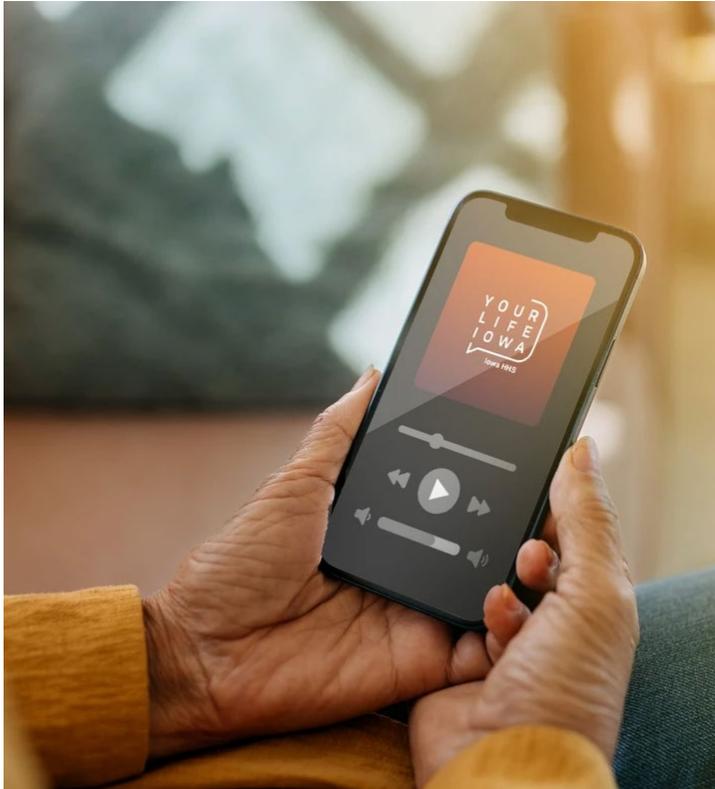
3

Create and follow an integrated, statewide approach to behavioral health early intervention activities

4

Help early intervention partners increase their behavioral health knowledge and skills

# Improve System Coordination: System Navigation



- ▶ Person-centered information, education, referral and support.
- ▶ Brief interaction to connect individuals to services, supports and resources
- ▶ Follow-up on status of referrals and additional needs
- ▶ All Iowans are eligible
- ▶ Connect with a System Navigator through Your Life Iowa
- ▶ Specialized system navigation
  - ▶ Crisis
  - ▶ Jail-based

# Improve System Coordination: **988** and **Your Life Iowa**

- ▶ **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** a simple, convenient three-digit number that connects individuals to trained crisis counselors.
  - Total Iowa contacts in SFY25: approx. 55,000 (89% answer rate in Iowa)
- ▶ **Your Life Iowa:** a resource for individuals seeking help and support for behavioral health concerns.
  - Total Iowa contacts in SFY25: approx. 35,000 (85% answer rate)

**988**

SUICIDE & CRISIS  
**LIFELINE**

Y O U R  
L I F E  
I O W A

IOWA HHS

# Improve Access: Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC)



CCBHCs are outpatient clinics that provide a comprehensive range of mental health and substance use disorder services to anyone regardless of age, diagnosis, or insurance status.



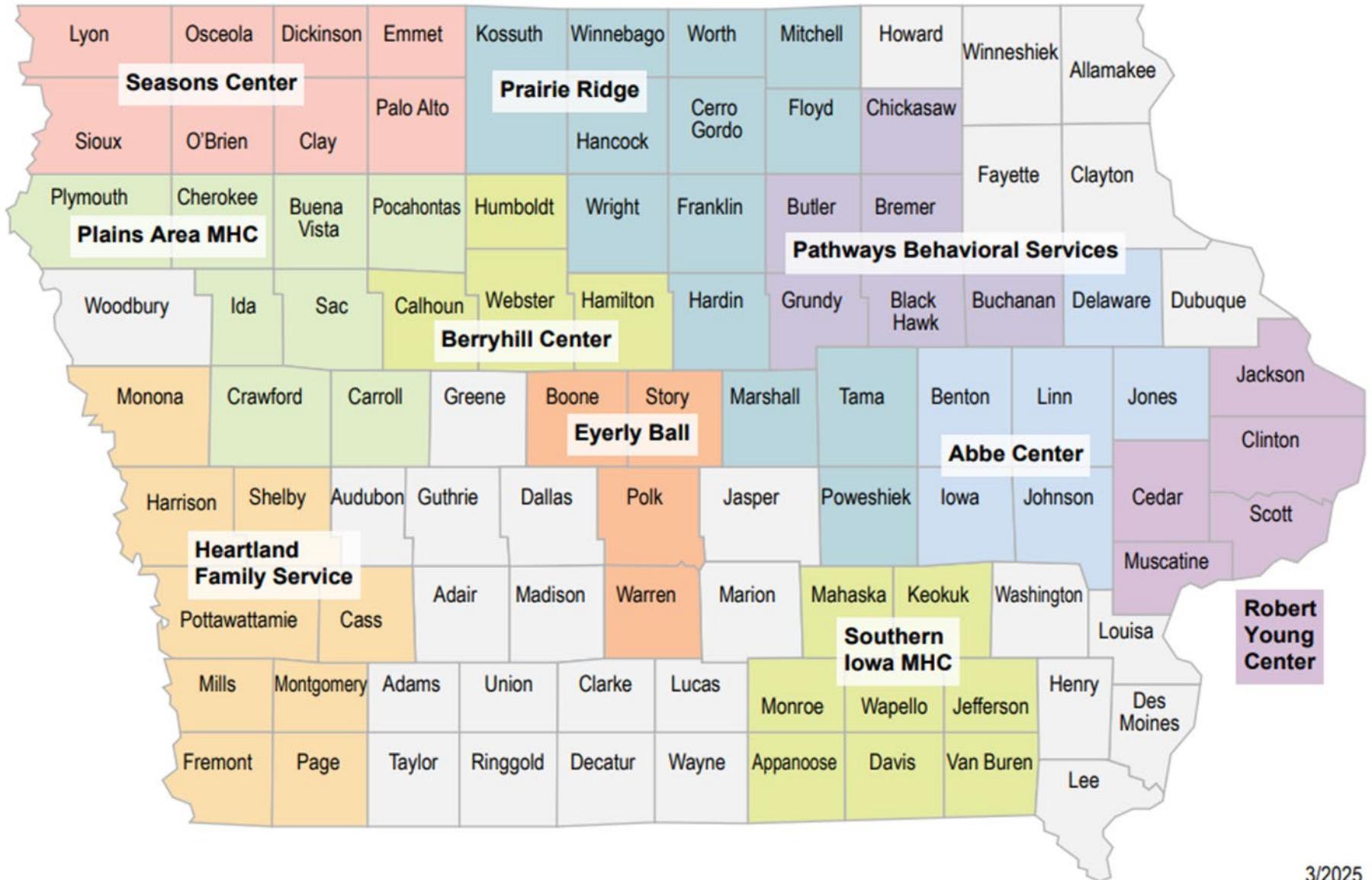
Iowa is a part of a 4-year Medicaid demonstration to implement CCBHC.



Iowa launched CCBHC on July 1, 2025, to align with the behavioral health service system implementation.



Iowa has 10 certified CCBHC covering 71 counties.



# CCBHC Impact

CCBHC providers are already noting positive impacts from the design, including:

- ▶ Greater staff flexibility to meet immediate needs
- ▶ In-house food and clothing closets
- ▶ Enhanced crisis services

# Behavioral Health Service System Funding the “Safety Net”

## Coverage

- Funding for limited array of treatment services for uninsured and underinsured Iowans below 200% FPL who are not eligible for Medicaid.

## Providers

- Required to fulfill specific access requirements such as 24/7/365 availability or accepting patients regardless of individual ability to pay. For example: CMHC, CCBHC, IPN, and crisis service providers.

## Community

- Focused investments in prevention, early intervention, recovery support and crisis access to ensure Iowans know where and how to access the resources they need and don't delay care until it's too late.

# Opioid Settlement Funding

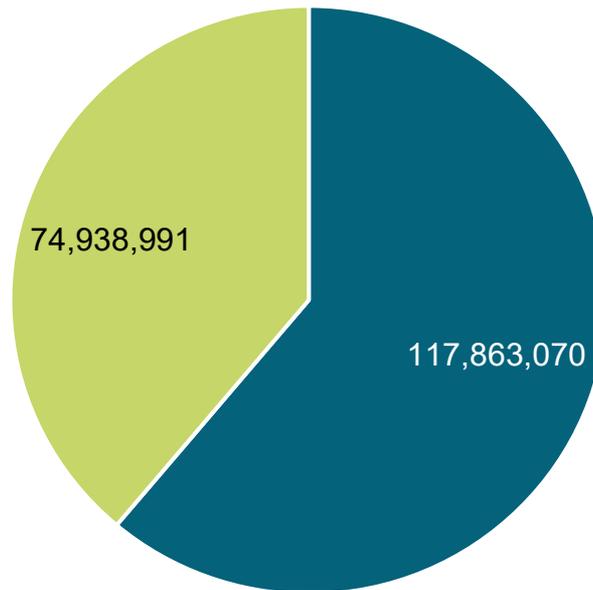
- ▶ A total of **\$26 million** was awarded to 21 different provider organizations, offering a range of opioid-related services.
- ▶ A total of **\$3 million** was used to issue a Request For Proposal (RFP) for the development and/or expansion of Recovery Housing services (awarded on November 21, 2025).
- ▶ October 2025 - Iowa HHS released a comprehensive RFP seeking applications that focused opioid-related initiatives and a total of **\$7 million** was made available with awards distributed to 10 different organizations (awarded on December 30, 2025).
- ▶ **SFY2025:** \$45,344,788 awarded to participating counties and \$5,314,849 expended

# Opioid Settlement Funding

- Fall RFP sought innovative proposals to strengthen opioid prevention, treatment, recovery, and crisis services in Iowa.
- Response was strong, with 53 proposals evaluated and scored by review teams.
- Ten organizations were awarded – ranging from \$207,730 to \$1 million.
- Awardees include behavioral health providers, community health centers, critical access hospitals, and broader community transformation initiatives.
- A second round of procurement is anticipated for spring 2026

# Behavioral Health Service System Fund

## Behavioral Health Service System Fund



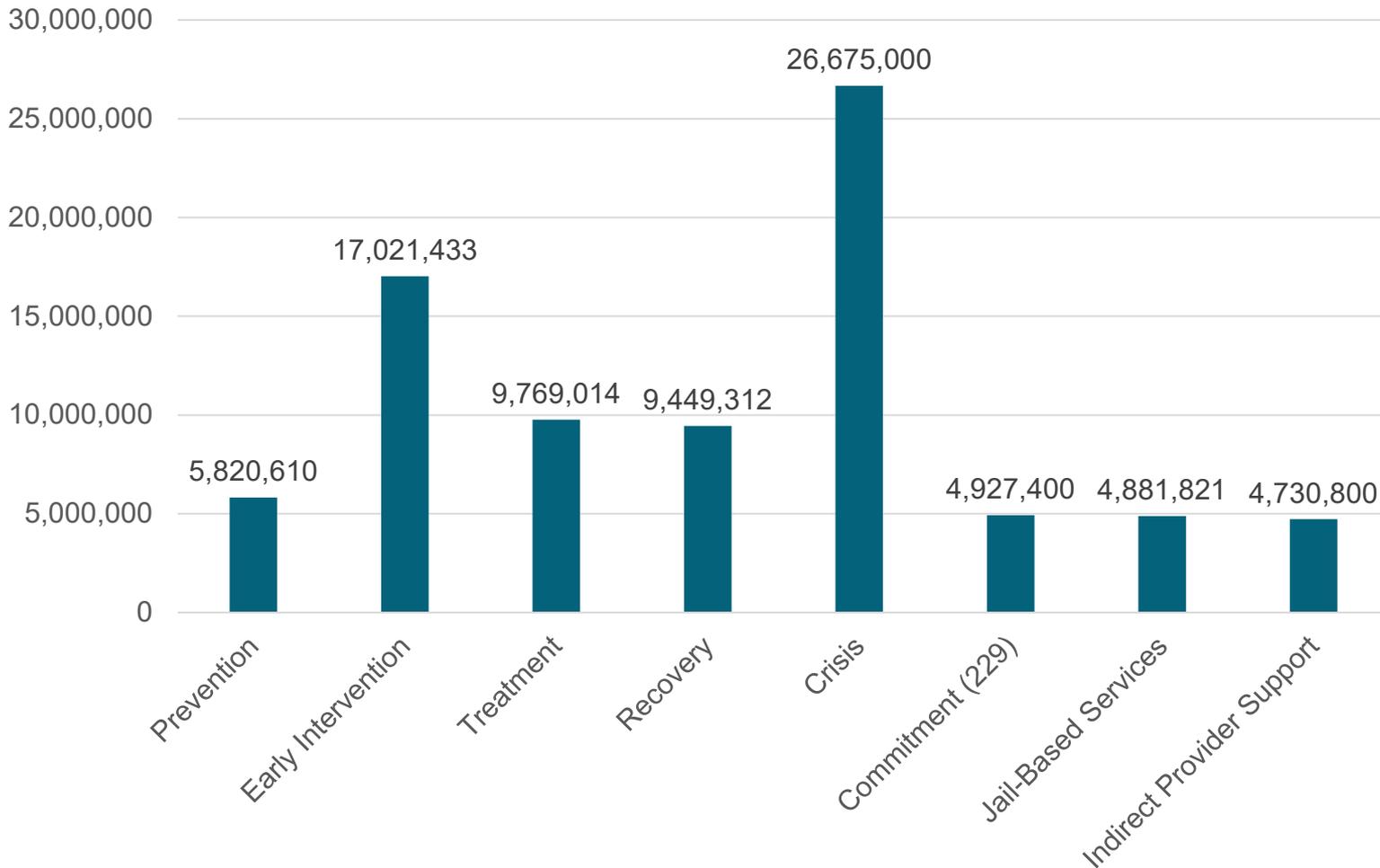
■ Behavioral Health Service System Fund    ■ Disability Services System

# Behavioral Health State and Federal Funds

SFY27 Funding Projections	
Behavioral Health Service System Fund (BH)	\$117,863,070
Other State Funds	\$25,877,121
Federal Block Grants and Non-Discretionary	\$20,010,483
Federal Discretionary and Other Grants	\$19,509,055
Interest	\$670,000
Total	\$183,929,729

- State funds include General Fund and Sports Wagering Receipts Fund.
- Block grants include Community Mental Health and Substance Use Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Services.
- Federal discretionary grants and other include State Opioid Response, CDC Tobacco Prevention, and others and assume level funding

# Administrative Service Organization Budget Allocation



# Streamlined Administrative Effort



Reduced multiple contracts into single, streamlined contracts



Improved reimbursement timeliness



Developed a consistent codes, rates and a single, simple claims payment system that aligns with typical insurance billing practices to improve efficiency



Identified program and payment efficiencies

# Early Successes – Reinvestment in Services and Supports

System Navigation for all Iowans



Jail-based behavioral health services



School-centered behavioral health



Increased reimbursement rates for substance use treatment services

# Next Steps

Iowa HHS, Iowa PCA, and local partners continue to build the foundation of the new Behavioral Health Service System. **Efforts underway include:**

Conducting district assessments and refining plans and budgets for next fiscal year.

Ongoing collaboration to improve System Navigation.

Evaluating and reporting outcomes identified in the behavioral health service system statewide plan.

Building Iowa's behavioral health prevention framework.

Implementing recommendations to improve crisis services and assure consistent access statewide.

# Behavioral Health Services

Aaron Todd, CEO, Iowa Primary Care Association

# Behavioral Health System Navigation

- **Non-crisis, time-sensitive** behavioral health service
- Helps individuals, families, providers and other “helpers” understand and access behavioral health services in Iowa.
- Brief, accessible support and guidance through information, education, referral, and coordination to connect people to the right services or support.

## General Public; Individuals and Family Members



**Call:** (855) 581-8111

**Text:** (855) 895-8398

**Chat:** [yourlifeiowa.org](https://yourlifeiowa.org)

## Providers and Community Partners

Providers and Community Partners can coordinate directly with Iowa PCA System Navigators by calling **(515) 505-8988**.

# Behavioral Health System Navigation

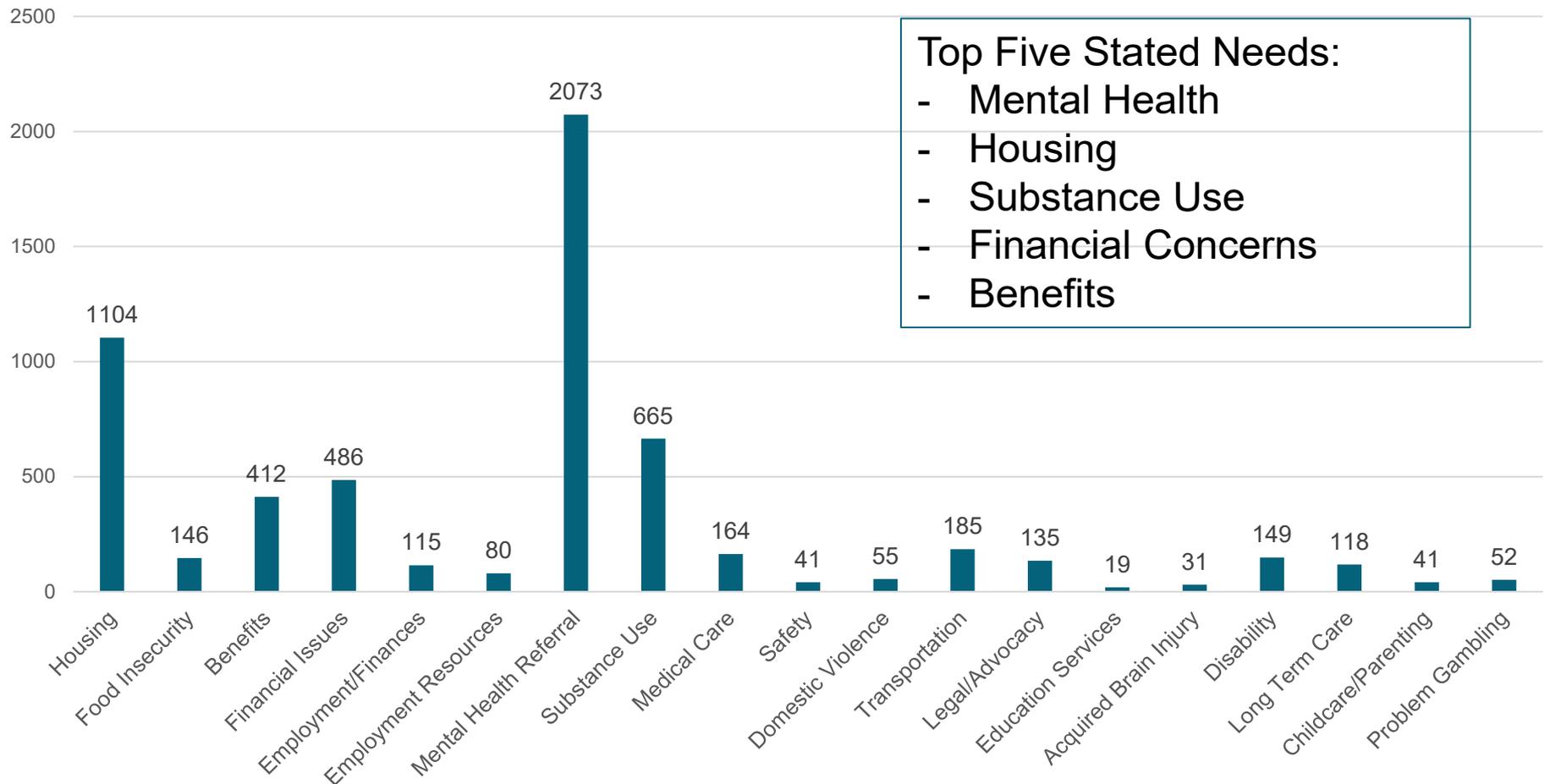
## The Challenge

- People seeking behavioral health support and the professionals aiding them often encounter a complicated, fragmented system causing delays and frustration.
- This complexity can discourage individuals from getting help.
- Stress and symptoms make navigating the system harder.
- Those facing stigma need additional encouragement and support.

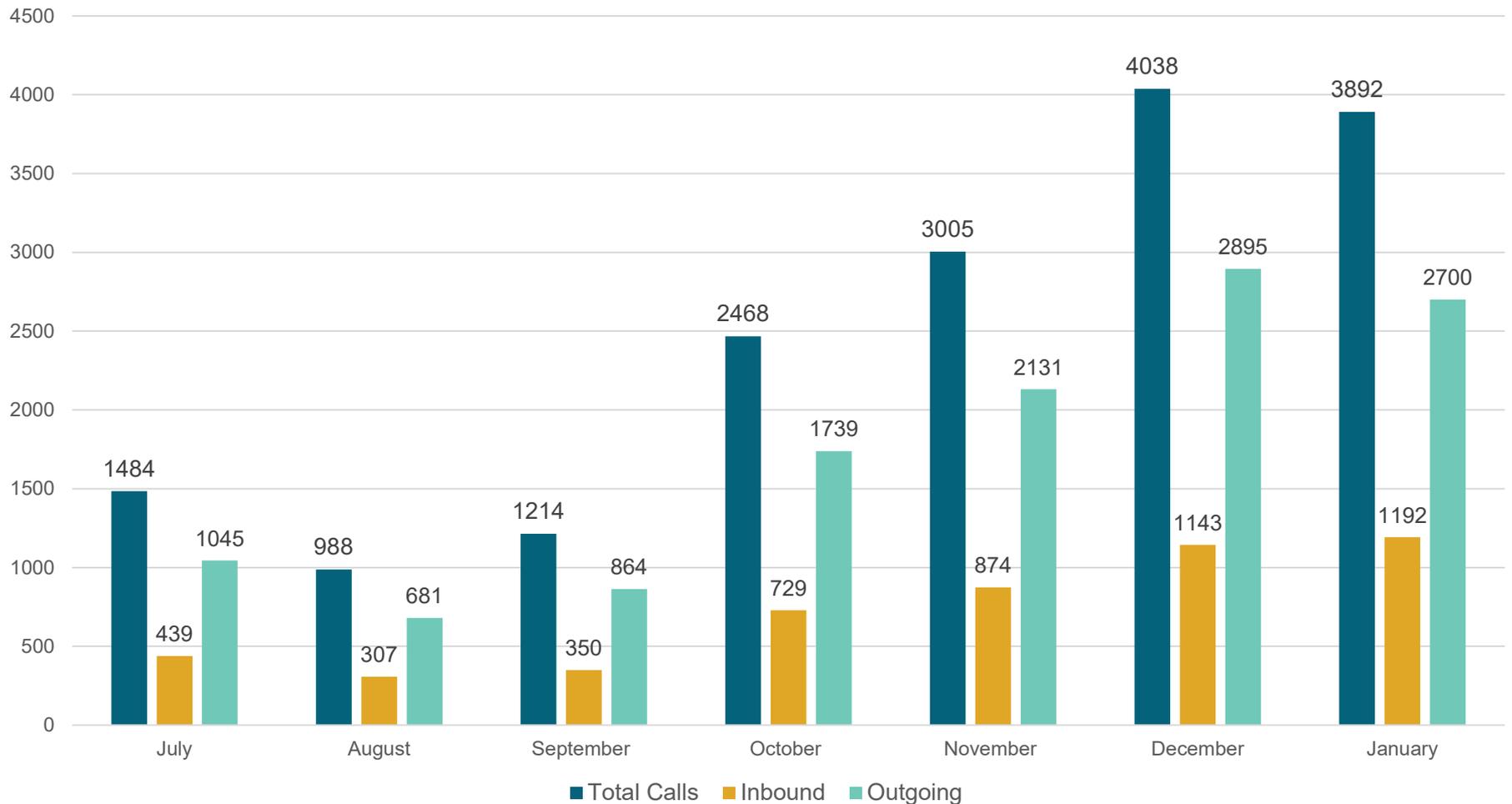
## The Solution

- The Iowa PCA is leading statewide Behavioral Health System Navigation by:
  - partnering with "Your Life Iowa"
  - creating resources and training
  - ensuring consistent access
  - working with various stakeholders to provide standardized, effective, and person-centered support for all Iowans.

# System Navigation: Top Presenting Needs



# System Navigation: Inbound and Outbound Calls



# System Navigation — Partnerships in Action

An Iowan experiencing chronic homelessness contacted System Navigation near the District 1–2 border and was hesitant to access shelter services due to past experiences. System Navigators across districts partnered with the Sioux City Warming Shelter to build trust and identify safe options.

Through a coordinated effort, System Navigators:

- Secured transportation to the Warming Shelter
- Scheduled needed medical appointments
- Assisted with housing documentation
- Identified care options that did not require insurance
- Assisted with Medicaid reapplication and approval
- Arranged transportation for safe transition to family housing



*The Warming Shelter, Inc., located in Sioux City, is dedicated to offering low-barrier shelter and compassionate support to individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Siouxland.*

# System Navigation —Partnerships in Action

“Having a Behavioral Health System Navigator at our Recovery Community Center has significantly strengthened our ability to support individuals and families. Their expertise and statewide connections have made a difference in many situations, and people have consistently told us they feel supported and hopeful after meeting with the navigator.

We’ve seen firsthand how their knowledge and statewide connections help people navigate complex behavioral health and social service needs. **Our navigator is approachable, flexible, and genuinely invested in helping people. It's easy to see how helpful this service is for individuals and families.”**

— Rod Courtney, Founder and Executive Director

*CRUSH of Iowa’s Recovery Community Center in Cedar Rapids connects people in recovery to resources, reduces stigma, hosts community events, and advocates for those in recovery.*



# School Based Health Care

- In Iowa, the [number of youth](#) experiencing behavioral health conditions has **doubled over the past three years – from 20% to approximately 40%**.
- The tele-behavioral health investments made by the Iowa PCA are designed to fill workforce and access gaps and strategically complement local providers.
- Made two investments in youth behavioral health services in school-based settings:
  - Classroom Clinic – actively working in nearly 40 schools
  - Hazel Health – actively working in over 20 schools
- \$5 million investment by the Wellmark Foundation for eligible rural schools to foster lasting, sustainable mental and behavioral health programs
  - Coordinated with Iowa HHS and Iowa PCA to increase impact

# System Navigation – Partnerships in Action

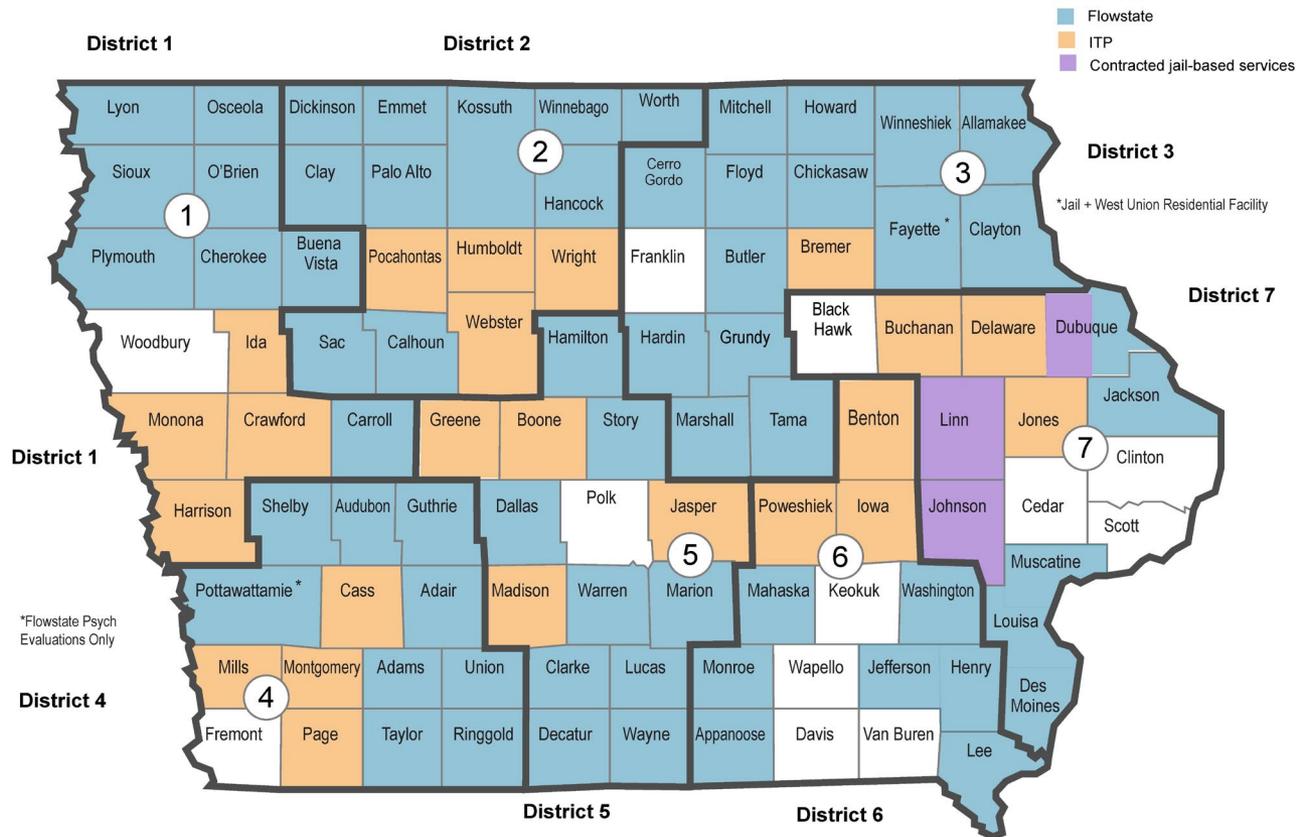
“Classroom Clinic provides gap-filling, children’s mental health services in partnership with local school districts. System navigation has been a great resource for our providers to access when additional community-based services are needed to support our families. **That collaboration has made a real difference for children who need multiple layered supports within the local community.**”

- Sue Gehling, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, Classroom Clinic

*Classroom Clinic, based in Carroll, Iowa, partners with school districts statewide to address unmet student mental health needs by providing timely, convenient access to children’s mental health services through telehealth.*



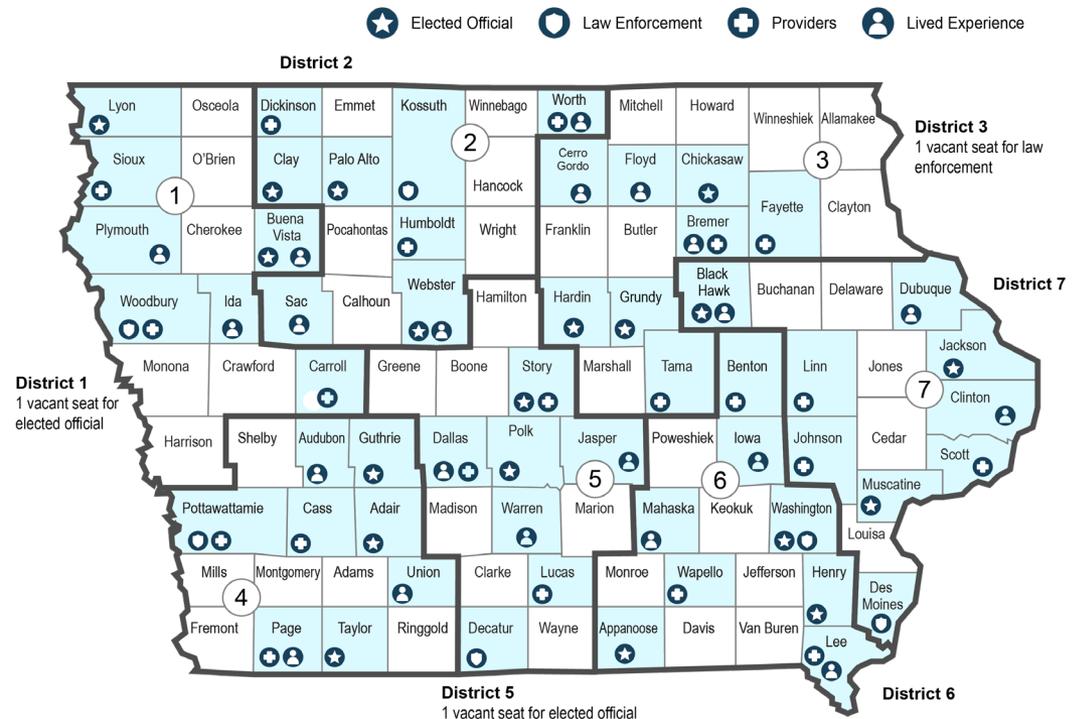
# Statewide Jail-Based Investments



All Iowa counties can provide and be reimbursed for mental assessment/evaluations, therapy, medication management, and medications.

# District Advisory Councils

- Have met two times since July 1
- Chair and Vice-Chair approved, charter ratified for all districts
- Topics included key behavioral health updates, discussion and feedback for Opioid Settlement Funds, prevention services, and district assessment and planning
- Meeting details, recordings, and slides can be found at [iowapca.org/district-advisory-councils](http://iowapca.org/district-advisory-councils)
- Currently have open seats in:
  - District 1: elected official (1 open seat)
  - District 5: elected official (1 open seat)



# District Assessment Process

## District Assessment Survey Process

- Distributed survey to 2,000+ contracted providers and community stakeholders
- 171 provider responses and 956 stakeholder responses

## District Assessment Guided Provider Conversations

- Iowa PCA district leaders are hosting in-depth sessions with contracted providers
- Focused on reviewing survey feedback and assessing the behavioral health service continuum

## Next Steps

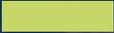
- Identify key findings and themes from provider and stakeholder feedback.
- Use insights to inform development of district plans.
- Seek feedback from District Advisory Councils (DAC) and community members at the March DAC meetings.
- Iowa PCA will submit draft district plans to HHS by March 30, 2026, with final district plans submitted by June 1, 2026.
- Implement plans to guide Iowa PCA operations for Fiscal Year 2027.

# Training and Technical Assistance

- Our team includes subject matter expertise to lead and co-design Training & Technical Assistance (TTA), supporting the design, delivery, and continuous improvement of the BHSS.
- Direct collaboration with Iowa HHS, contracted providers, and community partners to ensure prevention, early intervention, treatment, recovery, crisis, justice-involved services, and children’s behavioral health needs are met consistently across all districts.
- **Our Approach**
  - **Provide knowledge and skills to drive quality and performance:** Offer evidence-based content and practical tools that equip providers and teams to deliver high-quality, person-centered care.
  - **Offer centralized resources and subject matter expertise:** Deliver support through a team of consultants, guides, and tools tailored to clinical, operational, and strategic needs.
  - **Leverage the expertise of the network through collaborative learning:** Create structured opportunities for peer exchange, shared problem-solving, and dissemination of lessons learned across organizations.
  - **Elevate best practices to share and scale:** Identify, document, and promote replicable models and innovations that demonstrate measurable outcomes.
  - **Drive continuous improvement and advance innovation:** Support data-informed decision-making and adaptive implementation strategies that lead to sustainable change.
  - **Promote varied opportunities and formats for TTA:** Flexible delivery to meet various needs - live sessions, on-demand resources, individual consultation, and learning collaboratives.

# Year 1 Accomplishments

- Established strong provider relationships, laying the foundation for effective training and support to improve quality and outcomes.
- Built collaborative structures and district-level workstreams across all continuum areas to guide implementation.
- Participation in all District Assessment Guided Provider conversations to identify district-specific and statewide training and technical assistance priorities.
- Launched coordinated provider and partner engagement activities, including onboarding, introductory meetings, and early technical assistance touchpoints.
- Expanded statewide training capacity through partnerships with SolutionPoint+ and NAMI Iowa, offering crisis response, prevention, recovery, and family education programs.



# Questions?

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