



**Monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the allocation and adequacy of mental health and substance abuse services in North Dakota**  
**Focusing on wellness and recovery that is consumer and family driven**  
For more information: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/bhpc>

Testimony  
House Bill 1012  
Senate Appropriations  
Human Resources Division  
Sen Dick Dever, Chair  
March 19, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Dever and members of the committee. My name is Melanie Gaebe and I am the Chair of the Behavioral Health Planning Council (Council). I am providing testimony on behalf of the Council in support of HB 1012.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the Council, every state receiving federal Mental Health Block Grant funds is required to have a planning and advisory council. North Dakota expanded the focus of the council to include services for substance use disorders under the encouragement of the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This expanded focus moved us toward a behavioral health planning and advisory structure that integrates mental health and substance abuse services.

The Council consists of thirty members who are appointed by the Governor. We have a diverse membership representing a wide array of state agencies, stakeholder groups, mental health providers, as well as consumers who have lived experience with mental health and substance use disorders. Our objective is to monitor, review, and evaluate the allocation and adequacy of mental health and substance abuse services in North Dakota.



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The second piece of my testimony outlines the priority areas the Behavioral Health Planning Council is supporting this legislative session. The Council supports the funding for the new State Hospital and for Regional based services. There are some who would say that investing in regional services should mean we no longer need the State Hospital, and there are some who would say that investing in the State Hospital means we don't need regional services. But the reality is much more complex. The Council supports the need for a both/and approach to these investments, not an either/or approach.

The Council members are available to assist you with questions or concerns you have with these priorities. As noted on the priority document, please direct questions to the Council's contracted facilitator, Janell Regimbal at [janell@insighttosolutions.com](mailto:janell@insighttosolutions.com). She will be able to direct your questions to the Council members best able to provide you with the information you request.

Thank you,  
Melanie Gaebe  
Chair, Behavioral Health Planning Council