

Budget for One Minnesota



RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

Farmers and other rural residents statewide are experiencing high levels of stress, linked to farm production challenges, financial difficulties, changes in the social fabric of rural living, and other factors beyond their control. Farm earnings hit record lows in 2014 and 2015 and declined again in 2017. Stresses like these take their toll; there are indications that suicide, divorce, and substance abuse rates are all climbing in this population.

The Walz-Flanagan budget provides \$450,000 to expand on collaborative rural mental health efforts that began in 2017, including one-on-one farmer counseling and a 24-hour hotline, critical resources that are currently not meeting growing demand.

HELPING FARM FAMILIES COPE



Increase Rural Counseling Services

Add a second Minnesota rural mental health specialist to provide confidential, one-on-one counseling tailored to farmers and their unique concerns.



Supplement the MDA Farm Advocate Team

Add two Farm Advocates to the current team of 10 trained advisors who provide one-on-one assistance for Minnesota farmers facing a crisis caused by either a natural disaster or financial problems.



Support 24-hour Farm and Rural Helpline

Fund and promote the confidential Minnesota Farm and Rural Helpline, a 24-hour hotline that connects farmers and other rural residents in distress with a counselor or other resources.



Coordinate Public Outreach

Engage farm groups and rural communities to reduce the stigma of stress, anxiety, and other mental health challenges.