

People with disabilities have opportunities. Our neighbors with mental illness, intellectual or other developmental disabilities have choices about issues that affect their lives, such as care, treatments, careers, and civic and political participation. These choices lead to full citizenship and being involved with the community. Polk County service organizations offer people with disabilities and their families many strategies and action steps that can lead to a better, happier life.

Who We Are

- The Polk County Board of Supervisors created Polk County Health Services (PCHS) in 1976 to develop and oversee a local network of services and support for people who have disabilities. Today, PCHS remains a private, nonprofit organization, governed by a community board that is committed to offering effective and responsive local services.
- PCHS does not provide direct services to consumers. The organization works with lowans with disabilities and their families to assure that everyone is accepted within the community and has similar opportunities to live and work.
- PCHS supports improved access to health care and promotes full citizenship and self-sufficiency for people with mental illness, intellectual or other developmental disabilities.

How We Can Help You

Polk County partners with a network of local organizations to offer services that are designed to meet the needs of people with mental illness, intellectual or other developmental disabilities. Here are some examples of those services:

Coordination Services—Counsel in finding information about resources and other support to help you make decisions on what services you need. Coordination services also match you with your services and ensure payment for services provided.

Community Living Services—Services that provide support and supervision, allowing you to become more independent in your own home or apartment. Services are also available to help support you when you are living with others in a group home setting. Personal support may include activities of daily living such as transportation training, money management, and meal or housing assistance.

Respite Services—Services also are available to offer relief for families who take care of a family member who has a disability.

Employment Services—Employment opportunities offer valuable supported education and work skills training. Career opportunities range from offering job training and job placement with a local business to working with personalized supervision and support in a group work setting.

Treatment Services—Mental health treatment services include evaluation, counseling, mental health prescriptions, medication management, community support and help in dealing with a crisis.

Please contact a Polk County access point for help in connecting to any of these support areas.

In some instances, consumers may be required to pay for part of service fees, based on income, resources and family size.



Moving Toward Success

By working together with various partner agencies, Polk County annually serves approximately 9,000 Central Iowans with mental illness, intellectual or other developmental disabilities. Here are a few examples of success stories we're proud of:

Martha and her two children were living in a rundown apartment filled with health hazards. With no job or necessary life skills, Martha had little hope as she struggled to care for herself and her children. However, that's all changed because Martha got help from case management and supported community living services. Today, Martha has moved into a nice apartment, been introduced to a physician, attends parenting classes and is looking forward to new job opportunities.

Sally bounced among at least 14 mental health facilities over several years. During that time, she was hospitalized more than 100 times with severe mental health symptoms and more than 30 incidents of selfharm. Since then, Sally has turned her life around with help from employment staff and community living staff. She learned coping skills, moved into her own apartment and recently gained a job. With continuing assistance, she maintains her apartment, exercises at the YMCA and stays active in her church. She's busy getting a life!

With an intellectual disability, Brian works harder than most people to succeed. Supported employment services provided training and helped Brian find a job that he loves. After being on the job only two months, Brian's coworkers are already praising him. In addition, Brian is working to develop independent living skills. With assistance from supported community living staff, Brian may soon achieve his goal of getting his own apartment.

P O L K | C O U N T Y
H E A L T H | S E R V I C E S

Polk County River Place
2309 Euclid Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50310

Phone 515.243.4545
Fax 515.243.8447
Email PolkDisabilityServices@pchsia.org.

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Opportunities

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