



## **CHESTNUT RECEIVES \$4 MILLION GRANT**

*Services to help bridge gap between physical, behavioral health*

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GRANITE CITY, ILL. – Adults living with serious mental illness, youth living with serious emotional disturbances, and people living with simultaneous mental health conditions and substance use disorders will have better access to treatment as a result of new federal grant funding for a local agency.

Chestnut Health Systems will receive \$4 million over the next two years from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The funding is part of an estimated \$450 million in nationwide funding to increase access to community mental health and substance use disorder treatment.

### **Integrated approach**

The funding will enable person-centered, team-based mental health services, substance use disorder treatment, and primary health care. Expanding treatment will benefit the most vulnerable citizens of Madison and St. Clair Counties and will produce better treatment outcomes.

With the funding comes Chestnut's designation as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC). There are just two such Clinics in Illinois and 113 in the U.S. CCBHCs provide person- and family-centered, integrated services including mental health treatment and substance use disorder treatment. CCBHCs are required to employ staff members credentialed in substance use; coordinate evaluation, inpatient psychiatric treatment, detox services, residential treatment, and crisis behavioral health services; offer specialized medication for treatment of substance use disorders; and offer evidence-based treatment. Services are available 24/7.

The need for CCBHCs is heightened by COVID-19, as they reduce hospitalizations and facilitate telehealth service delivery – both important given social distancing recommendations. Further, CCBHCs increase capacity for addiction treatment – important because job losses, isolation, and other life changes brought on by the outbreak can exacerbate substance use.

"People who need to address their mental health issues and to achieve recovery face a number of challenges," said Amy Gibbar, vice president of integrated care, Chestnut Health Systems. "Unaddressed social, emotional, physical, and mental health challenges will affect their entire life. The funding will enable us to provide greater access to evidence-based interventions. We anticipate a decreased number of crises, reduced risk of physical health problems, and engaging people in meaningful steps toward recovery."

With the funding, Chestnut will serve an additional 1,165 clients over the two-year project period.

### **Local incidence of drug use, mental illness**

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the National Comorbidity Survey Replication report that in Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois:

- 26,000 people have either serious emotional disturbances or serious mental illness;
- 5,700 are estimated to have serious mental illness with a co-occurring substance use disorder;
- 38,000-plus people have a substance use disorder and most are not receiving treatment;
- 7,100 people will experience bipolar disorder or a first episode of psychosis in a given year; and
- More than 31,000 will have a major depressive episode in a given year.

### **Complicating health conditions**

Also in Madison and St. Clair counties:

- Approximately 9,900 adults with serious mental illness also have metabolic syndrome;
- 2,900 have type II diabetes; and
- As many as 12,000 use tobacco products regularly.

Each contributes to a shorter life expectancy among people with mental illness compared to those without mental illness.

### **About Chestnut Health Systems**

Chestnut Health Systems is a non-profit organization that has cared since 1973 for persons needing behavioral health services. Chestnut provides substance use disorder treatment, mental health counseling, primary health care, credit counseling, and housing and supportive services. It is a leader in substance use-related research. More at [www.chestnut.org](http://www.chestnut.org).