



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority Receives Innovative Integrated Health Care Grant from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAGINAW, MI – Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority (SCCMHA) is proud to announce their award of a \$1.6 million grant for primary and behavioral health care integration (PBHCI) from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The purpose of the grant is to improve the physical health status of people with serious mental illnesses.

“We are honored and excited to be acknowledged as a recipient of this innovative funding award for the Saginaw community,” said Sandra Lindsey, CEO. “SCCMHA has been diligently working toward healthcare integration in our community for some time now and this grant will help put us at the forefront of a growing nationwide effort to promote prevention, early detection and treatment of behavioral health conditions at the same time a person’s physical healthcare needs are addressed.”

Currently SCCMHA, through its partnership with Health Delivery, Inc., identifies eligible consumers with one or more chronic health conditions such as insulin dependent diabetes, congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorders, and seizure disorders, and works to provide care coordination and management of these illnesses in the health home. The State of Michigan has instituted three official health homes and SCCMHA is acting as a “shadow site” - while not officially identified by the state, SCCMHA is participating in the transformation of health care to include behavioral health and physical health services within the physician office setting. This grant from SAMHSA will help SCCMHA enhance and extend these services to all eligible consumers.

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SCCMHA Integrated Health Grant

The grant dollars will be used to support the Saginaw community in coordinating and integrating primary care services into the community mental health programs and services SCCMHA currently provides as well as other community-based behavioral health settings. In doing so, SCCMHA intends to continue to build the necessary partnerships and infrastructure to support this goal. SCCMHA will partner to expand the current offering of primary healthcare services for people with serious mental illness in an effort to improve the health status of consumers served by SCCMHA.

The impact of untreated behavioral health conditions on individuals' lives and the cost of health care delivery in the United States is staggering. Data collected through SAMHSA indicates that people with mental illness are more likely to have chronic health conditions such as high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke than those without mental illness. And those individuals are more likely to use costly hospitalization and emergency room treatment. Additionally, individuals with major mental health diagnoses are associated with death from 7 to 24 years earlier than for those without such disorders; substance use disorders are also associated with increased mortality.

"To achieve overall individual health and increase community health, it's imperative that prevention, early detection, and treatment of behavioral health conditions be integrated with physical healthcare," explained Colleen Sproul, SCCMHA's director of Health Home and Integrated Care. "Emotional, behavioral, and physical health do not function independently of one another - each has a direct impact on the other and by approaching healthcare in this way, we can create community and public health strategies that are more effective and help prevent other public health issues such as teen pregnancy, community and interpersonal violence, tobacco use, and homelessness. I couldn't be prouder to be leading this integrated approach charge at SCCMHA, and I am excited for the positive impact this grant will have on our community's health and wellbeing in the very near future."

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Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority is headquartered at 500 Hancock Street in Saginaw. SCCMHA provides numerous services including evaluations, screenings, treatments and referrals. SCCMHA assists approximately 5,000 Saginaw County citizens each year.