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## **LAKE ADAMHS VOTES TO PUBLISH FY2011 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board voted unanimously to publish its Fiscal Year 2011 Request For Proposals (RFP). The action came at the Board's regularly scheduled March 22, 2010 meeting.

Established by Ohio Statute, the ADAMHS Board is responsible for planning, funding and evaluating Lake County's mental health and recovery services. Those services are delivered through a network of agencies. The annual RFP process is an opportunity for area providers to submit proposals on the various service components that comprise the ADAMHS system.

Kim Fraser, Executive Director of the ADAMHS Board, says the RFP process is especially critical this year because of funding reductions the system is facing. "The Ohio biennium budget, passed last July, slashed spending for mental health and recovery services," she explains. "The agencies in our network are all rallying as best they can, but the fact is that they're facing an incredibly tough scenario – increasing need for services coupled with fewer dollars to provide those services. Our job as the ADAMHS Board is to make sure we're getting the most from every available nickel. The RFP process lets us evaluate options and improve efficiencies where we can."

ADAMHS Board members, 18 Lake County residents who serve without compensation, have the final say on which agencies will be offered ADAMHS contracts to provide services for Fiscal Year 2011. That fiscal year begins in July. Between now and then agencies will submit proposals which will be analyzed by ADAMHS senior management and several committees comprised of Board members. The analysis process will culminate with a list of service and provider recommendations – that list will be formally presented to the full Board for a vote in June.

Fraser adds that the ADAMHS Board is continuing its transition to a “purchase-of-service” model – which offers a more direct connection between specific units of service and agency compensation – in the coming fiscal year. “We’ve utilized purchase-of-service selectively for years, but with funding uncertainties becoming more of a reality in our world, it’s now imperative that this becomes our standard business model,” she said. “It simply gives us additional ways to monitor and control spending.”

In other action, the Board voted to reduce staffing in the ADAMHS office by abolishing the position of Planning Manager from the table of organization. “All of us in this system – agencies and Board alike – are feeling the impacts of these painful budget cuts,” said ADAMHS Board Chair Roberta Kalb. “This was a cost-cutting move recommended by our Board’s Executive Committee. We were already working with razor-thin staffing – this move brings our operating budget down to roughly 4% of our revenue. But given our economic realities I believe this was a prudent move for the Board to make.”

More information on the ADAMHS Board and its network of service providers is available at [www.HelpThatWorks.us](http://www.HelpThatWorks.us).

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