

Washington Island Community Health Program Summary Report

Information about the Applicant

Applicant Information: Washington Island Community Health Program (WICHP) was established in 2007, incorporated in Wisconsin as a non-profit community health organization and received Federal Designation as a 501(c)(3) in 2008. WICHP services and programs help allow community members to remain in their homes safely and independently which fulfills our mission. Our organizational mission statement is “empowering and supporting Washington Island residents across generations to make informed choices for a successful, healthy, safe, and independent lifestyle. WICHP establishes links between Island residents and service providers not available on Washington Island.” Our success comes directly from our community members identifying, understanding, and requesting our resources and services.

WICHP provides assistance to cope with chronic medical conditions and/or decreased mobility, address caregiving concerns and help with limited financial resources from fixed incomes. Other programs such as our Medical Travel Fund (MTF), which we are asking for your financial support of, provides financial assistance for those residents traveling for physician ordered therapies and/or cancer treatments. Residents need to travel by car ferry for these therapies and treatments. WICHP works with the Washington Island Ferry Line and Door-Tran to provide these subsidized transportation services. Many of these therapies take months of treatment and rehabilitation, so revolving costs could be quite high for our clients if these programs aren’t utilized. Having these services covered through WICHP allows for more personal income availability to help pay medical and other monthly bills.

The residents that we serve with the MTF are in all age ranges though the majority are 60 years and above. In need of the MTF services, these residents are either temporarily and/or permanently disabled. Some of these folks will recover fully from their temporary disability brought on by illness or surgery while others may continue receiving services due to ongoing chronic health needs or disabilities.

Statement of Need

Door-Tran and WICHP have collaborated on the MTF Program since its inception in 2010. Door-Tran reimburses WICHP 50% of the incurred monthly passenger costs and WICHP expenses the remaining 50%. Over the past few years this program has grown significantly thus requiring more funds to be found to cover WICHP’s cost. An example of this increase is reflected when in 2019 WICHP’s expense was \$2,504.25 compared to 2021 which was \$4,655 thus representing an 85+% increase to WICHP’s program cost in just 2 years. As our population continues to age in place, the demand for these services will continue to grow.

Our goal for this grant is to supplement our budget for this highly utilized program which is growing very quickly. In 2020 we had 880 one-way passenger trips and 106 one-way vehicle trips servicing 100 residents. In 2021, we had 1330 one-way passenger trips and 364 one-way vehicle trips servicing 170 residents and already as of 6/30/22 , we have had 779 one-way passenger trips and 211 one-way vehicle trips servicing 64 residents. We keep track of each, and every one-way personal and car tickets sold for the people that are enrolled in our program through a monthly bill sent to us from the Washington Island Ferry Line and then input it into our tracking system..

Project Goals and Expected Benefits

The MTF goal is to serve as many Island residents who need this service, but our yearly goal is to grow this program by 5 to 10%. Over the past few years this percentage has exceeded the 10% growth as

demonstrated by these OW passenger trip stats: 2018 = 617, 2019 = 742, 2020 = 880 and 2021 = 1,330. We attribute this growth to wider knowledge of our program and the increased visibility we received during the pandemic. MTF participants are identified via word of mouth, local advertising, folks who used the MTF service in the past who are in need of it again and/or folks coming in for other services upon which we identify they could also benefit from this program. Given we live on an Island, the only access to rehab and/or cancer treatments is by traveling to the mainland which is 30 minutes away via ferry, followed anywhere by a 20 to 120 minute drive to either Sister Bay (21 miles one way=OW), Sturgeon Bay (48 miles OW) or Green Bay (102 miles OW). With the cost of a round trip (RT) vehicle being \$28 and passenger(s) paying \$14 (RT) per person, the ferry expenses can add up quickly. The benefit of the MTF program is twofold, it allows folks to get the treatments they need while remaining in their homes and it eases the financial burden of traveling so there are monies to pay other bills.

Project Implementation Plan

The staff who will be carrying out and managing the MTF consists of the executive director and office manager. Every month the ferry line invoice is reviewed and usage stats are documented in an ongoing spreadsheet. We monitor the financial expense monthly and our Finance Committee meets quarterly to review our annual budget to see if we are on track with our income and expenses.

Evaluation Plan

We screen participants, manage the paperwork, provided the MTF ferry vouchers, keep an updated monthly list which is shared with the ferry line, discuss participants qualifications with our MTF committee and keep them up to date, review the monthly ferry invoice, submit the invoices for reimbursement to Door-Tran and track monthly usage on a spreadsheet. The executive director and office manager are responsible for the day to day operations of the MTF along with reviewing the monthly ferry line invoice and submitting it to Door -Tran (50% of MTF passenger fares) for reimbursement.

Budget

Our 2023 budget for the MTF program is \$5,000 which is based on past usage. We do not have any other funding sources designated to cover this expense at this time. In previous years WICHP's MTF expense was covered via donations and fundraising. The Wispact grant would help cover WICHP's 50% portion of the program expense as noted above being approximated at \$5,000 for next year. If these funds are received then it would allow us to utilize our donation/fundraising monies in other growing service areas.

Staff Recommendation

The grant application can be recommended for approval for the requested amount of \$5,000.00. The proceeds will provide transportation for disabled individuals on the island and provide a direct benefit for those who have to travel to the mainland to receive care. The grant aligns with the initiatives of the foundation.