



Kane County Health Department Celebrates One Year Anniversary of IRIS

April 7, 2022- The Kane County Health Department's (KCHD) Integrated Referral & Intake System (IRIS) celebrated its first year of providing Kane County individuals and families access to services they need. This free, web-based communication tool created by the University of Kansas helps organizations connect the families they serve to the right resources in the community, providing transparency to the organizations and a closed loop for referrals, ensuring follow-up.

For a demonstration video of the program, see https://youtu.be/w_ag8MBAeIE.

Kane County launched the IRIS System in March, 2021 during the height of the pandemic. The Kane County IRIS community has representation from local community programs including mental health & psychiatry, primary care, dental, early childhood services, K-12 education, park district programs, adult & juvenile probation, parenting resources, substance abuse services, employment resources, immigration and legal services, emergency shelter, and basic needs (food & clothing).

To date, IRIS has sent 1,709 referrals, serving 793 Kane County individuals and families. The growth of the system from 66 to 111 local community partners within the year had an annual survey respondent remark about "easier linkage especially after more partners were added."

Other respondents remarked that "the ability to connect families to services has become so much easier" and that "patients have been able to receive services faster than if they sought on their own." Individual and family follow up with referrals had another respondent say that "sending a referral through IRIS improves the likelihood that my client will access those services."

The implementation process started in 2019 when the All Our Kids (AOK) Network identified the need for a more streamlined referral process for care coordination and started laying the groundwork to bring IRIS to Kane County. In late 2020, KCHD decided to implement IRIS through a collaboration between the AOK Network, Kane County System of Care, and the Opioid Task Force. The team gathered community partners to configure the IRIS platform to meet the unique needs of Kane County residents. Together, partners agreed on common referral practices and developed the Community Standards that dictates expectations of use for all. The Kane County IRIS System had a strong launch and continues to expand to include all sectors of support that a community needs to stay healthy.

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The program is data driven and HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996) compliant. This collaborative platform strengthens relationships among providers and leads to quicker response times and access to care.

The Kane County IRIS Community celebrated its one-year anniversary with a virtual meeting, including community stakeholders and current IRIS partners to share community referral data, celebrate network strengths, and discuss their vision for the future.

For more information, visit KaneHealth.com/AOK/Pages/Initiatives-Pages/IRIS.aspx or contact one of the Kane County IRIS Community Managers:

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