



Supporting Behavioral Health During the Pandemic

Mike DeWine, Governor
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November 2020

Prevention and Recovery Support Providers - \$15,200,000

On Monday, November 9, 2020, the Controlling Board approved a request to redirect the remaining \$15.2M of CARES Act provider relief fund money originally allocated for behavior health providers. The initial \$45M of funding was approved by the Controlling Board in July, with a deadline for providers to apply by the end of October.

The funds will be distributed to behavioral health providers who deliver a continuum of care from prevention to recovery support to promote the mental health and wellness of youth, adults, and families. These payments will help prevention and recovery support providers who have incurred losses and are experiencing additional costs due to COVID-19, such as increased costs for staffing and overtime, PPE, enhanced cleaning, growing technology needs, and supplies for sustaining in-person services. To ensure that the funds are distributed quickly, OBM and OhioMHAS will work with non-profit intermediaries to help promote awareness of this opportunity and provide eligible providers with technical assistance when applying for the funds.

October 2020

On Monday, September 28, 2020, the Controlling Board approved \$10M of funding made available from the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help respond to the behavioral health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CARES Act allows these funds to be used for necessary pandemic-related expenditures incurred from March 1, 2020, through December 30, 2020.

Behavioral health problems are among the most commonly experienced adverse health effects of a pandemic, and demand for services historically increases during a crisis. Almost everyone in the community where an infectious outbreak occurs will feel some type of emotional effect as general anxiety increases with fear of contamination and death, financial instability and loss, lifestyle changes, and uncertain futures.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) will use CARES funding to support COVID-19 response efforts and strengthen the continuum of care in the three primary areas: 1) visibility and access to services, 2) psychiatric inpatient and crisis care, 3) supports for those in recovery. This document outlines how the money will be allocated.

Strengthening Crisis Care Services

Indigent Inpatient Capacity - \$1,800,000

Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic in March, the state hospital system has experienced a 40% decrease in admissions. In addition, the capacity has been reduced daily by over 150 beds, and access to OhioMHAS' six Regional Psychiatric Hospitals has been affected by the need to establish quarantine units in each hospital. In order to serve those Ohioans in need of inpatient behavioral health treatment, \$1.8 million dollars will be used to reimburse local ADAMH Boards for indigent, civil patients to be served at inpatient private psychiatric hospitals at a rate of \$750 per day for up to seven days.

Peer Supporters in Local Hospital Settings - \$500,000

Peer support is the “process of giving and receiving encouragement and assistance to achieve long-term recovery” (Mead, 2003). This funding will be used to train and recruit peer supporters in non-traditional settings, including Federally Qualified Health Centers, emergency departments, permanent supportive housing, and homeless shelters, to respond to families in need across Ohio in the primary care system.

Mental Health First Aid Training for First Responders - \$30,000

Law enforcement officers are often called to respond to a person who may be experiencing a mental health emergency. Appropriate responses to a person experiencing a mental health emergency are critical to the health of the individual and the community. Training will be offered to first responders (i.e. law enforcement, firefighters, EMS, dispatchers, and jail staff) to assist them in gaining skills to identify individuals who may be experiencing mental health issues and prepare them on how to appropriately respond. First responders will also learn how to identify ways to use resources to help individuals access needed behavioral healthcare.

Supporting People in Recovery

Expand Tele-Recovery Check-Ins - \$300,000

Late night and weekends are vulnerable times for individuals in recovery, particularly during the pandemic as traditional in person support groups (e.g. Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, etc.) are not occurring as often as they were and access to supportive environments, such as drop in centers, have been greatly reduced. This funding will support recovery support providers in applying non-traditional ways to proactively connect with people in recovery.

Take Back Ohio Expansion - \$300,000

Take Back Ohio combines many pathways to recovery along with healthy eating and lifestyles, eight dimensions of wellness, and the practice of strengths-based thinking. This will embed holistic recovery tools and resiliency to individuals with lived experience.

Increasing Public Awareness of Mental Health and SUD Issues and Strengthening Access to Care

Community Education and Outreach - \$2,000,000

The Community Education & Outreach initiative seeks to decrease stigma and connect Ohioans to support for emotional distress, mental health conditions, or substance use challenges that are brought on or exacerbated by COVID-19. Local partners will reach Ohioans of all ages with this information in communities throughout the state. Educational materials and information will be distributed to Ohioans to help them understand the signs and symptoms of emotional distress, mental health promotion strategies to manage emotional distress, and pathways to get help when needed.

Implementing organizations will engage with local partners for distribution of information and educational resources focused on managing emotional distress for children/youth/adults/older adults/families, signs and symptoms of mental illness, and where to call/text to connect to help or services and supports including local resources and the Ohio Care Line and Crisis Text Line. OhioMHAS will provide templates for print materials and for the Care Line and Text Line. This information may be supplemented. Information should be disseminated in the community at locations where people are already safely interacting, including but not limited to Job and Family Services, food pantries, Grab & Go meal pick-up, produce distribution sites, churches/temples/mosques, COVID testing sites, and other locations culturally relevant to a variety of citizens in the community.

Trauma Treatment Trainings - \$105,000

First responders are often faced with inherently difficult and stressful situations that the general public does not face. They are typically the first to arrive on the scene of events involving injuries and loss of life. No training can prepare one for horrific circumstances, and the response can result in anxiety and stress that could lead to trauma and potentially suicidal thoughts. In fact, there is evidence that post-traumatic stress disorder is higher among first responders than in the general population. Finally, these circumstances often place first responders at risk for secondary or vicarious trauma (SAMSHA, 2018). The pandemic has impacted them even further by their involvement as often first on the scene for the surge in overdoses and suicides occurring and anticipated in the coming months. Behavioral health providers often struggle with appropriately treating these individuals due to their distinctive needs. This funding will provide specialized training for licensed mental health clinicians to respond to the unique needs of first responders.

Ohio CareLine Marketing - \$1,700,000

As all Ohioans continue to experience pandemic-related stress, OhioMHAS has developed a 24/7 helpline staffed with licensed clinicians to help direct people to care and provide them with real-time mental health services. These funds will focus on raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of mental illness and promote the Ohio CareLine.

Expanded support for Urban Minority Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Outreach Programs (UMADAOPs) - \$220,000

Ohio's 11 UMADAOPs are located throughout the state and focus on alcohol and drug prevention in minority communities. Minority populations have been most vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic, potentially causing additional trauma and stress for entire communities. These funds will allow UMADAOPs to expand existing efforts to link minority communities to prevention, treatment, and recovery resources.

Community Conversations - \$200,000

Through faith-based partners and local NAMI chapters, this funding will be used to hold conversations around suicide and the dangers of opioid misuse. These discussions will provide tools for community members to host family conversations on these topics and will touch families and individuals who would not otherwise seek support in the behavioral health system.

Child Welfare Mental Illness Training - \$150,000

This money will be used to help provide additional training for child welfare workers on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness in clients that may be amplified as a result of the additional stress of the pandemic. This training will also help child welfare workers learn the appropriate ways to respond and how to connect their clients to mental health services and supports.

Family-Focused Training - \$250,000

Everyone is at an elevated risk for behavioral health challenges during the pandemic. Families experiencing poverty and those who are child welfare-involved are under even greater stress during this time. This funding will develop a video or video series (totaling less than one hour), targeting parents and caregivers, on what to do if you believe a loved one (especially a child) is struggling. The video will highlight strategies that families will use at home, guidance on when to reach out for help, and how to connect to the behavioral health care system. The video will be available to families who are reaching out to local ADAMH Boards and child welfare agencies asking for help with concerning behaviors in their children.

Suicide Prevention Trainings - \$50,000

Gatekeeper training refers to programs that seek to develop individuals' knowledge, attitudes, and skills to identify

those at risk of suicide, determine levels of risk, and make referrals when necessary. Gatekeepers can include anyone who is strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide (e.g., parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, coaches, caseworkers, police officers). This addition of \$50K to the current program will incorporate Take Back Ohio support groups in consumer-operated services and recovery community organizations. Targets include those supporting the following populations: elders, farmers, veterans, adult males, communities of color, faith communities, and Educational Service Centers through the Ohio Department of Education. This funding will train approximately 500 people and provide materials for many more.

Support for Higher Education Students - \$1,000,000

In partnership with the Ohio Department of Higher Education, these funds will support the formation of sustainable collaborations between campuses and community behavioral health partners. By leveraging behavioral health services expertise, expanding infrastructure needs for telehealth, distributing awareness resources, providing training to existing campus networks (e.g. Greek system), these funds will spur the formation of new partnerships while improving access to mental health services for college students.

Support for K-12 Students - \$1,000,000

In partnership with the Ohio Department of Education, these funds will expand evidence-based practices to ensure that Ohio's students have safe and supportive learning environments and access to evidence-based prevention, early intervention, and treatment services in their schools and communities. The capacity of Educational Service Centers will be built up to serve as best practice centers for supporting schools with development of a Student Assistance Program Framework.