

# 2019 TLG Innovation Showcase Applicant

## Region Five Shared Services Initiative in Local Government

Region Five, MN

*#Robust External Partnerships*

Population: 162,000

### Innovation

#### Criteria:

- Initiative fundamentally changed a process, product or service (fundamental)

OR

- Initiative builds upon existing knowledge to improve a product, process or service (incremental)
- The initiative substantially stretched the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations.

### Describe Your Innovation

*(When and how did this innovation get started? Do also detail how the program or policy innovative, how it has changed previous processes, products, or services, and how it has substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations.)*

The Region Five Health & Human Services (HHS) Directors collaboratively designed a Shared Services employment program for multiple HHS positions in the Region. The positions that utilize this concept are positions that are duplicating efforts throughout the Region, such as Childcare (Daycare) Licensing, Adult Foster Care Licensing, Social Services Contract Management, and Mental Health Client Transitions. The Region Five HHS Directors contract with Sourcewell to have one person employed for each shared service concept, instead of 5 for each concept (one in each County).

This is not only collaborative and building partnerships among the Region, but is highly innovative. The private sector has focus on a shared economy for years, but local government has lagged. This is not only saving time and money for the Counties, but is changing the way government looks at services it provides as well. This creates consistency for the public and saves taxpayer money. Also, due to the partnership and collaboration, one shared service concept has led to four – and many more to come. By joining together in these efforts and seeing the success, we have continued to gather and creatively suggest new ideas and ways of doing things. Our group has become stronger and more united, which in the end has benefited our Region tremendously. It is now being looked at from the MN Department of Human Services (DHS) as a model going forward due to the success in our Region. We are changing the way local government looks and feels, both internally for our staff and externally for our residents.

## Collaboration

### Criteria:

- Initiative demonstrated engaging stakeholders both internal and external.
- Initiative demonstrated high performance teaming, breaking down internal silos.
- Strategic partnerships and or community networks were developed as a result of the initiative

In less than 200 words, what individuals or groups are considered the primary initiators of your program? How does the innovation engage stakeholders or demonstrate high performance teaming? What strategic partnerships and/or community networks, if any, were developed?

This initiative was designed by 5 Health & Human Service Directors from Region Five, one from each County in the Region. They engaged an external stakeholder (Sourcewell) in developing the shared services concept and Sourcewell employs each of the Shared Service Specialists. This has affected multiple community networks, including every provider in our Region for services (over 150), the Adult Mental Health Initiative, and residents affected by our services, such as daycare providers and adult foster homes.

If a private consultant was used please describe in detail their involvement, identify the consultant and/or firm and provide contact information. Maintain a 100 word maximum.

No private consultants were used in these efforts. Sourcewell is a public state agency in the State of MN and is the regional service cooperative. They have partnered with us in these efforts, but do not make any money or act in a private manner in any way.

## Significance

### Criteria:

- Initiative addresses an area of concern for the majority of local government organizations.
- Initiative can serve as a model and replicated in other jurisdictions.

Please describe the extent to which you believe your program or policy initiative is potentially replicable within other jurisdictions and why? To your knowledge, have any other jurisdictions or organizations established programs or implemented policies modeled specifically on this project? Please also provide verification of the replication.

As mentioned above, this model is being looked at from a statewide level due to its success in our Region. We have also been contacted by counties outside the Region to join the shared services for childcare and adult foster care and expect those counties to join in January 2019. Also, some of the shared services concepts do exist outside our Region in other parts of the State of MN. This proves that this concept is easily replicable elsewhere.

## Effectiveness

### Criteria:

- Initiative addresses a community or organization need.
- Initiative has achieved tangible results.
- Initiative improved the organizational culture or the traditional approach to problem solving.
- Initiative has received recognition for its achievements, i.e. independent evaluation, national recognition, local press, etc.

**Please describe the most significant obstacle(s) encountered thus far by your program. How have they been dealt with? Which ones remain?**

The most significant obstacle encountered was helping statewide agencies understand the concept and approve of the change in oversight. For example, the MN Dept of Human Services (DHS) has to approve of who does the licensing for childcare settings in the State. Because we were transitioning this role out of the Counties, we needed to gain DHS approval. This was a difficult process and involved extensive change management progression. Now that they understand the concept and have seen it in action, they are extremely supportive and are looking to implement it statewide.

**What outcomes did this program or policy have? Could you share one or two objective measures that demonstrate these outcomes? Ultimately, how did you measure the change based on the intervention, and why do you believe in the credibility of this assessment?**

Each of our shared services concept work to create efficiencies in local government by changing the way we have always done things. We have performance measures for each shared service concept but we will share the child care licensing measures as an example. We currently measure success based on:

Number of licensed providers   Number of inquiries   Number of participants in orientation that follow through  
Number of licenses closed   Length the provider was licensed

Our goal is that we will improve all of the above areas through our licensing shared service concept. Thus far, that has been the case. This is especially crucial for us as we are seeing an extreme childcare shortage in our State.

**Has the program received any press or other media coverage to date? If yes, please list the sources and briefly describe relevant coverage.**

Sourcewell has done several Statewide and National presentations in regards to this concept at local government conferences, such as the League of MN Cities and Association of Counties. They have also released several publications in regards to the concept. We are currently working with DHS for a media/press release in regards to the licensing shared service concept.

## Presentation

### Criteria:

- Presentation will be delivered by a team.
- Presentation will be highly interactive and engaging.

### Example Social Media Post

We currently utilize Facebook and Twitter in sharing our innovation in the Region. Potential posts could be (in any format):

"MN Region Five HHS Directors collaborate to create shared services concept to improve the way we license daycares and adult foster care homes."

"MN Region Five HHS Directors collaborate to create shared services concept to improve the way we support and assist mental health patients to facilities and home settings."

"MN Region Five HHS Directors collaborate to create shared services concept to improve the way we contract with providers of social services to Counties."

"Ever heard of VRBO, Uber, Lyft, Etsy, or Amazon? All of these are examples of private shared economies. How about doing this in public organizations? MN Region Five has done just that with multiple social service programs!"

**Please write an abstract or short description for your innovation that would make conference attendees say "Well, I need to attend this session!"**

Heard of Uber, Lyft, Etsy, VRBO? These are all examples of shared economies created in the private sector. How about implementing this same concept in local government? MN Region Five has done just that for multiple social services normally operated individually by Counties. Come learn more about how shared economies can work in local government!

**How will you make the session creative and unique?- How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?- Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.- What will attendees be able to have as an actionable "takeaway" from the session?**

If selected, we would plan to utilize Sourcewell's studio and videography services to create an entertaining and educational short film to highlight these services. We would also plan to involve our audience by helping asking them to interact in determining the shared economies they currently participate in (it is more than most people realize). The takeaway will be helping them to identify shared economies in their current public sector environment that they can begin working on.

**Anything else you would like to add?**

Thank you for the opportunity to share our idea!