



United Community Center (UCC)

2026 Application Overview

PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

UCC's mission is to strengthen individuals, families, and the community by providing access to high-quality, culturally responsive services that promote health, well-being, and self-sufficiency. This mission is carried out daily in the Human Services department that delivers the full continuum of substance use disorder treatment. UCC operates one of the most comprehensive SUD treatment continuums in Milwaukee County, including residential treatment facilities, day treatment, and outpatient services. UCC is one of only two residential programs with a full-time Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioner/Prescriber on site.

Expand access — Serve a minimum of 120 unduplicated clients with psychiatric evaluation/medication management.

On-call crisis support — Provide evening/weekend psychiatric coverage to reduce unnecessary ER visits.

"Mind Matters" education — Deliver 22 group sessions across four residential sites.

Improve stabilization & retention — Target 60% treatment completion and 75% retention beyond 15 days through in-house prescription services, enabling timely medication management without emergency intervention.

Reduce language/cultural barriers — 100% of Spanish-speaking clients served in their preferred language.

SCOPE OF WORK AND KEY ACTIVITIES

UCC will contract a bilingual (English/Spanish) Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP), Dr. Guillermo Palacios, DNP, PMHNP-BC, to deliver integrated psychiatric services including evaluation, diagnosis, medication management, and on-call crisis support, within UCC residential SUD facilities, including evenings and weekends. The project also introduces monthly psychoeducational group sessions around mental health.

TARGET POPULATION AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Milwaukee County residents in residential SUD treatment at UCC. Milwaukee's South Side, home to UCC's residential Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment facilities, continues to carry a disproportionate share of the county's opioid overdose burden. Fatalities in the 53204 and 53215 zip codes rose from 60 (2023) to 75 (2024), even as countywide deaths declined. A key driver of poor outcomes is the lack of after-hours psychiatric access for clients with co-occurring mental health conditions, gaps that currently force costly ER transfers, disrupt treatment, and client who face barriers in emergency settings.