

## First Quarterly Report

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Organization: Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska

Project Title: Case Management Project

Period Covered by Report: May 1, 2006 through July 31, 2006

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### SUMMARY

#### 1. Summary of Project Objectives

1. Provide faith-based case management support to at least 50% of the Katrina evacuees in Nebraska.
2. Train 8 Congregational Team Leaders to integrate spiritual care into current case management of evacuees.
3. Recruit for to six volunteers to join Case Management Teams from 24 to 48 congregations.
4. Recruit 8 Disaster Chaplains to mentor Case Management Teams.
5. Provide ten trainings for Case Management Teams for effective and appropriate provision of Spiritual Care.
6. Match Case Management Teams with individuals/families affected by Hurricane Katrina.
7. Network with community-based agencies providing case management to integrate case management efforts and on-going support.
8. Hold a conference for case management teams and disaster chaplains to further understanding of spiritual care.
9. Maintain database of evacuees and their on-going needs.
10. Develop program protocols which can be shared with other states and regions.
11. Network Case Management teams with FEMA Crisis Counseling Team for trainings and coordination of case management.

#### 2. Primary activities implemented this quarter

- Recruitment and hiring of case managers – 5 case managers work 20 hours a week and 3 case managers work 10 hours a week – developed and had contracts signed – completed background checks – case managers trained in CAN system and working to recruit volunteers to work on their teams
- Initiated contact with “Reaching Out . . . Nebraska” (RON) – the FEMA Crisis Counseling Program and began receiving referrals from RON
- Meetings with those who have previously provided case management – Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging and Catholic Charities who contracted with Source Net
- Omaha gathering of Katrina evacuees for a meal to begin introduction to the case management opportunity – meal provided and personal care products distributed
- Coordination of training for Case Managers and Crisis Counselors for two trainings: Psychological First Aid and Cultural Competency

- Participation of Case Managers in the Annual Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health Conference – one Katrina evacuee spoke to the conference and 4 others attended the afternoon session in support of their fellow evacuee
- Program manager participates in the Long Term Unmet Needs Committee meeting and participates in CAN training in Houston
- Coordinator and Manager alternate travel with RON supervisory staff to locations in out state Nebraska to locate service providers and evacuees in these areas – Scottsbluff, North Platte, Lexington, Kearney, Grand Island and Hastings
- Development of filing system for storage of case management information
- Volunteer (UNL Student) who is working to put information in the CAN Resource Directory
- Weekly team meetings with the Omaha and Lincoln case managers

## RESULTS

### 3. Details of accomplishments this quarter

Following receipt of the letter indicating the award of the UMCOR Grant to Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska (IMN), Caroline Walles and Harry Walles met with the Reaching Out . . . Nebraska (RON) FEMA Crisis Counseling Program staff. The RON staff indicated that there was an overwhelming need for case management that they were not capable of providing and requested that the IMN Case Management Program become operational as soon as possible. Although we had planned on having staff in place by July 1, we immediately revised that plan, and told RON that we would be ready to receive referrals from them by June 1.

We recruited a number of individuals who could serve as case managers. The criteria that we used in this recruitment process were primarily three-fold. a) The case managers had to have a strong connection to a faith community, but also be willing to agree to not proselytize in their work with the evacuees. b) The case managers needed to be culturally appropriate for working with this population, especially with an awareness of the realities of generational poverty issues. c) The case managers had to have some sense of the resources in the community and how to help the evacuees access those resources. Through a series of previously established connections, we were able to accomplish this task in relatively quickly and had staff available to work by June 1.

Referrals were immediately available from the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) in the Omaha area. The ENOA staff was very helpful in giving direction to what continued to be case management needs for the clients that they had worked with. RON/CCP found it quite difficult to develop a protocol for referring their clients for case management, in spite of their rather adamant request that we be available to provide the service as soon as possible. In fact, it was only during the week of July 16 that they actually realized that they did not need a release of information signed by the evacuees prior to referring people for case management – though they had been verbally informed of this protocol by the administrative management for the Crisis Counseling Program. Also, many of the RON staff have developed relationships with the evacuees and found it quite difficult to disengage from those relationships, in spite of the fact that they knew that they could not/should not provide case management. The case manager who was initially contracted with by Catholic Charities has been very difficult to work with and has attempted to undermine our efforts to establish working relationships, especially with those who because of their financial status remain in the poorest housing conditions. Initially, the Catholic Charities funding was completed by June 30, 2006. We now understand that additional funding has been made available, starting approximately July 16. Although we have made

several attempts to connect with Source Net, they have not indicated any desire to coordinate case management work.

Several concerns have developed over the course of the first quarter of our work with the Katrina evacuees. In Omaha, individuals are in need of very complex case management services. A number of these individuals were homeless or living in extreme poverty prior to the time of their coming to Omaha. Their ability to secure employment is severely limited by the fact that they have not ever held jobs, do not know anything about how to obtain employment and do not have significantly marketable job skills. They were able to survive on the streets of New Orleans because they had developed their own network of opportunities. This network no longer exists, and they are having a difficult time re-establishing life patterns which allow them to survive without benefit of formal employment. Some of them are in need of medical services for which there are minimal resources. We also have several who are in need of mental health service, and we are seeking evaluations through Region 6 Behavioral Health Care for several individuals. Housing has been an issue – and until recently about 12 to 15 were living in a low-income housing situation without air conditioning. The advocacy of one of the evacuees actually motivated the City of Omaha to make sure that air conditioners were provided in each apartment.

In Lincoln, there are far fewer evacuees, but those that are here have complicated needs. In both communities, illegal substance abuse has been identified as an issue that needs to be addressed. One family is in jeopardy of losing their children to Child Protective Services because of illicit drug use. Additional challenges include finding funds which will provide assistance in upgrading housing opportunities (first months rent and deposit) and funds for travel expenses in order to get to and from work. The public transportation system in both communities is quite limited – and the travel distances for employment are daunting.

In greater Nebraska, we know that there were situations where evacuees did access services – but in asking about the current needs, it has been difficult to determine whether those evacuees remain in the communities – or if they have returned to their homes or relocated in other states. In our travel across the state with the RON staff, we were able to identify only 2 evacuees – and they were simply looking for other evacuees to connect with. They did not present any case management needs.

On June 24, the Omaha case management team organized a gathering of evacuees in an effort to introduce themselves to the evacuees and to start working on paperwork. The Heartland Chapter of the American Red Cross made fans available to those who needed them. Between 30 and 40 people attended this meeting which also included a meal and the distribution of personal care products – items which are not possible to purchase with food stamps.

The meeting of the Long Term Unmet Needs Committee was the result of the IMN Case Management Program's desire to receive the FEMA list of evacuees who had been received in Nebraska. At the meeting it was revealed that no cases had been presented as having unmet needs. In fact, the next scheduled meeting will take place in September, and the already agreed upon agenda for that meeting is to disband the committee.

#### **4. Progress per Indicator Tracking Table**

##### **1. Quarterly Indicator Tracking Table**





3. QUARTERLY DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

	Total Proposed Per Agreement	# under or over total (X) or +X	Total for this Reporting Period	AGE					GENDER		ETHNICITY								
				<18	18-34	35-49	50-65	>65	Male	Female	African American or Black	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Tribal Affiliation	Other	White	None Specified
# of paid case Managers KAT Partner Reported	8	0	8		1	4	3		3	5	7							1	
# of Volunteer Case Managers KAT Partner Reported	32	(12)	20	1	4	7			4	16	8			1				4	
Total Paid and Volunteer Case Managers KAT Partner Reported	40	(12)	28	1	5	11	3		7	21	15			1				5	
# of cases CAN Reports																			
# of cases opened (new) CAN Reports																			
# of cases closed CAN Reports																			
# of cases transferred to NCMC members CAN Reports																			
# of transfers received from NCMC member CAN Reports																			
# of clients seeking employment who obtained employment CAN Reports																			
# of clients who made a decision about permanent housing CAN Reports																			

4. AGGREGATE DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS																		
	Total Proposed Per Agreement	# under or over total (x) or +x	Total to date	AGE					GENDER		ETHNICITY							
				<18	18-34	35-49	50-65	>65	Male	Female	African American or Black	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Tribal Affiliation	Other	White
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# of clients seeking employment who obtained employment CAN Reports																		
# of clients who made a decision about permanent housing CAN Reports																		

5. QUARTERLY INDICATORS BY STATE

State	✓ Locations of Operation per grant agreement -Does Not Change-	# CMs KAT Partner Reported	# vCMs KAT Partner Reported	# Open Cases CAN Reports	# Closed Cases CAN Reports	# Cases Transferred to NCMC members CAN Reports	# Transfers Received from NCMC members CAN Reports	# Cases presented to LTRC/UNT CAN Reports	# of Cases indicating state as permanent address CAN Reports
TX									
LA									
MS									
AL									
AR									
CA									
CO									
CT									
FL									
GA									
IL									
KY									
MA									
MN									
MO									
NC									
NJ									
NY									
OK									
TN									
MI									
OH									
NV									
IN									
PA									
SC									
AZ									
DC									
IA									
NE		8	20						
WA									
State outside of consortium-served network									

6. AGGREGATE INDICATORS BY STATE

State	✓ Locations of Operation per grant agreement -Does Not Change-	# CMS KAT Partner Reported	# vCMs KAT Partner Reported	# Open Cases CAN Reports	# Closed Cases CAN Reports	# Cases Transferred to NMC members CAN Reports	# Transfers Received from NMC members CAN Reports	# Cases presented to LTRC/UNT CAN Reports	# of Cases indicating state as permanent address CAN Reports
TX									
LA									
MS									
AL									
AR									
CA									
CO									
CT									
FL									
GA									
IL									
KY									
MA									
MN									
MO									
NC									
NJ									
NY									
OK									
TN									
MI									
OH									
NV									
IN									
PA									
SC									
AZ									
DC									
IA									
NE		8	20						
WA									
State outside of consortium- served network									

## 5. Success Stories/ Case Studies this Quarter

A husband and wife arrived in Omaha on one of the two airlifts out of New Orleans on September 11 and 12. When the shelter was closed, they were placed in a motel (about September 15, 2005). On about June 12 or 13, 2006, they contacted the IMN Case Management Program, because they were being evicted from the hotel. The College World Series was scheduled to start on June 16, and the hotel manger needed the space to accommodate people coming to Omaha for the Series. During the eight months that they were in the hotel, they were not in contact with anyone to help support them in their transition.

The IMN Case Manager, within a day, was able to move them to a transitional home program where they stayed for two weeks. During that time, the Case Manager was able to help them get their Section 8 voucher approved, and then helped them find a ground-floor apartment which was necessary because the husband is disabled. Following this, the Case Manager worked with them to reinstate their SSI, found a donor to provide them with household furnishings and bedding and recently helped them get a furniture voucher from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Service System. The couple is now beginning to integrate into the community, making friends, and participating in the life of a congregation where they are regularly attending worship services.

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

### 6. Challenges and Action Steps Taken to Resolve

One of the initial challenges for our program was to help the evacuees understand the relationship between the RON Staff and the Case Managers. There was some reluctance on the part of the RON staff to “let go” of their involvement in cases; the concept of case management was difficult to grasp and the staff who were coming on board to do case management were not familiar to the evacuees; the evacuees have had numerous promises of help and many of these promises have failed to materialize; and the communication from Case Managers back to RON Staff about connections made and developing was inadequate. Gradually, our case managers are becoming more familiar with the evacuees, and the RON Staff is more comfortable with the idea that the Case Managers are able to work with the evacuees. The Case Managers were overwhelmed initially with the magnitude of the needs that were presented, but as they have begun to develop relationships with the evacuees, they have also become more comfortable with finding ways to address the needs. We have attempted to not promise anything, but have indicated that we want to listen and support as much as we are able. It is a challenge to be present in people’s lives without having to “fix” them.

Another challenge is the difficulty of finding all of the evacuees. This is partially a result of the overwhelming need of those who are now located primarily in the North Omaha area. We have had one gathering in an effort to connect with those who might be in other areas of Omaha and another such gathering is planned for early August. We are also considering the possibility of a gathering some sort in September in Lincoln in conjunction with a One Year Katrina Anniversary Retrospective being put together by the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. The IMN Case Management Coordinator and Manager have traveled with the RON Staff to several locations in “out-state” Nebraska to determine if there are evacuees in those locations, and this will happen again to other areas of north-east Nebraska in early August. Although the initial foray out of

Lincoln and Omaha appeared to be unproductive, we are considering doing a sort of “phone-blitz” to these areas to learn more about the circumstances in which the evacuees are living.

There are currently no funds for providing direct services to the evacuees. This has been very challenging, because often it appears that needs are quite heavily tied to funds needed for rental assistance, gas money for transportation, or medical expenses. Although our case managers would like to meet these financial needs by providing direct assistance, we are attempting to find alternate resources for meeting needs. We have also become aware of the possibility of working with the National Salvation Army. In the next quarter we will be connecting with the local Salvation Army staff to begin to develop a process for meeting some of the unmet needs.

## **7. Remaining Challenges**

Although all of the case managers are representatives of faith communities and from that perspective are addressing issues of spiritual care by virtue of their presence and the quality of their work, we have not connected with the disaster chaplain network in a meaningful way. Additionally, because meeting spiritual needs is about finding meaning and purpose in life, and we have not provided avenues through which the evacuees might be able to do things that would address this level of concern. One of the evacuees recently said, “In New Orleans we were functional people. Here we don’t have any function to complete.” Finding ways to begin to address these concerns is a priority for the next quarter. One of the possibilities is to find ways to connect individuals with the arts and people in the community who are not evacuees who are involved in those pursuits. Another possibility is to find organizations, agencies and/or congregations who need volunteers and connect some of the evacuees to these types of activities. It may be that some of our disaster chaplains could be involved in helping to make some of these connections. Providing care in a way that helps persons find meaning in their lives without imposing the faith values of others is always challenging. In this case, it will take additional intentionality and a willingness to see beyond the basic case management needs of the individuals.

## **8. Summary of Planned Activities for Next Quarter**

- Gathering of evacuees in North Omaha in early August
- Travel with RON Staff in early August to connect with evacuees who may be in north-east Nebraska
- Intensive outreach to connect with those whom we have not had contact with to this point
- Coordinate publicity about the One Year Anniversary with RON Staff and distribute information about the possible occurrence of increased anxiety and/or depression that may result from the anniversary
- Tanya Harris, a long-time resident of New Orleans's 9th Ward and current local Chairperson of ACORN's 9thWard chapter, which is working with working-class and poor communities, particularly communities of color, on reconstruction will meet with evacuees in Omaha when she is in Nebraska  
<http://www.acorn.org/index.php?id=10188>)
- Facilitate connecting Katrina evacuees to the One Year Anniversary Katrina Retrospective being held by the University of Nebraska – Lincoln
- Present requests for unmet needs to the Long Term Unmet Needs Committee when they meet again in September

- Contact and work with the Salvation Army to find additional resources to meet unmet needs
- Begin building a network of people who participate in the arts who might be willing to work with the evacuees and/or connections for volunteer jobs which might provide meaning and purpose for those who are looking for ways to re-establish their lives

### **9. Suggestions for Improving the CAN System**

The program manager is regularly in contact with CAN (through [support@CAN.org](mailto:support@CAN.org)) to ask questions and make suggestions.

