2-1-1 of Ottawa County 2nd Quarter Report –2005

2-1-1 of Ottawa County provides callers with a comprehensive human services Information and Referral (I&R) system. By dialing 2-1-1, callers avoid the inconvenience of calling many different agencies without receiving any answers or help. With 2-1-1, callers can obtain the most up-to-date information about how they may access the assistance they need.

Our Mission — “2-1-1 of Ottawa County empowers people to make informed choices by offering accurate information and referrals and is committed to improving the quality of life by improving the flow of human services in the community”.

Ottawa 2-1-1 staff are available to give presentations to local community groups, human resource staff of local companies, or any other groups hoping to learn more about 2-1-1 and the services offered. Call (616) 935-1298 to schedule a time.

For more information about Information & Referral and the 2-1-1 initiative in Michigan and nationwide, please visit these websites.

www.airs.org Alliance of Information and Referral Systems
www.211.org Information about 2-1-1 around North America
www.comnet.org/miairs/ Michigan - Alliance of Information and Referral Systems

2-1-1 Open House — On Wednesday afternoon, June 22nd, area agencies were invited to visit Ottawa 2-1-1 at our new location. Visitors to the center observed call center staff taking “live” calls, learned how the service impacts the Ottawa County community and came away with a new appreciation for the depth of detail involved in making an accurate referral. The 2-1-1 database contains 329 agencies, 1,206 distinct programs and nearly 3,000 services.

Community Impact:
- Reduces frustration of callers by decreasing circular calling
- Helps people connect with the services they need
- Reduces calls to agencies by those not eligible for services
- Acts as an administrative arm of agency or business staff, expanding human resources so that agencies can provide more direct services
- Presents callers with consistently updated resource information
- Provides data on unmet community needs to target donor dollars
- Provides information on volunteer opportunities, in cooperation with Greater Ottawa County United Way & Volunteer Center
Data Reports - 2-1-1 of Ottawa County gathers data from each caller. Based on this data, 2-1-1 identifies various elements including call volumes, service requests and unmet needs for the reporting period. For the period April 1, 2005 through June 30, 2005 a total of 2,001 calls were received. 1,827 of those calls were from Ottawa County callers.

Top Ten Agency Referrals - 4/01/05 To 6/30/05

Service Requests – A service request is one request for health and human service assistance made by a caller to 2-1-1; one caller may make multiple requests.

Ottawa County Top Ten Service Requests
4/01/05 To 6/30/05

- Utility Bill Payment Assistance: 152
- Rent Payment Assistance: 124
- Food Pantries: 112
- Low Income/Subsidized Housing: 59
- Dental Care: 54
- Legal Information Lines: 53
- Emergency Prescription Assistance: 48
- Food Stamps: 39
- Homeless Shelter: 39
- Prescription Drug Assistance Programs: 37
**Calls by City**—Holland callers represent 47% of total Ottawa County inquiries to 2-1-1 this quarter. As the chart indicates, call volume is influenced by population density.

Unmet Needs—An unmet need is a request for a service that cannot be referred. Reasons for unmet services include callers not meeting income requirements, callers not meeting service criteria, callers having received prior assistance, no resources currently available in the community or the service does not exist. Local Bus Transit unmet needs are most often due to the caller living outside the service area.
The number of Ottawa County referral resources continues to expand, with service and program information being added to the resource database daily. Prescription Expense Assistance remains one of the most requested services. Both short-term and long-term prescription resources are available through 2-1-1.

2-1-1 of Ottawa County recently added the new program “PARTNERSHIP FOR PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE MICHIGAN”. Individuals may call a toll-free number or visit www.pparx.org to apply for assistance. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA) brings together America’s pharmaceutical companies, doctors, other health care providers, patient advocacy organizations and community groups to help qualifying patients who lack prescription coverage get the medicines they need through the public or private program that’s right for them. Once approved, qualifying individuals may receive free or low cost medication for up to one year. PPA’s mission is to increase awareness of patient assistance programs and boost enrollment of those who are eligible. Through their website, the Partnership for Prescription Assistance offers a single point of access to more than 275 public and private patient assistance programs, including more than 150 programs offered by pharmaceutical companies. Brochures and posters about the Partnership for Prescription Assistance are available through 2-1-1 of Ottawa County.

For additional information on this prescription assistance program and other Ottawa County health and human service resources, please dial 2-1-1. Cell phone users dial 888-353-6717.

Up-To-Date Resources – 2-1-1 of Ottawa County’s primary objective remains “The Right Referral the First Time”. Service information, eligibility criteria and program contacts change on a regular basis. 2-1-1 of Ottawa County works actively with community agencies to understand admission criteria in order to offer more than simple “directory assistance” to callers. It is the cooperative efforts of local agencies that assist 2-1-1 in maintaining current records on the 1200 programs listed in our system.

Agencies wishing to list their programs and services with 2-1-1, must meet specific Inclusion/Exclusion criteria. The criteria are available to the general public and to agencies wishing to list their services with 2-1-1 of Ottawa County. Anyone may request a copy by contacting Sue Boes @ 616-935-1298.

Questions or comments regarding this report may be directed to 2-1-1 of Ottawa County at 211ottawa@tds.net or by contacting Sue Boes at (616) 935-1298.