

DHSS Awarded \$3.58 Million Federal Grant to Increase Addiction Treatment Capacity Among Medicaid Providers

NEW CASTLE (Sept. 26, 2019) – The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently awarded the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services a \$3.58 million planning grant to increase the treatment capacity of Medicaid providers to deliver substance use disorder treatment and recovery services to Delawareans in need.

Delaware was one of 15 states to receive the 18-month planning grants to increase addiction-related services through:

- An ongoing assessment of the SUD treatment needs of the state.
- Recruitment, training and technical assistance for Medicaid providers who offer SUD treatment or recovering services.
- Improved reimbursement for and expansion of the number or treatment capacity of Medicaid providers.

“We are grateful to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for providing this technical assistance to Delaware during the ongoing opioid crisis,” Gov. John Carney said. “We also appreciate the members of our congressional delegation supporting this critical work to increase our treatment capacity of Medicaid providers statewide.”



Counseling is an important component of treatment for addiction.

“With one in every four Delawareans being a Medicaid

recipient, the need for treatment and recovery support is critical to stem this epidemic,” said Lt. Gov. Bethany Hall-Long. “The Behavioral Health Consortium is pleased we have our congressional delegation partnering with us to get more boots on the ground to save lives and expand care.”

“As our country continues to grapple with a deadly opioid epidemic, it is critical that we continue working to ensure that all those suffering from addiction have access to the life-saving treatment they need,” U.S. Sen. Tom Carper said. “By providing additional training and resources to Medicaid providers for substance use disorder treatment, we can help ensure that more Delawareans, regardless of their means or what community they live in, receive high-quality care.”

“As opioid-related deaths reach epidemic levels in Delaware and across the country, we need an all-hands-on-deck approach to stop this crisis. Already this year, we’ve lost over 200 Delawareans to suspected overdose deaths,” Sen. Chris Coons said. “This grant will allow the Department of Health and Social Services, along with Medicaid providers throughout the state, to focus on keeping our communities safe and bolstering our substance abuse treatment workforce.”

“Expanding treatment capacity and increasing resources to Medicaid providers is one of the most effective ways to combat the opioid epidemic in Delaware,” said U.S. Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester. “These resources from CMS will be crucial in continuing to improve our addiction treatment and ultimately, save lives.”

The Medicaid planning grant helps to meet priorities for Delaware’s treatment system outlined in 2018 recommendations from researchers and clinicians at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. In April 2017, DHSS Secretary Dr. Kara Odom Walker had asked Johns Hopkins to conduct a review of Delaware’s addiction treatment system. In July 2018, the Johns Hopkins team issued a [33-page report](#) that proposed four

main strategies:

- Increase the capacity of the treatment system.
- Engage high-risk populations in treatment.
- Create incentives for quality care.
- Use data to guide reform and monitor progress.

“Across our country, Medicaid is the largest payer of addiction treatment services,” Secretary Walker said. “In Delaware, this planning grant will help us increase the capacity for Medicaid-provided treatment and recovery services for vulnerable people who are suffering from this chronic and complex brain disease.”

Dr. Elizabeth Brown, Medical Director for the [Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance](#), said the funding will be used for data analysis, a rate review and reimbursement redesign, expanding the provider pool, and stakeholder engagement.

If you or a loved one is struggling with substance use disorder, please call DHSS’ 24/7 Crisis Services Helpline to be connected to trained crisis professionals who can discuss treatment options. In New Castle County, call 1-800-652-2929. In Kent and Sussex counties, call 1-800-345-6785. Individuals and families also can visit DHSS’ website, www.HelpIsHereDE.com, to find addiction treatment and recovery services in Delaware and nearby states.

As of Sept. 24, the Division of Forensic Science has reported a total of 209 suspected overdose deaths in Delaware this year. There is always a lag in terms of both toxicology analyses and death determinations. In 2018, there were 400 overdose deaths across the state, an increase of 16 percent from the 2017 total of 345 deaths.

-30-

The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of life of Delaware’s citizens by

*promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency,
and protecting vulnerable populations.*