



The Impact of the Minnesota Warmline (2022)

The Minnesota Warmline provides people with an opportunity to connect with others, find support, reduce social isolation, and talk about their concerns in a peer-to-peer environment. For many people, the Warmline is an important tool that helps them *before* they reach a point of crisis and supports their mental health recovery journey, and it plays an increasingly important role in the mental health system's continuum of care, often reducing people's need for crisis intervention, hospitalization, or other more intensive, high-cost services.

In 2022, the Minnesota Warmline responded to nearly 15,000 calls, texts and online chats. Since 2015, the Warmline has responded to more than 80,000 calls, texts and chats.

One in four of our callers tell us that they would go to an emergency room or use crisis/emergency services if they were not able to reach our Warmline service.

However, despite 25% of all callers indicating that they would use more intensive, higher cost services if they couldn't reach us, we believe that the Warmline is able to help reduce those numbers significantly through its provision of peer support for callers. In fact, 96% of callers are calmer at the end of the call, and less than 1% of all Warmline calls are transferred/handed off to crisis or emergency services.

So, of the 15,000 calls in 2022, up to 3,750 of those may have turned into ER visits or EMS/crisis calls. At a low estimate of \$1,000 per ER visit/call, **that's an annual estimated cost savings of \$3.75 million** in medical expenses because peer support is available to people when they need it. That number does not include any additional costs related to in-patient psychiatric treatment and other costs that can be incurred when a person utilizes hospitals/EMS. ***The cost of one call to the Minnesota Warmline is approximately \$18.***

15,000 calls x 25% of callers that could go to ER/use EMS or crisis

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3,750 potential ER/EMS/crisis calls in 2022

3,750 potential ER visits or EMS/crisis calls x \$1,000/visit or call = \$3,750,000 per year

Even if we stepped back to an estimate of just one in ten callers who would actually go to an ER or use EMS/crisis services, the savings are still significant. At one in ten, 1,500 ER visits/EMS or crisis utilization would still cost at least \$1.5 million annually.

The Minnesota Warmline provides upstream peer support that helps people address their concerns and symptoms before they reach a point of crisis.