



# Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Inc.

2900 "O" Street, Suite 200 • Lincoln, NE 68510  
(402) 435-2910 • Fax (402) 435-2949 • [www.lfsneb.org](http://www.lfsneb.org)

Dear Senator Nelson,  
440 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 120  
Lincoln, NE 68508

This letter is in support of Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network's (SNBHIN) request for earmarked funds which would assist in the purchase of Electronic Health Record (EHR) applications to more fully integrate the Health Information Exchange (HIE) system currently in development for behavioral health providers in southeast Nebraska.

I represent Lutheran Family Services, a provider of behavioral health services in southeast Nebraska. An integrated health information exchange system will significantly improve our ability to treat Nebraska citizens with behavioral health conditions in a number of ways. Lutheran Family Services is already using an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system. We can see that being able to integrate systems will assist us in serving our consumers more accurately and efficiently, when information can be accessed easier and sooner.

- Our waiting list for behavioral health treatment services typically is 20 consumers who wait an average of 30-45 days before they can access services. Consumers may be on multiple waiting lists for behavioral health services some of which may or may not be appropriate. An integrated HIE system would provide us with an avenue to research the consumer's position on other agencies' waiting lists and promote communication with other behavioral health agencies to expedite the delivery of services based on consumer need.
- Lutheran Family Service's ability to coordinate health and behavioral health will improve with the EHR system's ability to manage chronic conditions using consumer lists and decision support. Our clinicians will be able to produce an electronic summary of care record for every transition in care. The electronic summary of care could be accessed by other primary and behavioral health care providers.
- Safety for the consumers Lutheran Family Services serves will improve with easy access to up-to-date medical records which will promote evidence-based treatment decisions and provide easy access to essential information in emergency situations.
- Reduction in disparate health outcomes for consumers of behavioral healthcare services will be experienced through sharing of behavioral health records with primary healthcare providers.

SNBHIN's leadership in the development of an HIE system has been aggressive and successful. National, state, and local funding sources have invested in the HIE system and still more funds are needed. We urge you to consider an earmark for this project which will improve the efficiencies and effectiveness of the behavioral health system in Southeast Nebraska, provide a roadmap for the adoption of an HIE



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system for the rest of the state and most importantly improve the quality of life for Nebraska citizens with behavioral health conditions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Fisher-Erickson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J".

Julie Fisher-Erickson, M.A., LIMHP, LADC  
Southeast Regional Manager  
Lutheran Family Services