

NEWS RELEASE

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Northeast Minnesota Behavioral Health Summit Tackles Regional Needs Through Collaboration

Virginia, MN – Minnesota North College and the Better Together Behavioral Health Network are joining forces to host the **Northeast Minnesota Behavioral Health Summit**. The event will take place Wednesday, January 22, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center in Virginia, MN.

This summit represents a unified effort to address the challenges and opportunities in behavioral health across Northeast Minnesota. By bringing diverse voices to the table, the event aims to spark dialogue, build partnerships, and uncover solutions to regional gaps in care.

“This summit is about building bridges between organizations, communities, and people,” said Kate Cowley, Counselor and Program Development Lead at Minnesota North College. “When we work together, we can create pathways to better care and a stronger, healthier region.”

The day will feature:

- **Welcome Remarks:** By leadership from Minnesota North College, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), The Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation and the Better Together Behavioral Health Network.
- **Regional Behavioral Health Insights:** A data-driven panel discussion highlighting current trends and challenges.
- **Lightning Round Presentations:** Quick snapshots of innovative projects addressing behavioral health needs across the region.
- **Workforce Opportunities and Needs:** By **Dr. Paul F.E. Mackie of Minnesota State University, Mankato**, focusing on rural workforce solutions for the behavioral health sector.
- **Partnership Roundtables:** Collaborative sessions designed to generate actionable ideas for closing service gaps.

“This event is a call to action,” said **Aubrie Hoover**, Regional Manager, Behavioral & Mental Health Services for the Northeast Service Cooperative. “We know the challenges in behavioral health are too big for any one organization to tackle alone. Together, we can build a roadmap for real change.”

The partnership between Minnesota North College and the Better Together Behavioral Health Network reflects a shared commitment to supporting behavioral health services and workforce development in the region. This collaboration is a powerful example of how working together can turn challenges into opportunities.

The summit is bringing together professionals, community members, and others with a vested interest in improving behavioral health resources in Northeast Minnesota. Participants will have opportunities to network and engage with regional leaders and peers. Registration for the event is already full, however people may request to be added to the wait list by registering at [Northeast MN BH Summit](#) or contacting Kelly Sather at satherk@stlouiscountymn.gov.

About Minnesota North College

Minnesota North College has six campuses across Northeast Minnesota, offering a variety of academic options, including one- and two-year degree programs, certificates, and customized training opportunities. In the field of behavioral health, Minnesota North provides programs in Applied Psychology, Addiction Studies, and Human Services, and is launching an exciting new Pre-Social Work Transfer Pathway to further support students and regional workforce needs.

About Better Together Behavioral Health Network

The Better Together Behavioral Health Network is dedicated to improving access to quality behavioral health services across Northeast Minnesota through collaboration, innovation, and community engagement.