



**Heart**  
for Helping People



*Sedgwick County...*  
*working for you*

**COMCARE**  
*2016 Annual Report*



## Mission

COMCARE of Sedgwick County helps people with mental health and substance abuse needs improve the quality of their lives.

## Vision

We envision a healthy community where people are provided the support needed to reach their potential.



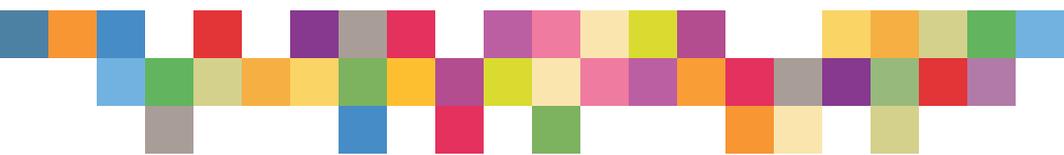
It's been clear for some time that so much of the impact of the services we provide is a result of the passion and caring approach providers take in connecting with those they provide services to. While clinical approach, medications, coping abilities, life situations and personal difference in temperament all contribute to clinical outcomes, the trusting relationship that develops between a provider and a patient provides the means to personal growth and adherence to the treatment plans that were mutually developed.

This year we decided to focus our annual report on some of **our staff** and look at what brings them back to work each day. In this environment of change and dwindling resources, provider compassion, passion and commitment are what keep so many in our field going and effective. We hope you enjoy the stories in our report this year and see that caring is the core element of the care our staff provide.

## It's the "art" behind the science.

Our thanks to our staff, Board of County Commissioners, Advisory Board and community partners for all they do to help us continue to provide needed behavioral health services in our community.

*Marilyn Cook*  
Executive Director,  
COMCARE of Sedgwick County



## 2016 Annual Expenditures

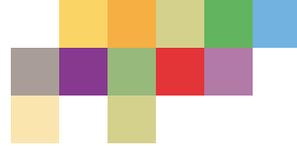
■ Personnel	\$20,163,567	64%
■ Contractual/Operating Expense	\$ 11,257,689	36%
■ Total (Unaudited numbers)	\$ 31,421,256	

Working with the littles (ages 3-5) we use the Conscious Discipline Model by Becky Bailey. After training and using this model daily I have started to use it in my own life, it is not just something for kids but it is a great tool when trying to work with kids to find their strengths.





Andrea Lantz  
Early Childhood Specialist



Andrea returns to work each day because she loves how excited her young clients are to see her. She said sometimes, early on, it feels like they don't trust or want her around, but once she has had time to build rapport, it makes it so rewarding. She gets the best feeling when they are excited to meet with her, and to her it sometimes doesn't even feel like work.

She has worked at COMCARE Children's for nearly three years, and says what she enjoys the most is working with the littles (ages 3-5). She is very passionate about finding their strengths, helping them see their strengths and helping them over their current speed bumps. After graduating college, she liked the idea of getting to directly work with families and help them through difficult times in their lives. She sees clients on Monday and Tuesday mornings, does a Proud of Me (POM) class until 3 p.m. on most days, and works with teens on Thursdays and Fridays as part of her Masters in Social Work coursework.

She has seen a lot of clients through her time at COMCARE, and each with their own story. One of her most memorable clients was a transfer from a different POM and different case manager. He had a rough start to services, but by the time they closed, he had made a tremendous amount of progress. Andrea said was even able to make a significant connection with his family. She said his siblings knew who she was and greeted her with their stories and always wanted to join in on their sessions.

Andrea said she utilizes best practices in her work. "Working with the littles (ages 3-5) we use the Conscious Discipline Model by Becky Bailey," Andrea said. "After training and using this model daily I have started to use it in my own life, it is not just something for kids but it is a great tool when trying to work with kids to find their strengths."

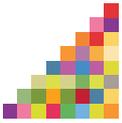
She also believes in a holistic approach to care because the more information or better understanding you have in a case the more effective you can be. She is able to build a more effective rapport with her clients, which in the long runs makes for a more efficient and beneficial session. She also said she gets to know the person as a whole and not just their behaviors/diagnosis.

Andrea said her biggest barrier has been finding her voice and confidence. She said there is a lot she needed to learn in this job, and many things to remember daily. She said it is easy to get wrapped up in the paperwork and various situations. But, she constantly reminds herself why she chose this field and what she wanted to accomplish. She said this has pushed her to build the skills she needed along with her confidence.

Andrea has a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Criminal Justice, and is currently working on a Master's in Social Work. She is still fascinated with the criminal justice field, but children are her main passion. Andrea is from Wichita, and has one sister and brother. She also mentioned the family dog, a beagle, named Freckles.



👤 I very much enjoy training our staff  
and helping them make sure they have the skills and tools they need. 🧑🏻



**Benjamin Benson**

*Quality and Risk Management Specialist*

Ben has been with COMCARE for a total of four years. He started his career as a student therapist, then spent one year as an outpatient therapist, and finally moved into his current role as a Quality and Risk Management Specialist.

He especially enjoys his team, and says it is one of the main reasons he enjoys his job. As the Quality and Risk Management Specialist, he spends about 50 percent of his time reviewing electronic records, and helping to ensure COMCARE is meeting the requirements for appropriate treatment and documentation of services provided. The rest of his time is spent in staff training, and he also spends one day a week as a Crisis Therapist at the Community Crisis Center. Ben says he enjoys all aspects of his job, but training is his favorite. “I very much enjoy training our staff and helping them make sure they have the skills and tools they need,” he said. Some of the trainings he assists with are Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (patient de-escalation), DLA-20 (industry-standard holistic functioning assessment), treatment plan trainings, and also specific trainings tailored to the needs of staff.

Spending time once a week as a therapist has also given him invaluable time with patients. He said his favorite patients to interact with are those who are new to mental health treatment. “They may need a better understanding of their mental illness,” he said, “or for someone to explain to them they’re not alone and there is hope of recovery.”

Ben cites community collaboration as being incredibly important in his work, and for COMCARE as a whole. He believes a single organization can’t meet all of everyone’s needs, and the network of helping organizations in our area is an invaluable resource. The mental health field is always changing, and Ben says the most significant changes in his experience so far have been the DSMIV-TR to DSM5 transition and the continual shift to integrated mental and physical health care.

Ben was married in October of last year, and currently has two dogs. When he’s not at work, he enjoys spending time with his family.

“What we provide is a team-oriented support system that allows for successes and the ability for them to learn and move forward successfully.

We work closely with the participants to aid them in reaching and hopefully maintaining self-sufficiency.”





**Maggie Flanders**  
*Homeless Plan Specialist*

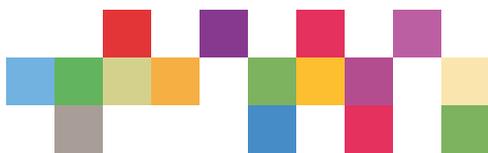
Maggie's mantra is if she were "Empress of the World", all who sought to secure and maintain housing would do so. She is passionate about her clients, and in connecting them to housing and other resources. She began working at COMCARE in February of 2011, and has since realized there is no "one size fits all" solution to homelessness for the many different households she has connected with. Many don't fit into the parameters necessary for securing subsidized housing, such as being enrolled in services or having some type of income, which can delay or even prohibit some from connecting to a specific resource. These differences can make her job both challenging and rewarding.

Even if Maggie is unable to assist her clients with a desired resource, she still speaks with them to let them know she cares. Her thinking is if she or someone close to her were to ever encounter similar circumstances, she would like to think that there would be someone in a role similar to hers who would take the time to speak with them without hesitation.

"What we provide is a team-oriented support system that allows for successes and the ability for consumers to learn and move forward successfully. We work closely with the participants to aid them in reaching and hopefully maintaining self-sufficiency," said Maggie.

Maggie has worked with countless individuals. She remembers a homeless elderly gentleman she helped secure housing using Rapid Rehousing Funds. His family had totally ostracized him. He was so confused and afraid, and had been accosted due to not being able to walk without assistance. He shuffled everywhere. They worked together for several weeks. He called her every day, and he did everything asked of him in terms of securing documentation and speaking with potential landlords and apartment complexes. He eventually secured housing in a local senior living complex, and he remains successful to this day. On the day he signed his lease, he turned to Maggie with tears in his eyes and said, "Thank you. I could not have done this without your help. I appreciate your kindness and patience. No one else wanted to help me and you did."

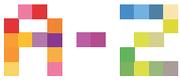
Maggie applied for this position at COMCARE due solely to the housing aspect, and a desire to connect homeless individuals with housing. She says she has learned much in her role and has also gained a very healthy respect for those who work directly with the consumers with behavioral health issues. Maggie has been married for nearly 20 years, and has two sons.





❑ I enjoy seeing how people develop throughout their life span, so I am encouraged, challenged and humbled by the winding path of life each of us goes through conception until death.

During my career as a therapist, I have worked with people throughout the life span: very young children in play therapy, adolescent, and adults of all ages. ❑



Deborah Olien

*Behavioral Health Consultant, Primary Care Integration*

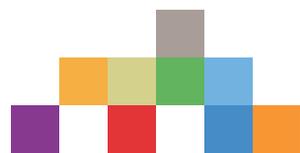
“Every person has a unique story filled with adventure, triumph, failure, victory and daily battle which needs to be understood to assist him/her,” said Deborah.

Deborah’s current role for COMCARE is to integrate physical and behavioral health which historically has been separate. Deborah reflected, one of the big changes at COMCARE was the advent of integrated care - where medical and physical health are brought together and work side by side. Being a part of this initiative has been exciting for her. Both physical and behavioral health have their own lexicon, and understanding one another and having open communication has been key to overcoming this potential barrier at the new COMCARE/GraceMed Clinic. Deborah said she is most passionate about helping people understand the behavioral health issues they are experiencing, and how these symptoms impact other areas of their life. “I value listening to personal feelings and thoughts, and using this information to help them feel better.”

Deborah has an extensive history with COMCARE. She has worked for COMCARE twice. From 2000-2004 she worked in the Family and Children’s Program, as well as at the Community Crisis Center as a clinician. From October 2015 to the present, she has been the Behavioral Health Consultant at the COMCARE/GraceMed Clinic. She was attracted to the behavioral health field at a young age, but said it took her awhile to figure that out. At five-years-old she remembered talking with an elderly couple who lived next door and listening to their stories. At 19-years-old, she was given an employment opportunity to work as a physical therapy aide, and instead of working with her patients on their exercises, she was more intrigued by their journey in life. She then changed her major from physical therapy to social work and has never looked back. “I enjoy seeing how people develop throughout their life span, so I am encouraged, challenged, and humbled by the winding path of life that each of us goes from conception until death,” said Deborah. “During my career as a therapist, I have worked with people throughout the life span: very young children in play therapy, adolescents and adults of all ages.”

Deborah also commented on the importance of best practices in her field, and the ones she utilizes the most include: brain research that helps her understand the etiology for mental illnesses, reflective listening, Brief Solution Focused Therapy and Motivational Interviewing.

Deborah is married and has a very big family. She has six children of her own, and also three step-children and they constantly keep her on her toes.



What I value most about my work with families and children at COMCARE is the collaboration which occurs between our team members – case managers, nurses and therapists to problem solve in complex cases. Working with staff with a strong commitment to the youth in our community is a rewarding experience.





*Dr. DeAnne Jenkins*  
*Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist*

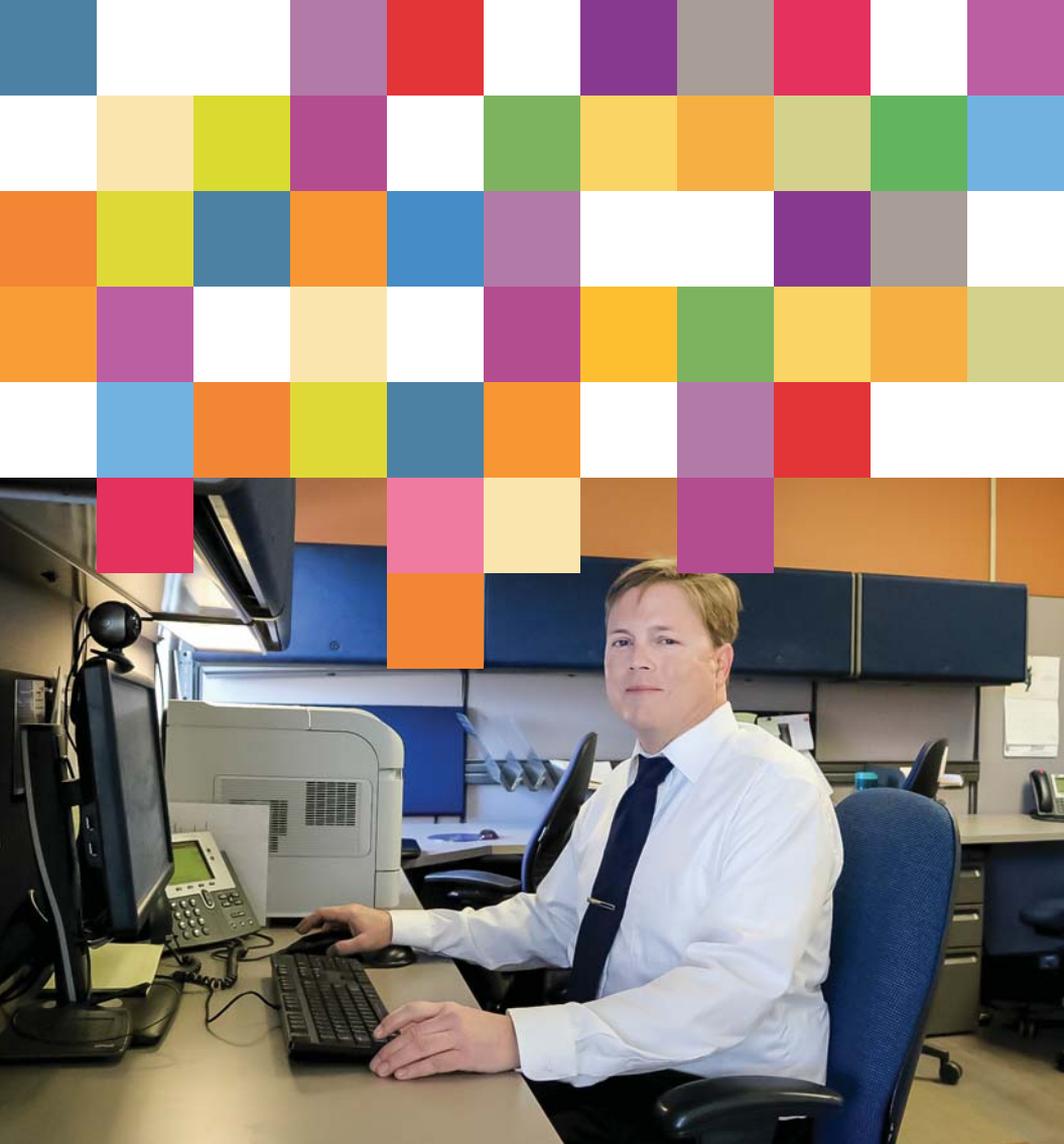
Dr. Jenkins has worked at COMCARE for nearly 12 years, and said one of the largest challenges has been the integration of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) into mental health care. She said the doctor-patient interaction has changed significantly by incorporating computers into the visits, and they now work to find the balance between documentation expectations and patient needs as health care continues evolving. She said she appreciated how COMCARE staff meets these challenges with patient care foremost in mind.

She said COMCARE and the behavioral health field has seen many other significant changes. The publication of DSM-5 has refined diagnostic thinking and the integration of evidence-based practices has advanced our understanding of treatment. Dr. Jenkins was also proud to be a member of the COMCARE team during this time of change.

“What I value most about my work with families and children at COMCARE is the collaboration which occurs between our team members – case managers, nurses and therapists to problem solve in complex cases,” said Dr. Jenkins. “Working with staff with a strong commitment to the youth in our community is a rewarding experience.”

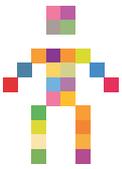
Dr. Jenkins was attracted to work with youth in the behavioral health field in the hopes of providing earlier diagnosis and treatment, and to hopefully reduce the psychosocial consequences of unrecognized mental illness. She said these interventions often involve connecting with families, schools and other community agencies to provide support for at risk youth.

Dr. Jenkins did her fellowship in Madison, Wisconsin, and focused on child and adolescent psychology. She then went to work for work for PrairieView for 10 years. She joined the COMCARE team in 2005. She spends the majority of her time seeing patients, and also goes out to Heartspring on Wednesday mornings to work with children with developmental disorders.



“It is really satisfying when our consumers experience success and can see improvements in their lives.

It is inspiring to see someone move from a state of hopelessness to one of confidence and looking forward to life and opportunity.”



**Kyle Breer**

*Community Reintegration Specialist, Sedgwick County  
Offender Assessment Program (SCOAP)*



Kyle is most passionate about working with consumers in the community. He enjoys seeing their progression in treatment and successes in becoming more independent and self-confident. “The thing I value most about my job is being surrounded by a team of co-workers and supervisors who dedicate themselves to enriching the life of those with mental illness and substance abuse,” said Kyle. “We take pride in our work and SCOAP is like an extended family. I can say my work is honestly appreciated and we are making a difference.”

In June, Kyle will be celebrating his seven year anniversary with COMCARE. He says the most challenging part of his job relates to working with consumers who have not fully realized that treatment and services will actually be beneficial to them, as well as in sometimes not having adequate resources in the community to meet the needs of our clients. “It is really satisfying when our consumers do experience success and can see improvements in their lives. It is inspiring to see someone move from a state of hopelessness to one of confidence and looking forward to life and opportunity,” he said.

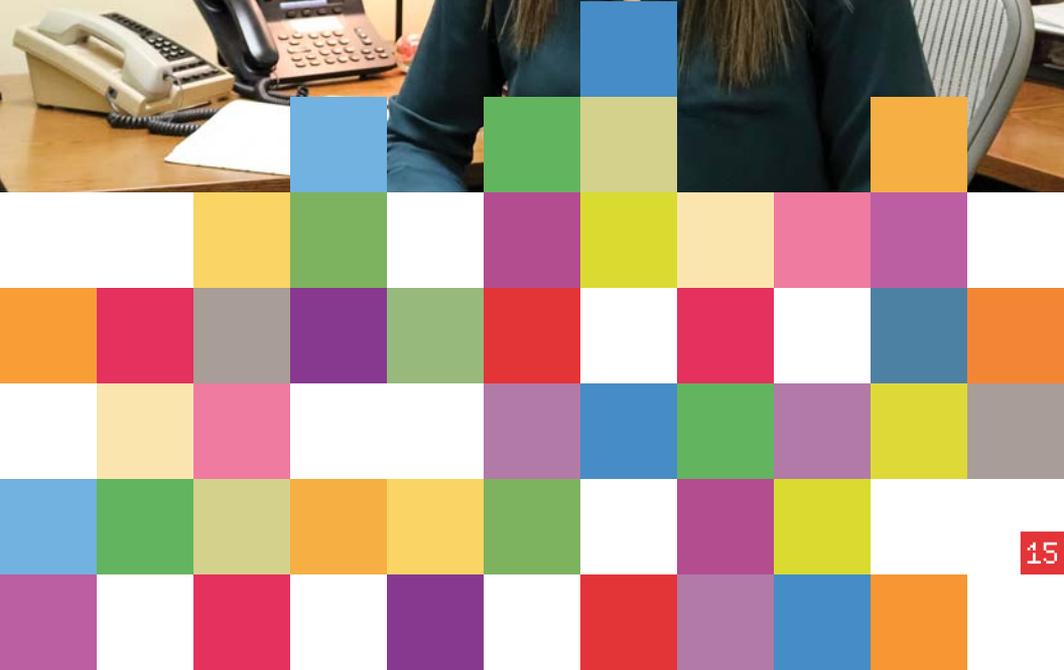
Kyle came to the behavioral health field because he likes to see the diversity of many individuals and figure out what makes them tick and what motivates them. He believes it gives him the opportunity to make a positive difference in people’s lives, and every day in the field presents a new challenge. One consumer he remembers most was a lady who faced many challenges. She presented with many barriers, extreme anxiety and hopelessness and said they had a long professional journey together. At one point, she lost custody of her daughter, but with classes and continued mental health treatment, she was eventually able to get her daughter back. Kyle said she overcame a lot and she is a great mother and is very passionate about her family.

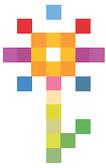
Kyle said in the almost seven years he has been with COMCARE that the SCOAP and Crisis programs have evolved positively. He believes the Community Crisis Center (CCC) has been extremely beneficial by providing consumers with a quicker access to services. He said many of his clients don’t like public places or dealing with crowds, and the easy access of the CCC, with a supportive team, has been vital in keeping his clients in the community. Not only that, but he said COMCARE is always finding new and exciting ways to do things better. Community collaborations are essential to his work at SCOAP, as well as at the CCC. He has personally worked to develop strong relationships with City of Wichita Probation Office, with Municipal Court Judges, attorneys, mental health staff and corrections officers at Sedgwick County Adult Detention Facility and with Substance Abuse Center of Kansas (SACK), just to name a few.

He also stresses the importance of taking a holistic approach in treating our consumers. He believes each person is multi-dimensional and it is imperative that we look at each individual as a whole person and not only focus on their illness, but also what factors in their life have an influence on their ability to recover.

Kyle is married and has one daughter. He says he does all the cooking in the house and also enjoys gardening, and exercising. He even helped clean up the flower beds on the SCOAP property.

It reminds me of the importance of breaking down the stigma of mental health, informing people of the available resources and the importance of the job I do every day.





Lauren McMullin

*Sr. Social Worker, Community Crisis Center (CCC)*



Lauren has worked for COMCARE nearly three years, and says the part of her job she values the most is the day to day interactions with the people we serve and the connections she is able to make with them. This connection gives her the opportunity to facilitate change in her client's lives and also instill hope when they are at their lowest. She returns to work each day so she can continue to serve her clients and help them cope with their mental health symptoms, again, letting them know they are not alone.

However, the most challenging part of Lauren's job is also tied to the most rewarding part of her job. "It is difficult to see people at their lowest, facing their mental health symptoms along with the difficult situations life has handed them," said Lauren. Experiencing the raw emotions they are coping with alongside of them is not an easy place to be, however, it is equally as rewarding when we can connect with people in these moments. It gives us the opportunity to let them know they don't have to go through this difficult time in their lives alone."

Lauren was born in Topeka, Kansas, and moved to Wichita to work on her undergraduate degree. Growing up, she knew that she wanted to work with people, but wasn't sure which avenue to take. She first began college as a criminal justice major with a goal of becoming a police officer or detective, but after more education and experience, she realized a lot of the people in the criminal justice system had some sort of mental health issue or internal struggles that held them back. She realized with her passion and skill set, she could make a bigger impact in the community by becoming a social worker. She said, "I could help people learn to manage their symptoms and take control over their lives again without letting their mental illness define them."

The client she remembers the most is one she encountered within my first few months of this job, and just shortly after graduating college. This patient was experiencing her first symptoms of psychosis and the symptoms were impacting all areas of her life – college, sports, family, friends – everything. Her story of how she grew up reminded me a lot of my own upbringing. Hearing her story and her family's response to her symptoms reminded Lauren that mental illness can happen to anyone and affects so many more people than just the person with the illness. "It reminds me of the importance of breaking down the stigma of mental health, informing people of the available resources, and the importance of the job I do every day," said Lauren.

Lauren said the biggest change that has occurred since she first became a part of COMCARE is the development of the CCC. The CCC has allowed her clients and many others to receive the treatment they need while remaining in their community. It has helped keep many people out of both the local and state hospitals and connected with their treatment providers and other natural and community supports. It has also allowed people struggling with addiction to have a safe place to sober and detox in the community, freeing up local emergency departments. Most importantly, it has provided the community a place to begin the process of recovery, whether it is recovery from mental health symptoms, addiction or both.

Personally, Lauren is married, and has a mini-Australian Shepard named Maverick. She also describes herself as a die-hard Kansas City Chiefs fan, and enjoys most sports.



❖❖ All the years within different positions, as well as in my personal life, I've learned to have a positive outlook; be optimistic; be proactive and helpful to others in need; to have an open mind; to be thoughtful of others and the situation at hand, and importantly, to be patient, be grateful, and be hopeful things will work out at the end. ❖❖



Minh Peng

System Liaison at COMCARE Community Support Services (CSS)

Minh has worked for COMCARE for 25 years, and says it's difficult for her to recall the many barriers in her position along the way, but regardless she has always remained hopeful and positive. "All the years with in different positions, as well as in my personal life, I've learned to have a positive outlook; be optimistic; be proactive and helpful to others in need; to have an open mind; to be thoughtful of others and the situation at hand, and importantly, to be patient, be grateful, and be hopeful that things will work out at the end," Minh said.

Challenges are always present, including changes in state funding, the KanCare process and the delay of Medicaid process and lack of community resources, but there is one main reason she continues coming to work – making a difference in people's lives. She said it is a humbling feeling to be part of people's recovery process, and in seeing the success in people reclaiming their lives that were taken away by mental illness.

Minh found a path to the behavioral health field through a series of life events. She escaped communism during Vietnam War, experienced life in refugee camps and also has a daughter with severe mental illness. She credits her daughter's illness for giving her the ability to empathize and connect with clients and families. She is multi-lingual. She was approached at her elementary school to assist in communicating with refugees because they couldn't find an interpreter. Her father also knew many languages and her family group up multi-cultural. Her grandmother lived with her and her father and she became a caretaker for both of them when they both became ill. Helping people is a natural fit for her.

She has many clients that hold a special place in her heart, but one client in particular showed her that even at the age of 74, he was still resilient and a survivor. He never gave up hope that one day he would be able to move out of the nursing home. Since she started her position as System Liaison in 2014, she advocated with his guardians and built rapport with his guardians and eventually was able to convince them he was not a danger to himself or society. The process of getting him out of the nursing home was lengthy and they experienced many roadblocks, but with the support of the attorney at the Disability Rights Center, and the staff at the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability, her client finally moved out of the nursing home in November of 2015, and into his own studio apartment. Persistence was key in getting this client to where he wanted to be.

Minh is especially known for working with the community. She said community collaborations are extremely important in her work. "Community collaboration and the partnership of community professionals is an essential and crucial part of my job, as it requires teamwork and a group effort, said Minh.

Minh is known around Sedgwick County for her delicious egg rolls, which she shared often. She tries to go out of her way to connect, and to make people feel special. She goes out of her way to visit with security guards at the various places she visits daily. She tries to be the person who makes someone's day with her kindness and caring attitude.



# COMCARE Programs

of Sedgwick County

## Same Day Assessment

Walk-ins Welcome, No Appointment Necessary  
Adult Mental Health: 316-660-7540  
Adult Addiction: 316-660-7550  
Hours: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
940 N. Waco, Wichita, KS 67203  
TTY: 1-800-766-3777

## Community Crisis Center

24-hour Mental Health Emergency/Suicide  
Prevention Services, Crisis Stabilization Unit,  
Offender Assessment Program  
635 N. Main, Wichita, KS 67203  
316-660-7500

## Children's Services

To Schedule First Appointment  
350 S. Broadway, Wichita, KS 67202  
316-660-9605

## GraceMed COMCARE Clinic

1919 N. Amidon Ave., Suite 100, Wichita, KS 67203  
316-866-2000

## Adult Outpatient Mental Health Services

1919 N. Amidon Ave., Suite 130, Wichita, KS 67203  
316-660-7675

## Addiction Treatment Services

940 N. Waco, Wichita, KS 67203  
316-660-7550

## Community Support Services

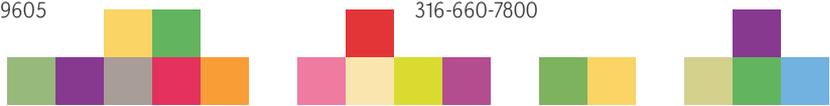
1929 W. 21st St., Wichita, KS 67203  
316-660-7700

## HealthLinks

1969 W. 21st St., N., Wichita, KS 67203  
316-660-1028

## Homeless Program – Center City

402 E. 2nd, Suite B, Wichita, KS 67202  
316-660-7800



# BOARDS Governance

## 2016 Board of County Commissioners

Dave Unruh – 1st District  
Tim Norton – 2nd District  
Karl Peterjohn – 3rd District  
Richard Ranzau – 4th District  
Jim Howell – 5th District

## 2016 COMCARE Leadership Team

Marilyn Cook, LSCSW, Executive Director  
Tim Kaufman, MPA, Division Director  
of Health and Human Services  
Rex Lear, MD, Medical Director  
Jason Scheck, LSCSW, Director  
of Outpatient Programs  
Joan Tammany, LMLP, Director of Quality and  
Risk Management, Compliance & Innovation  
Shantel Westbrook, LMLP, LCP, Director  
of Rehabilitation Services

## 2016 Advisory Board

Janet Brumbaugh  
Mary Dean  
Deb Eller  
Rev. Bruce Freeman  
Rev. David Fulton  
Jim Grocholski  
Neil Guthrie  
Robert Lee  
Trevia Lichti  
Darryl Roberts  
Jon Rosell  
Martha Sanchez  
Michelle Shaheen  
Marilyn Whipple

## Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners

Nancy Ballinger  
Jacy Barker  
Bob Born  
Sara Friesen  
Patricia Harris  
Luree Lusk  
Ashley Melugin  
Maria Maugans-Coleman  
Monica Morales  
Nse "Renee" Nkana  
Arian Riordan  
Paula Skinner

## Medical Staff

Rex Lear, MD, Medical Director  
Katherine Girrens, MD  
German Gonzalez, MD  
Katherine Grimsley, MD  
DeAnn Jenkins, MD  
Andrew Lauronilla, MD  
Lin Xu, MD



[www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org)

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