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WNY Human Services Collaborative gets \$1.45 million in grants for shared space

By [Jonathan D. Epstein](#) | Published January 11, 2019 | Updated January 11, 2019



Ken Houseknecht, executive director of the Mental Health Advocates of Western New York, one of the eight social services nonprofit agencies collaborating in a shared-services venture on Buffalo's East Side. (Photo courtesy of the MHA of WNY)

A group of eight nonprofit agencies that formed a collaborative for shared space has received \$1.45 million in funding from four local foundations to support their new partnership on Buffalo's East Side.

The Western New York Human Services Collaborative will use the grants to help cover the cost of building out its new shared space at 1021 Broadway, where the eight agencies plan to move in during fall 2019.

The total cost is expected to fall between \$3.75 million to \$4.5 million, and Collaborative officials said they expect to receive additional funding commitments from other foundations, corporations and government agencies.

The funding to date includes \$700,000 from the John R. Oishei Foundation, \$500,000 from the KeyBank/First Niagara Foundation, \$150,000 from the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation and \$100,000 from the Patrick P. Lee Foundation.

"This project represents a significant investment in the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood and will bring needed services to the area," said Oishei Foundation President Robert D. Gioia. "By taking a creative approach and co-locating, these nonprofits will be able to operate more efficiently and collaboratively, making the project a great win for everyone."

The eight agencies in the Collaborative provide a range of parenting, mental health, developmental disability and other programs and services in the region. Together, they employ 550, serve more than 60,000 clients and post annual revenues of \$37.5 million.

The agencies have been working together for five years to develop the shared-space project to transform how social-service nonprofits operate in the region. Besides just sharing space, the goal is to consolidate services, staffing and programming so they can save money and function more efficiently.

The Collaborative's members include:

- EPIC — Every Parent Influences Children
- Parent Network of Western New York
- Learning Disabilities Association of Western New York
- Self-advocacy Association of New York State
- New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities' (OPWDD) Region One satellite office
- Children's Mental Health Coalition of Western New York
- Spectrum Health and Human Services' satellite office
- Mental Health Advocates

The group two years ago chose the Broadway site, citing its location near the Broadway Market. The building is already home to Jericho Road Community Health Center's third health-care clinic, which opened last July to provide medical care to the community, as well as a satellite location of Western New York MRI, which opened in November to provide imaging services.