

BHDDH Block Grant Priorities for 2016-2017

Mandated by Congress, block grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) are non-competitive grants awarded to states that provide funding for substance use disorder and mental health services.

BHDDH Priority Populations and Planned Activities from the Block Grant Application 2016-2017

- 1. Adults with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)** have higher levels of psychological distress and utilize more mental health services. They depend on “high-cost, intensive and reactive services” (especially hospital services). Historically, these services have had unsatisfactory results for consumers, while at the same time, they have driven behavioral healthcare costs higher in Rhode Island than in most other states.

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Reduce unnecessary Emergency Department use, hospital admissions and re-admissions, and length-of-stay by:
 - o Modifying Health Home contracts to reduce 30 re-admissions and Emergency Department use by Health Home clients.
 - o Using Health Home peer staff to help clients connect with community supports.

- 2. Older adults (over age 65) in Rhode Island with Serious Mental Illness** are admitted to mental health and substance use disorder facilities at a higher rate than the national average. Currently, roughly 80 percent of long-term care dollars are spent on elders and adults with disabilities in nursing homes, a third above the national average.

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Develop a needs assessment and joint action plan, and implement the plan with the Division of Elderly Affairs (DEA), RI Elder Mental Health Advisory Council (RIEMHAC), the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and Community Mental Health Organizations
 - o BHDDH to hold monthly meetings

- 3. Homeless adults with SMI** need affordable housing with supportive services that focus on housing retention. Additional programs are needed at both ends of the housing continuum, Housing First and Sober Housing models. There is a need for chronically homeless individuals to attain economic stability and to have behavioral healthcare services that meet their particular needs.

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Through their SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery) program, increase eligibility for supplemental security income (SSI)/social security disability income (SSDI) which are disability income benefits from the Social Security Administration.

- Coordinate with State SOAR program to increase the number of SSI and SSDI approvals for SOAR clients
- In Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) and Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) grant contracts, include requirements for providers to provide behavioral healthcare services that are community-based and more intensive than screening
 - Change provider contracts to increase the number of PATH and CABHI consumers getting intensive behavioral healthcare services
 - Monitor provider contracts
- Use CABHI to place clients in permanent supportive housing
- Include housing support services in the 115 Medicaid Waiver

4. Persons with or at risk of having Substance Use Disorders and/or Serious Mental Illness/Serious Emotional Disturbance

- **Accidental Overdose deaths**

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Reduce overdose deaths
 - Develop community strategies to reduce deaths in geographical “hot spots”
 - Promote community response , better prescribing practices and use of Naloxone
 - Support overdose survivors using the Anchor Emergency Department Peer Recovery Coaches program
- **Hepatitis C infections among behavioral health clients:**
 - Raise awareness among intravenous drug users (IVDUs) that they are at high risk for or may already have Hepatitis C due to lack of awareness among IVDUs of risk factors, preventive measures and effective treatments for Hepatitis C.

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Engage IVDUs in testing and treatment for Hepatitis C. Track Hepatitis C infection rates using Department of Health data
 - Provide a Hepatitis C Booth manned by Peer Recovery Coaches at the Rally4Recovery

5 – Tuberculosis (TB)

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Maintain or reduce the number of TB-infected individuals in the State’s general population
 - Enforce Behavioral Healthcare provider regulatory requirements for infection control, testing, counseling and evaluation for TB (using Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and Mental Health Block Grant Monitoring Tool)

6 – Pregnant and parenting women with substance use disorders and their children

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- All licensed behavioral healthcare provider contracts will require timely access to care as described in Substance Abuse Block Grant
 - o Amend all licensed Behavioral Healthcare Organization (BHO) contracts
- Make Providers, community organizations and insurers aware of access to treatment priorities for women
 - o Reach out to community organizations, providers and insurers
- Assess the gaps/unmet needs for interim services for substance abusing Pregnant Women and Women With Dependent Children and their children

7 – Transition age youth/young adults with Severe Mental Illness and Co-occurring Disorders

In the Block Grant Application, BHDDH committed to the following objectives and strategies:

- Increase youth/young adult engagement in treatment
 - o Implement Healthy Transitions and State Youth Treatment Planning Project grants
- Increase capacity for peer-delivered services to youth/young adults
 - o Develop peer curriculum, employ certified youth peers in Healthy Transition's Coordinated Specialty Care programs
- Recruit youth/young adults as Rally4Recovery volunteers