



9900 East Iliff Avenue  
Denver, CO 80231  
P: (303) 636-5600  
F: (303) 636-5603  
[MillLevy@rmhumanservices.org](mailto:MillLevy@rmhumanservices.org)  
[www.rmhumanservices.org/ml](http://www.rmhumanservices.org/ml)

# 2017 Semi-Annual Report on Intellectual and Developmental Disability Services Supported by Denver Mill Levy Funding

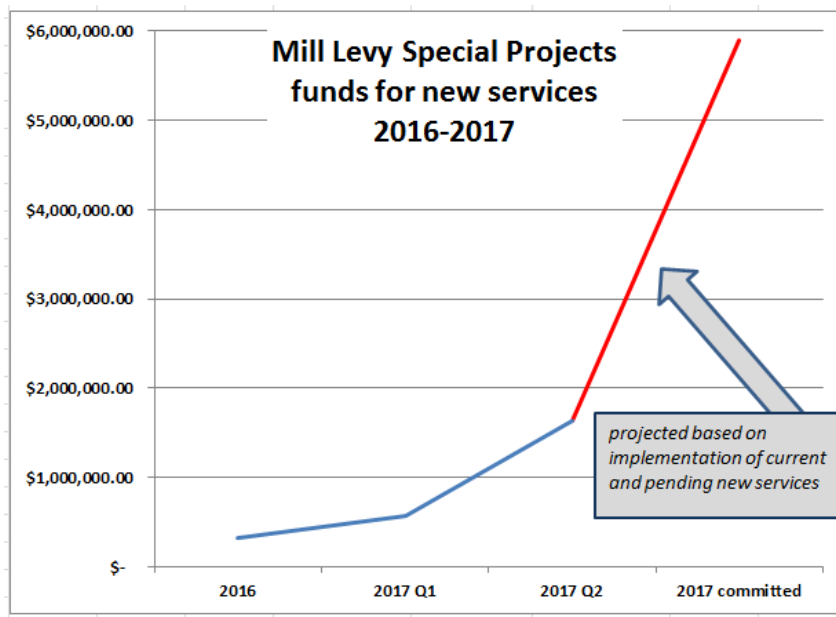
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January 1, 2017 – June 30, 2017

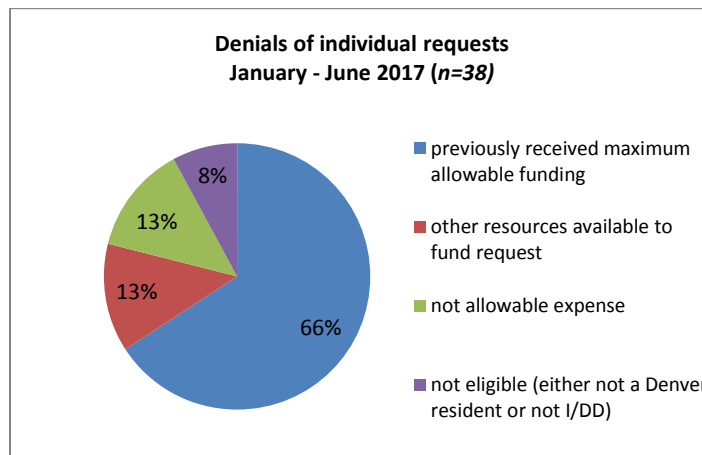
## Executive Summary

This report provides quarterly updates on RMHS’s use of Denver Mill Levy funds, including the number of individuals served and number and types of services provided. In addition to submitting this report to Denver Department of Human Services, RMHS also makes it available to the public on the Financial Information page of our website (<https://www.rmhumanservices.org/about/financial-information>). Major points established in this report regarding RMHS’ Mill Levy spending from January – June 2017 are:

- Mill Levy Special Projects (funding of new services) has increased from \$327,836 at the end of 2016 to \$566,196 in Quarter 1 of 2017 to \$1,638,774 in Quarter 2 of 2017. This is an increase of more than 88% in just six months.



- During this reporting period, the highest spending was for **respite services** (37%), **client education** (19%), and **assistive technology** (11%).
- In the first half of 2017, RMHS has received **1,344 individual requests**, averaging 224 requests per month. Ninety-seven percent of all individual requests have been approved. Reasons for denying the remaining 38 requests (3%) are as follows:



## Introduction

Rocky Mountain Human Services (RMHS) provides case management and direct services to individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in Denver County and surrounding communities. We have a variety of funding sources for our organizational programs, and utilize Mill Levy funds to increase services and access to opportunities for individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in Denver County.

**Table 1: 2017 Year-to-Date Results for Denver Mill Levy**

Indicators	2017 Quarter 1	2017 Quarter 2	2017 Year to Date
Total Mill Levy Funds Utilized	\$1,845,531.33	\$2,785,379.13	\$4,630,910.46
Total number of Individual services (individuals may be counted in more than one area)	4,942	5,966	10,908
Total number of Organizations/Persons who received Mill Levy Funding to provide services	531	618	1,149

## RMHS' Role as a Community Centered Board

Rocky Mountain Human Services (RMHS) is the designated Community Centered Board (CCB) for the City and County of Denver. CCBs determine eligibility of I/DD individuals within respected counties, serve as the single point of entry for persons to receive services and supports under section 25.5-10, C.R.S., and provide authorized services and supports to persons either directly or under contract from other service agencies.

## 2017 Year-to-Date

During the first six months of 2017, Mill Levy funding has been utilized by a variety of community-based organizations for an ever-increasing number of services to meet individual's needs. In some cases, Mill Levy funding was used to address system gaps and program service limitations of other funding sources, such as Medicaid. In other circumstances, RMHS has been expanding its reach beyond Medicaid services by partnering with community partner organizations to fund new and innovative projects and services to meet individuals' needs.

## Mill Levy Management

RMHS continues to expand its program for the distribution of Denver County Mill Levy funding, which strives for both transparency and equity in spending of Denver taxpayer dollars. The intended goal of Denver Mill Levy dollars is to provide for services and support to benefit children and adults in Denver's intellectual and developmental disabilities community. RMHS recognizes the importance of tracking programmatic intent and outcomes for the success of the program's development. In 2017 Mill Levy reports, RMHS is highlighting its efforts to design and implement an effective program as a compassionate and accountable steward of funds intended for Denver's I/DD community.

RMHS is utilizing a two-pronged approach to distribute funds for services and supports:

- **Individual Requests:** Residents of Denver County with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities access supports and services by contacting their Service Coordinator or Mill Levy Management Staff. **In the first half of 2017, RMHS has received 1,344 requests, averaging 224 individual requests per month.**
- **Community Partner Requests:** Service provider agencies and other community partners serving Denver residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities access funds to develop, implement and manage new community projects or services. **RMHS has partnered with or is developing partnerships with over 50 community partners to date.**

RMHS uses Mill Levy funds to provide services directly, as well. These services are not otherwise reimbursable by other funders. RMHS is composed of different programs to serve individuals of Denver’s I/DD community. Mill Levy expenditures by program area are detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2: 2017 Mill Levy Expenditures by Quarter<sup>1</sup>**

Mill Levy Program Areas	Q1 2017 Expenditures	Q2 2017 Expenditures	2017 Year to Date Total
Early Intervention	\$172,422.16	\$ 138,319.62	\$310,741.78
Family Support and Respite Care	\$178,096.86	\$ 165,208.11	\$343,304.97
Life Essentials Provider Network	\$169,844.66	\$ 256,430.39	\$426,275.05
Comprehensive Residential Services	\$56,437.13	\$ 132,397.95	\$188,835.08
Service Coordination (Case Management)	\$301,283.47	\$ 385,022.89	\$686,306.36
Assessment and Consultation Team	\$168,359.40	\$ 471,311.96	\$639,671.36
Behavioral Health	\$189,039.44	\$ 108,752.79	\$297,792.23
Community Outreach and Communications	\$43,852.25	\$ 55,357.26	\$99,209.51
Special Project Funds	\$566,195.96	\$1,072,578.16	\$1,638,774.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,845,531.33</b>	<b>\$2,785,379.13</b>	<b>\$4,630,910.46</b>

### Early Intervention (EI) Services

The Early Intervention program provides eligible infants and toddlers and their families with services and supports to enhance child development in the areas of cognition, speech, communication, physical development, motor development, vision, hearing, social or emotional development, and self-help skills. Early Intervention is a public health entitlement program and therefore does not have a waitlist.

The two primary services that are performed for Early Intervention (EI) Services are case management and direct services, which includes clinical assessments as well as therapies to address identified needs.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers are preliminary and subject to audit adjustment. Staffing expenses are included.

Funding for these services includes State funds, Medicaid, and private insurance. In the EI program for children with Medicaid, the reimbursement for case management is programmatically capped at 60 hours annually. Moreover a Community Centered Board is required to pay for any identified therapy needs of individuals in this program. In both instances, when an individual needs more case management or therapies than is reimbursed through existing funding, Mill Levy funding is utilized to support individuals' needs. During the first half of 2017, a total of 2,021 individuals were served in this program. Over 90% of the children served in Early Intervention receive additional case management services funded through the Mill Levy to ensure services are in place and to monitor children's health and safety. Without Mill Levy Funding, RMHS would not be able to be as responsive to these individuals' needs.

## Family Service and Supports Program and Respite Care (FSSP)

FSSP is a partnership between families and publicly funded supports. The individual's and family's circumstances and needs are utilized to determine the appropriate types of services or supports which can best assist a family with the least disruption to the family lifestyle. In the FSSP program, State funding covers direct services and case management activities, both of which are capped contractually to Community Centered Boards. When an individual needs more case management or direct services than is reimbursed through current funding programs, Mill Levy Funding is utilized to supplement that individual's needs. During the first half of 2017, 1,085 individuals were served in this program. Without Mill Levy Funding, more than seven hundred individuals on FSSP would lose case management and direct services, and a waitlist would be enacted.

### Mill Levy Special Project: FSSP

#### Sam's Story

*Four year old Sam has autism. Sam's mom requested funds to purchase sensory items recommended by Sam's Occupational Therapist to use in the home with Sam, to help him with regulation and becoming more independent. Mill Levy funds enabled the family to purchase several items for Sam's sensory support needs. His mom reports being very pleased with having these items for him in the home, noting that his ability to control his own behaviors and emotions has improved.*

## Life Essentials Provider Network

The Life Essentials Provider Network Program provides direct service for adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities through Medicaid programs such as Home and Community-Based Services-Supported Living Services (HCBS-SLS) and Home and Community-Based Services-Children's Extensive Supports (HCBS-CES), including home health care, daily living skills, coaching, and independent living supports. RMHS uses subcontractors in this service model to provide services, which means that individuals have a greater choice of providers and can utilize a family member or other relative to provide those services. During the first half of 2017, 500 individuals were served in this program. Mill Levy Funding was utilized to supplement the costs of an increased administrative burden

of providing oversight to more than 260 contractors to serve these individuals. Other CCB's in Colorado have ceased providing services in this model due to the higher administrative costs. Without Mill Levy Funding RMHS would be unable to provide this option to Denver County residents.

## **Comprehensive Residential Services**

RMHS' Residential Services Program provides services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. When an individual needs more care and support than is reimbursed through current funding programs, Mill Levy Funding is utilized to support that individual's needs. During the first half of 2017, 94 individuals were served in this program.

## **Service Coordination (Case Management)**

Service Coordination provides case management to children and adults receiving Medicaid-funded developmental disability services. Case management includes intake activities, eligibility determinations, enrollments into services, and locating, coordinating and monitoring services. Service Coordinators also assist individuals in securing other non-developmental disability-funded services and benefits, such as medical, social, educational and other services. During the first half of 2017, 1,726 individuals were served in this program.

Case management reimbursement for services is capped at 60 hours annually and some case management functions are not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement. When an individual needs more case management beyond what is reimbursed through current funding programs, Mill Levy funding is accessed to support that individual's needs.

## **Assessment and Consultation Team**

The Assessment and Consultation Team (Children's Clinical Services) provides comprehensive assessment, consultation and intervention services to infants, children and adolescents, birth to 18 years of age. As a Community Centered Board, RMHS conducts developmental assessments and diagnostic evaluations for children including those with autism spectrum disorder, and also provides and uses subcontractors for intervention services, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology, and psychology. The current funding for these assessments services does not provide reimbursement for all of an individual's needs, nor for the administrative oversight of subcontractors. During the first half of 2017, a total of 727 individuals were served in this program. Approximately half of those individuals receive assessment services only and half receive ongoing intervention services. Mill Levy Funding is utilized to supplement individuals' needs, and to supplement the costs of an increased administrative burden of providing oversight to external contractors, including multidisciplinary teams. Mill Levy funding in this area is making a significant impact. RMHS is able to complete diagnostic evaluations in two months or less, while other entities in the community are taking six months or longer to complete.

## **Behavioral Health**

The Behavioral Health needs of individuals with I/DD are unique, and require complex coordination of care needs – a population for which there are limited resources in our Denver community. RMHS' behavioral health clinic is staffed with psychiatry, psychology, and licensed therapists, all with specialized expertise and extensive experience in working with individuals who are dually diagnosed

with I/DD and mental health/behavioral issues. Because of the specialization of staff required to meet these needs, the cost of providing services is greater than the current funding reimbursement. Mill Levy funding is utilized to support individuals' needs in these areas. During the first half of 2017, 235 individuals were served in this program.

## Community Outreach and Communications

RMHS reaches out to the I/DD community in Denver on an ongoing basis to understand the needs and interests of individuals with I/DD. Mill Levy funds are used to support community outreach and communication activities regarding services and activities for Denver residents with I/DD, ensuring that their voices are heard and that they are aware of and have access to programs, services and activities available to them. Communication and outreach activities include the following:

- Bimonthly Community Advisory Council meetings (formerly the Mill Levy Advisory Committee) to solicit input from the community
- Community Forums to provide persons accepting services, family members and others in the community the opportunity to learn about RMHS' activities and provide input relating to their needs and priorities
- An online survey
- Continually updated website with information targeted to clients, families and other caregivers
- Two monthly e-newsletters: one for providers and one for the broader community
- Meetings with community partners (over 100 face-to-face meetings have been conducted with over 350 community partners interested in accessing Mill Levy funding for their program ideas and services).
- Coordination of client events
- Coordination of quarterly meetings of service agencies working with individuals with I/DD
- Design and distribution of person-centered materials to provide effective communication with individuals with I/DD and their families/caregivers

Mill Levy Management also works to collect data, interpret findings, and share results among stakeholders at the Community Forums and across RMHS communication efforts.

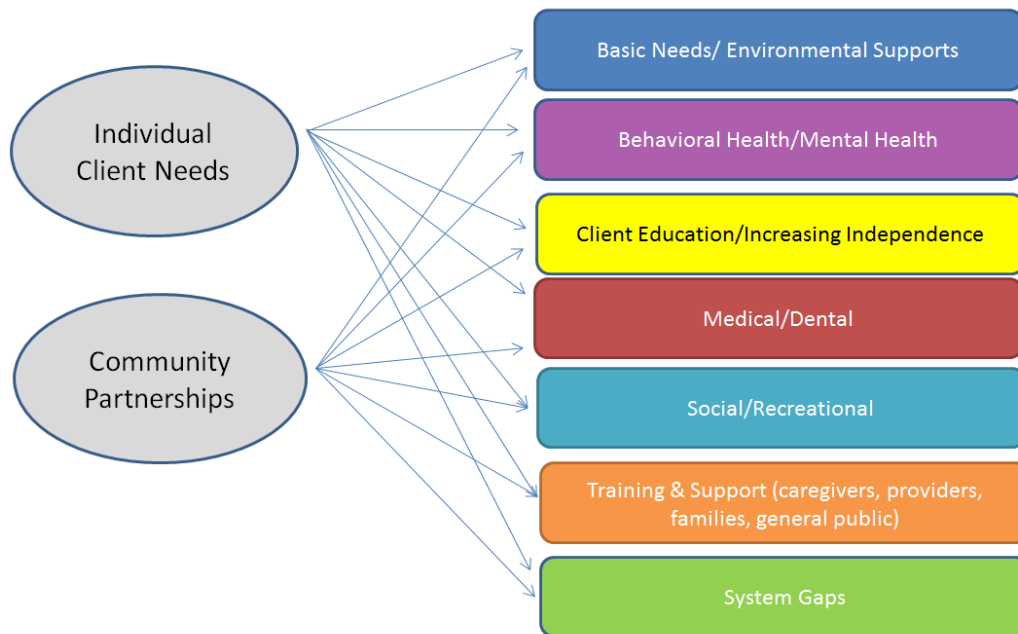
## Special Project Funds

As described earlier, RMHS is continuing to develop new services through a two-pronged approach to funds distribution: individual requests and community partner requests. The programming is established as Special Project Funds and encompasses a wide variety of programs that are a combination of new programs in 2017 and continuation of efforts that began in July 2016. The total spent for the first half of 2017 was \$1,638,774.12. Most of the direct service dollars were paid to external organizations and partners to provide the services. Table 3 provides additional detail regarding the specific services and supports that were funded for individuals with I/DD living in Denver.

The Mill Levy Program is working to increase services and access to opportunities for individuals with I/DD in Denver. Mill Levy funding is being used to address seven project goals that have been identified through our ongoing needs assessment and discussions with stakeholders, in collaboration with RMHS' Community Advisory Council. The Community Advisory Council (formerly the Mill Levy Advisory Committee) includes persons accepting services, family members, advocates, and other stakeholders:

1. Meeting **Basic needs/Environmental supports** for individuals/families, such as costs associated with housing, transportation, wheelchair accessibility, and furniture or clothing
2. Improving individuals' **Behavioral/Mental health**
3. Providing opportunities for **Client Education and Increasing Independence**
4. Addressing **Medical/Dental** needs
5. Increasing **Social/Recreational** opportunities and access
6. Providing for **Training and Support** for caregivers, providers, families, and the general public
7. Addressing **System Gaps** within the I/DD system and between this and other systems, like transitioning out of foster care, provision of music therapy, testing for I/DD eligibility, and services beyond those covered by Medicaid or other funders, like respite

Mill Levy funding is accessed to address these goal priorities as illustrated through the diagram below.



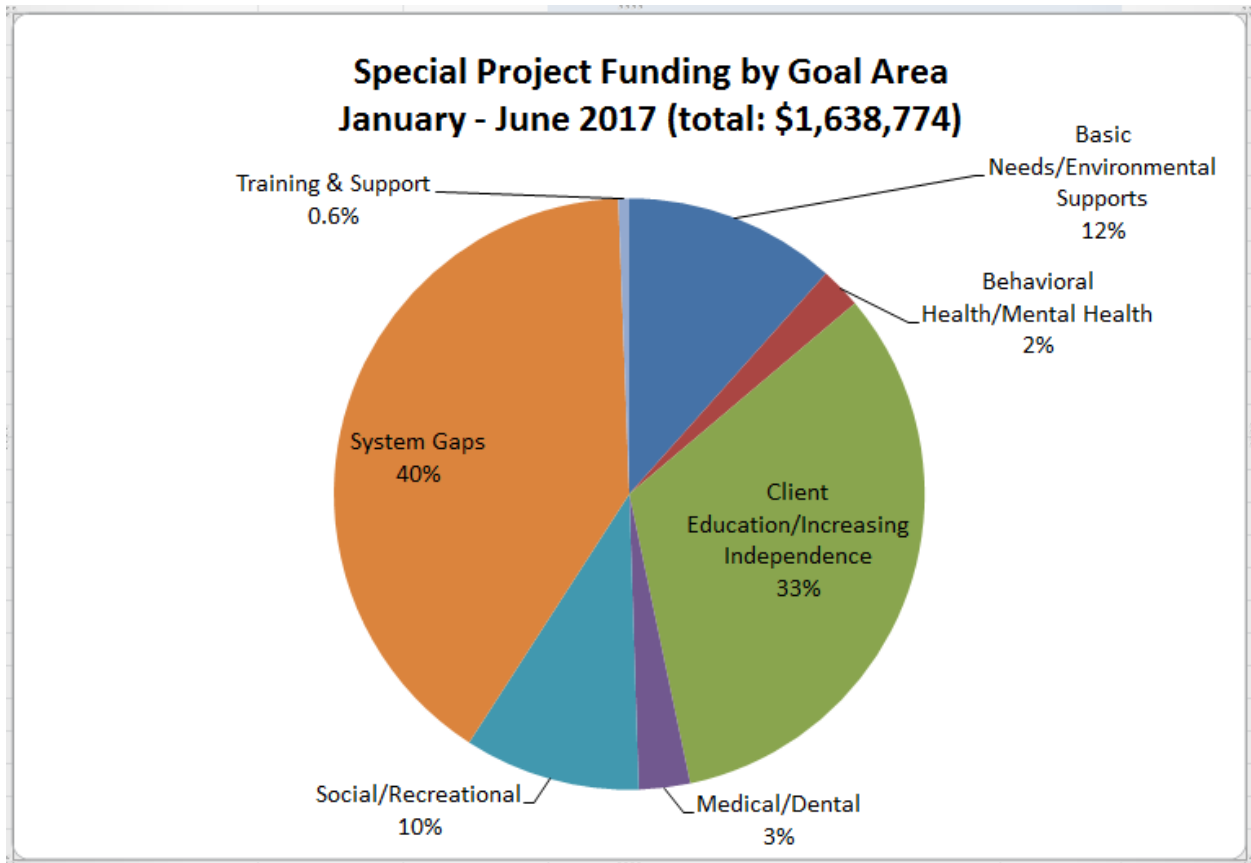


**Table 3: Special Project Funds Distribution**

January – June 2017

<b>Goal Area</b>	<b>Number of providers/family members/ organizations paid</b>	<b>Transaction Amounts</b>
<b>Basic Needs/Environmental Supports</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>\$ 156,409.20</b>
Assistive Technology	20	\$ 19,122.93
Client Rent	25	\$ 24,244.42
Client Utilities	9	\$ 5,119.86
Consulting Services - General Operations	1	\$ 10,000.00
Home Accessibility Adaptations	12	\$ 32,486.66
Medical & Client Care Supplies	28	\$ 17,294.64
Moving Expenses	1	\$ 475.00
Other	8	\$ 13,529.27
Transportation	13	\$ 8,319.70
Vehicle Modifications	2	\$ 25,816.72
<b>Behavioral Health/Mental Health</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>\$ 30,256.04</b>
Behavioral Services (All)	1	\$ 997.60
Consulting Services - General Operations	2	\$ 5,000.00
Other Professional Services	16	\$ 24,258.44
<b>Client Education/Increasing Independence</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>\$ 441,015.27</b>
Assistive Technology	1	\$ 147,738.33
Other Professional Services	21	\$ 253,527.18
Personal Care	1	\$ 3,749.76
Pre Vocational Services	2	\$ 36,000.00
<b>Medical/Dental</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>\$ 37,748.61</b>
Dental - Basic	5	\$ 12,309.28
Medical & Client Care Supplies	55	\$ 15,989.22
Medical Care	8	\$ 5,005.92
Specialized Med Equip/Wheelchair	3	\$ 606.19
Vision Services	2	\$ 3,838.00
<b>Social/Recreational</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>\$ 129,926.35</b>
Equipment, Supplies & Other	50	\$ 45,517.00
Recreational Activities	76	\$ 84,409.35
<b>Training &amp; Support</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>\$ 7,550.86</b>
Other Professional Services	4	\$ 300.00
Parent Ed/Support	16	\$ 7,250.86
<b>System Gaps</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>\$ 529,089.80</b>
Hippotherapy	1	\$ 900.00
Music Therapy	2	\$ 2,376.00
Other Professional Services	42	\$ 29,133.80
Respite- Adult	2	\$ 4,606.00
Respite- Children's	587	\$ 492,074.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>\$ 1,331,996.13</b>

The following pie chart illustrates the percentage distribution of Mill Levy Special Projects funds by prioritized goal area.



We anticipate that the Special Projects component of Mill Levy funds will continue to significantly expand over the coming months and years, increasing the amount and variety of services available to individuals with I/DD in Denver. Beginning in August 2017, individuals receiving case management services from RMHS will access Mill Levy-funded services through their service planning process. As an individual's needs are assessed on a periodic basis by their Service Coordinator, Mill Levy funded services will be utilized to supplement the service plan designed to meet an individual's needs. Moreover, individuals not connected with RMHS are able to request Mill-Levy-funded services through our website.

During this semi-annual reporting period, RMHS has continued to refine and simplify the processes of receiving and responding to community partners' requests for funding. These processes include a Request for Funds application that is posted on RMHS' website for interested community partner organizations. Included in the application request is an evaluation scoring tool to improve consistency and objectivity in evaluating whether projects are approved to receive funding. This approach has proven to be an effective promotion of collaborative efforts of multiple community partners to best meet the diverse needs of individuals with I/DD in Denver, particularly for large-scale projects.

## Mill Levy Processes

Mill Levy funding is accessed through either individual or community partner requests. Every individual request is reviewed by RMHS staff to ensure appropriateness to an individual's needs before the facilitation of any payment. For the first six months of 2017, RMHS has received 1,344 individual requests. Of those requests, 38 requests have been denied, which represents a less than 3% denial rate. The percentage of denials categories and additional details for the 38 denials is below:

- 25 (66%) denials due to the request exceeding the individual funding limit for the Family Services and Supports Program, which is established based on an assessment of the child's needs, meaning the individual/family had already received funding previously
- 5 (13%) denials due the availability of other resources to fund the service item (Medicaid, private insurance)
- 5 (13%) denials due to an unallowable expense (international travel, adoption legal fees)
- 3 (8%) denials due to the requestor not being eligible (either not a Denver resident or does not have a diagnosis of an intellectual or developmental disability)

Every community partner proposal request is evaluated by Mill Levy Management staff to ensure appropriateness before proposals are accepted, contracts are signed, and any payment is made. All project proposals that have been approved to date fall within one of RMHS' seven identified priorities as defined by our Community Advisory Council, comprised of community membership. For the first six months of 2017, RMHS has received 21 project proposals. Of those proposals, 17 have been approved; 12 are active and have received at least one payment; and five proposals are being implemented and have not yet invoiced RMHS. Of the remaining four, three remain in development but no contracts have been issued. Only one proposal to date has been denied, as that project proposal did not clearly identify a direct benefit to Denver residents with I/DD, did not clearly articulate implementation steps, and cited multiple dependencies on other entities that could impede implementation.

In 2017 RMHS is focused on working with each community partner applicant to ensure its program's success. There are a number of required components of an application for Mill Levy Funds, including:

- Proposal serves I/DD community members in Denver
- Proposal's Need Statement is clear—the proposal and intent of the project is fully understood
- The proposal's goals align with one or more of seven identified priorities:
  - Basic Needs/Environmental Supports
  - Behavioral and Mental Health Services
  - Education and Independence
  - Medical and Dental Needs
  - Social and Recreational Opportunities
  - Training and Support for Families and Others
  - System Gaps
- The proposal lists clear, realistic, measurable objectives that address an identified community need directly impacting Denver's Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities community
- The proposal describes implementation steps
- The proposal clearly identifies how the items in the budget will be used to further the project goals

Partners have been approved once their proposal can adequately address these components. RMHS has actively worked with applicants to refine proposals when all required components are not initially included in the proposal and to connect multiple community organizations to partner on a larger community proposal when feasible.

## Program Outcomes

The Mill Levy Program has a goal of increasing services and access to opportunities for individuals with I/DD in Denver. Positive program outcomes have been achieved in Mill Levy's seven project goal areas for the first six months of 2017.

### Project Goal: Basic Needs/ Environmental Supports

Meeting basic needs and providing environmental supports for individuals/families includes addressing needs such as housing, transportation, wheelchair accessibility, and furniture or clothing.

Approximately 12% of Mill Levy funding year-to-date has been utilized towards these needs. The types of requests for assistance in this area are specific to the individual circumstances of the individual requesting, across a large continuum. There are a number of outcomes to highlight in how Mill Levy funding has demonstrated successful outcomes in meeting the basic needs of individuals in Denver County with I/DD:

- Twenty-five individuals' housing was temporarily stabilized, which contributed to preventing or delaying homelessness in funding rental assistance
- Over 20 individuals in need received new mattresses, a high cost item that is often difficult for individuals, families and residential agencies to adequately obtain. The majority of clients receiving a mattress currently reside in residential settings. In surveying participating providers, the following feedback was received:
  - 91% felt the mattress was extremely beneficial to their *customers*
  - 80% felt the mattress was extremely beneficial to their *agency*
  - 78% feel it is extremely important to customers the mattresses belong to them
  - 100% of customers were happy with their mattresses
  - 100% of participating residential agencies serving customers in Denver intend to submit additional requests for customers in the next 6 months
- 2 individuals received assistance with funding a vehicle to become wheelchair accessible to facilitate greater independence in the community

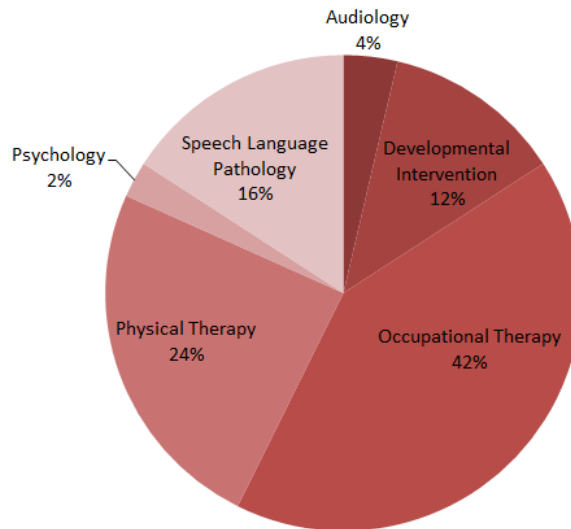
### Project Goal: Client Education/Increasing Independence

Meeting client educational needs or providing opportunities to increase independence includes professional services and a large assistive technology project. Approximately 33% of Mill Levy funding year-to-date has been utilized to address these needs. One significant project under the professional services category is the Play and Learn Library, which is hosted at RMHS. Our organization maintains an inventory of therapeutic equipment for therapists to borrow to support their therapy work with children. This enables therapists and families the opportunity to try equipment and ensure it works for individuals prior to making a commitment to purchase. In surveying the therapists who have been using the equipment, RMHS has received the following positive feedback:

- 82 items for the first half of 2017 have been borrowed from the library by clinical therapists to trial with children and increase their skills

- On a scale of 1-5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree), therapists rated:
  - Did the item help improve the child’s skills? *Average score: 4.6*
  - Will you access the Play & Learn Library again in the future? *Average score: 5.0*

### Play & Learn Library use by Discipline



RMHS is promoting an assistive technology project with the organization AbleLink. This project provides tablet computers and other assistive technology tools for individuals with I/DD to increase independence with skills like cooking, budgeting, personal hygiene, safely navigating the community, and making a schedule.

- 182 of 200 customers have been identified to benefit from this project to date
- A series of training and equipment distribution dates have been scheduled for July – November 2017
- Mill Levy Management staff is currently developing an evaluation survey to gauge customer benefit from this program. This technology is designed to increase independence and self-confidence with its users, and RMHS is in the process of working with the vendor to implement a survey instrument that will properly obtain that information. Initial reactions from participants in the equipment distribution and training dates have been overwhelmingly positive.

Another Mill Levy funded project that provides opportunities for client education and increasing independence is called the Self-Employment Education Project. RMHS has partnered with Celebrate EDU to provide innovative entrepreneurial education for young adults with I/DD that builds on their interests and passions. Individuals receive training to learn how to create a business plan at a one-day workshop, and explore their own business ideas using a self-employment curriculum.

- To date, Celebrate EDU has successfully hosted four Entrepreneur Education Information Sessions for family members and service providers in Denver for 38 individuals
- Celebrate EDU has created and administered surveys to family members and service providers and is currently working on developing a consistent method to measure project success
- Initial feedback on the information provided has been generally positive. However, there have been identified challenges with transportation to the events. RMHS is actively working with Celebrate EDU to address transportation issues

### Mill Levy Special Project: Celebrate EDU

*My brother and I attended the Entrepreneur Information Session with Celebrate EDU and were filled with hope and optimism. He has been dissatisfied with his job at a local grocery store and has been searching for something more rewarding. [Celebrate EDU staff] Jenny was patient and answered all of our questions; Celebrate EDU programs seem like the opportunity we've been waiting for! We are looking forward to having Scott participate in the Kindling Workshop and Spark Program course. Thank you, Jenny! -Shelley R.B.*

RMHS is also supporting opportunities for education and independence. One of these efforts is through funding a new organization named T.A.C.T. Kids - Teaching the Autism Community Trades. T.A.C.T Kids provides educational opportunities for credit to students aged 14 – 21 to increase abilities and independence. T.A.C.T's programming includes training in woodworking, automotive repair, computer repair, as well as summer camps and a workshop training series available to ages 7 – 21. T.A.C.T is using Mill Levy funding to develop curriculum materials and implement their education-based training program offering school credit in the three curriculum areas for individuals aged 14-21. One initial outcome of their program implementation was to have a high participation rate. Overall for the training classes, after-school program and summer camp, T.A.C.T. achieved an initial participation rate of 73%.

### Mill Levy Special Project: T.A.C.T. Kids

This is what TACT staff Sonia Carty had to say about their project's first months:

*This first quarter has been amazing. Seeing the joy in the students' eyes as they create and build is truly remarkable. Just today we finished building chairs and seeing the smiles on our students' faces as they sat in the chairs they made was truly incredible. It's a wonderful feeling having the opportunity to work with amazing children and families in an amazing community as we're providing an opportunity that never existed before. Another new family was so happy to find our camps that they put their son into two weeks of camp AND weekend programming AND they spent downtime just hanging out at our building. They said that they hadn't seen their son so happy in ages and that they were thrilled to finally find a place that understood what he needed. Children who have come to hate school are finally having positive experiences around learning and they are finding environments in which they are accepted, where they can thrive and where they feel pride in their achievements.*

### Project Goal: Social/Recreational

Meeting social and recreational needs of individuals includes the pursuit of recreational opportunities, which is not covered by Medicaid or other insurance programs. In addition, individuals on Medicaid with limited incomes have very limited resources to pursue these goals without support from Mill Levy funding. According to a recent AAA survey, 35% of Americans were planning to take a vacation 50 miles or more away from home in 2016 (<http://newsroom.aaa.com/2016/04/aaa-one-third-americans-will-take-family-vacation-year/>). In contrast, a recent poll of I/DD providers indicates fewer than 5% of individuals accepting services can afford to travel, particularly given the additional expenses associated with supports for supervision and personal care necessary to travel safely. The benefits of this project are in line with the benefits to anyone in being able to take a vacation. Reduced stress, lowered anxiety, possible decrease in heart disease, improved mental health, and better developed interpersonal relationships, in addition to overall increase in quality of life, are among the well-known benefits of taking vacation. The Journal of the American Medical Association published a study that concluded men who take frequent annual vacations were 32% less likely to die from heart disease than those who did not take frequent vacations ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jill-l-ferguson/health-benefits-of-taking-a-vacation\\_b\\_9384466.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jill-l-ferguson/health-benefits-of-taking-a-vacation_b_9384466.html)).

One hundred percent of individuals receiving funding for these purposes are having their needs met in this regard, as it is opening access to opportunities not previously available. Approximately 10% of Mill Levy funding year-to-date has been utilized for social and recreational goals. There are a number of different programs that have provided social and recreational opportunities for individuals with I/DD in Denver County from January to June 2017, ranging from supporting individuals to attend summer camp, taking local day trips to regional points of interest, and taking trips with family members or to see family members out of state. RMHS also provides annual regional recreation center passes through Denver Parks & Recreation for individuals accepting services and also one caregiver pass for children.

- 295 recreation center passes have been distributed to individuals as well as caregivers of children under 18 years of age
- 38 individuals have participated with community partner Activity Options, which provides increased community engagement opportunities, including local day trips and overnight trips

#### Mill Levy Special Project: Activity Options' Project World

*My son, Eli, age 28, did not have a fun, enjoyable childhood. He was very ill, was in pain most of the time and his behaviors were extreme. Today, Eli is far more robust, has gained self-management skills and is ready to have fun and enjoy his life. Certain social and recreational activities not only are appealing to him, they also add perspective to his outlook on life and positively impact his health outcomes. Eli needs and seeks meaningful, pleasurable social and recreational opportunities. Eli loves and looks forward to many of the occasions offered by Activity Options. The necessary support provided through Activity Options has created marvelous community opportunities for my son and others. As Ken Berry commented to me, "I have never seen anyone have so much fun at Indian Springs Hot Springs!" Now, isn't that a nice comment for a Mom to hear! - Betty Lehman*



### **Project Goal: Medical and Dental and Project Goal: Behavioral Health/Mental Health**

Medical, Dental, and Behavioral Health services includes a wide variety of health related services to ensure the health and well-being of individuals with I/DD. Combined, approximately 5% of Mill Levy funding year-to-date has been utilized toward these two project areas. Our stakeholder members cited these types of services as a significant need, and our experience to date has not shown the demand for these services we would have expected based on stakeholder feedback. RMHS is working with the Community Advisory Council to refocus outreach efforts to ensure we are meeting the community's need.

### **Project Goal: System Gaps**

Mill Levy funded services to address system gaps currently comprise the largest percentage of Special Project expenses at 40%. When an individual needs more care and support than is reimbursed through current funding programs, Mill Levy funding is used to address system gaps and program service limitations of other funding sources, such as Medicaid and State-funded services. In some cases these gaps may be within the I/DD system; in other cases, the gaps are between our system and other systems, such as mental health, foster care, and homelessness. By far the service deemed to be the most important from our stakeholders is respite care. For the year to date, respite funds of more than \$492,074.00 have been paid to 587 individuals, which accounts for more than 93% of funds being used to address system gaps.

There is significant literature available that demonstrates the positive effects that respite care brings to the life of a caregiver. Over time, without relief and assistance, caregiving can take a mental and physical toll. The Family Caregiver Alliance reports that 40 to 70 percent of caregivers show clinically significant symptoms of depression. The Center on Aging Society adds that 1 in 10 family caregivers report that their responsibilities have caused their physical health to worsen (<http://www.comfortkeepers.com/home/info-center/respite-care/importance-of-respite-relief-for-family-caregivers>) RMHS is in the process of implementing a survey in August of 2017 to obtain more information from caregivers who have benefitted from this service, and this information will be incorporated into the 2017 third quarter report .

### **Project Goal: Training and Support Opportunities**

Meeting training and support needs of caregivers, families, providers and the general public includes training on topics such as improvements in infant feeding and increasing the cultural competency of first responders to appropriately support individuals with I/DD. Approximately .6% of Mill Levy funding year-to-date has been utilized towards training and support goals.

During this reporting period, RMHS hosted a training on infant feeding targeted to Early Intervention providers and parents. Forty-three people attended the training and provided the following feedback, demonstrating the positive outcome of this training:

- 100% of participants agreed the training increased their level of expertise with infant feeding challenges
- 100% of participants found the training relevant to their respective work as an Early Intervention practitioner
- Only 2% said they would seek additional training on infant feeding challenges



## **On the horizon: Additional projects in planning**

Here is a brief summary of some of the new projects RMHS is working on in 2017 with our community partners.

### ***Expansion of the number of Individuals on HCBS DD Comprehensive Waiver***

RMHS, Denver County Department of Human Services, and Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) have committed to using Mill Levy funds to draw down Federal matching funds to expand the number of individuals on the HCBS-DD Comprehensive Waiver in Denver County. This Medicaid program funds 24-hour care and supports, including residential services and day habilitation. Using Mill Levy dollars to access additional federal funding is a very complicated process that will take a significant amount of time to coordinate efforts among Denver Department of Human Services, the Colorado Department of Healthcare Policy and Financing (HCPF), and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Once the processes have been established to facilitate the Federal fund's drawdown, it is hoped that other CCB's with Mill Levy funds will follow suit.

### ***Supported Employment***

Supported employment is a service provided on a small scale by several government and private agencies. This project is designed to fill in the gaps in those services in a cohesive way specific to the needs of individuals living in the City and County of Denver. This project, which is a collaboration of multiple community organizations, supports individuals with developmental disabilities through training, individualized and person-centered job placement and community employment job coaching support. Additionally, recruitment and training of potential employers to work with employees with I/DD, will aim to decrease the unemployment rate of individuals with I/DD in Denver. Once the program is established, the project partners will add a web-based component whereby employers and employees can create profiles and be matched to one another to optimize successful employment.

### ***Collaboration with Denver Public Schools***

RMHS is partnering with Denver Public Schools in identifying and facilitating staff trainings in the areas of motivational interviewing and cultural competence. Training topics are geared toward increasing cross-system knowledge so that consistent information and messaging can be provided to families of infants and children. In addition, the trainings will increase staff's ability to quickly assess supports parents may need including alleviating anxiety, addressing feelings of denial, or coping with new diagnoses - as they go through the referral process and begin navigating the I/DD and education systems and services on behalf of their child.

### ***Integrated Health Project/Collaborative Positive Behavioral Support***

Access to quality, culturally competent healthcare for people with I/DD is limited, but positive health outcomes are disproportionately low for this population. RMHS has engaged with an experienced partner in the development of a model of healthcare delivery to increase culturally competent healthcare for the thousands of people with I/DD in Denver. This integrated approach would bring together the resources needed to address physical, dental and mental/behavioral health. Integrated healthcare for individuals with I/DD is not a new approach; it has shown excellent results in other areas of the nation (including Colorado Springs) but is not currently available in the Denver community. RMHS has begun to involve healthcare leaders in Denver, other areas of Colorado and the US, as well as people with I/DD in designing the model. Specific targeted outcomes being considered are decreases in emergency room visits, decrease in rates of obesity, and increase in overall quality of life.

A statewide analysis of the gaps in services for individuals with dual diagnoses of I/DD and mental health/behavioral health disorders was reported in 2014. The analysis concluded that Colorado has a

severely limited capacity to provide crisis intervention and stabilization services for this population, limited access to mental health providers with knowledge and skills to work with the population, and little to no follow-up care post-crisis. The analysis provided recommendations to include people with I/DD in the vision of fully integrated systems of primary health care, specialty care, behavioral health, and dental care, with person-centered plans of care that include access to appropriate supports and care coordination. This model does not currently exist in Denver; most individuals with I/DD get their care in segmented systems, and continue to have limited access to providers with expertise in meeting their needs. This project aims to integrate all aspects of health into care plans for people with complex needs to help them improve their quality of life and reduce the burden on emergency care.

### ***Expansion of Behavioral Services***

RMHS has developed a partnership with one behavioral provider so far for the provision of behavioral services and supports beyond Medicaid Waiver defined services, including customer-specific training and staff support, consultation and training to other systems, and customer-specific behavior services excluded from waiver definitions (e.g., crisis support). The intent is to expand this model to additional providers of behavioral services to individuals in Denver to ensure needs are being comprehensively met in this area.

## **Summary**

RMHS provides case management and direct services to adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Denver and surrounding communities. We incorporate Mill Levy funds as needed to ensure adults and children in Denver County with intellectual and developmental disabilities are getting increased services and access to opportunities to ensure their health and safety and improve their quality of life. We believe that persons accepting services, their families and their caregivers are best positioned to identify needs and interests and to establish priorities for the use of funding, and we actively engage the Denver community in the development and implementation of services and programs in accordance with these priorities. In our service to these individuals, both directly and in partnership with others in our community, we strive to ensure people's health and safety needs are met, that they are supported in their own self-determination, and benefit from project services in a measurable way.

*Kris Kogan, Ph.D.*

*Director of Strategy & Innovation*

*Rocky Mountain Human Services*

[kkoqan@rmhumanservices.org](mailto:kkoqan@rmhumanservices.org)

## Appendix A: Implemented Projects: Mill Levy Management Program Portfolio by Project Goal Area<sup>2</sup>

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Target Age Group	2017 Spending to Date	Total 2017 Projected Spending	Projected # Benefitting in 2017	Projected dollars per person
<b>Client Assistance (RMHS)</b>	Access to funds for individualized needs in all areas	0 & up	\$270,000	\$485,000	400	\$1,200
<b>FSSP Supplement (RMHS)</b>	Includes Assistive Technology, Home Modification, Respite, Transportation, Medical/Dental, Parent/Sibling Support, Professional Services	3 - 17	\$735,000	\$1,300,000	1000	\$1,300
<b>Mattress Project (RMHS)</b>	Offers mattresses to individuals in need	18 & up	\$10,000	\$24,000	36	\$700
<b>Assistive Technology (AbleLink)</b>	Supports long-term independence skill building for safe access to communities for work and recreation	18 & up	\$175,000	\$220,000	200	\$1,100
<b>Play &amp; Learn Library (RMHS)</b>	Assistive technology, adaptive equipment, books and DVDs for clinicians to check out to assist children improve communication, social skills, mobility, daily living skills, and cognitive functioning	0 - 18	\$2,600	\$5,000	150	\$33
<b>Self-Employment Education (Celebrate EDU)</b>	Teaches the benefits of entrepreneurial education.	15 - 50	\$50,000	\$179,000	240	\$700
<b>T.A.C.T. Kids</b>	Provides trade and technical skills to children & young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder.	21-Jul	\$169,000	\$500,000	228	\$2,200

<sup>2</sup> Spending to date and project spending amounts are rounded to the nearest \$1,000; dollars per person rounded to the nearest \$100 if over \$100, otherwise exact

Implemented Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Target Age Group	2017 Spending to Date	Total 2017 Projected Spending	Projected # Benefitting in 2017	Projected dollars per person
<b>Project World (Activity Options)</b>	Community activities and overnight travel opportunities	18 & up	\$16,000	\$184,000	699	\$300
<b>Rec Pass (RMHS)</b>	Denver Parks and Recreation Center passes	0 & up	\$30,000	\$70,000	500	\$100
<b>Social Inclusion (Connect Us)</b>	Provides opportunities for families and youth for social connections through after school social groups, inclusive recess facilitation, and parent support groups.	3 - 11	-	\$81,000	500	\$200
<b>StellarCare Vacations</b>	Provides opportunity for vacations	21 & up	\$8,000	\$189,000	20	\$9,000
<b>Eligibility Testing (RMHS)</b>	Testing for Developmental Disability Determinations	5 & up	-	\$100,000	50	\$2,000
<b>EI Provider Trainings (RMHS)</b>	Specialized trainings for provider serving ages 0-3 in Early Intervention	18 & up	\$8,000	\$8,000	50	\$200
<b>Laradon Expanded Behavioral Services</b>	Provision of behavioral services and supports beyond waiver defined services, including crisis support, customer-specific trainings, and consultation and training to external systems	18 & up	-	\$35,000	20	\$1,800

## Appendix B: Pending Projects: Mill Levy Management Program Portfolio by Project Goal Area<sup>3</sup>

Pending Projects	Project Purpose & Service Types	Target Age Group	2017 Spending to Date	Total 2017 Projected Spending	Projected # Benefitting in 2017	Projected dollars per person
<b>Family Autism Resource Bag (RMHS)</b>	Resources and materials for families of newly diagnosed children with Autism	0 - 18	\$3,000	\$14,000	100	\$100
<b>Firefly Autism Training Series</b>	Trainings on Autism to be provided to caregivers and police/first responders	18 & up	\$3,000	\$3,000	40	\$75
<b>Laradon EI Family Navigator</b>	1. EI Play Group 2. EI Parent Support Group	0-3	-	\$40,000	100	\$400
<b>Provider Document Translation (RMHS)</b>	Document translation of guidance materials for family providers	N/A	-	\$8,000	10	\$800
<b>Homelessness Project</b>	Outreach to homeless individuals who are diagnosed with or have indications of an I/DD who need assistance connecting with I/DD services and other benefits	18 & up	\$10,000	\$200,000	50	\$4,000
<b>Resource Ability Program (Financial Health Institute)</b>	Provides a social learning environment to strengthen financial health and advance quality of life for people with I/DD and their support systems.	18 & up	\$30,000	\$265,000	250	\$1,000

<sup>3</sup> Spending to date and project spending amounts are rounded to the nearest \$1,000; dollars per person rounded to the nearest \$100