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**City of Huntington receives $2 million grant to address substance use epidemic**

HUNTINGTON – The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has awarded the City of Huntington a $2 million grant that will establish a process for helping those suffering from substance use disorder navigate treatment and recovery support services and provide more training for first responders and key community agencies that are on the front lines of the substance use epidemic.

The grant, which will be administered over a four-year period, will fund the creation of the Training Responders to Assess, Initiate, & Navigate (TRAIN) project. TRAIN will serve those who are unsheltered, who are unstably housed, who overdose, who seek treatment but fall out of care or who receive harm reduction services by closing the deadly gaps in the continuum of care.

By developing a HIPAA-compliant network of information sharing, case navigators will be able to minimize the gaps in the treatment network, improve outreach and increase compliance with treatment and recovery services while building on the current strengths of existing case managers and peer recovery support specialists.

TRAIN also will serve first responders and community agencies by providing extensive training on a broad range of topics surrounding the development, advancement and treatment of substance use disorder. TRAIN’s goal is to have trained more than 550 individuals during the next four years. Agencies that will receive training include the Huntington Police and Fire departments, PROACT, Quick Response Team (QRT), the Cabell-Huntington Health Department, peer recovery coaches, community health workers and Harmony House.

TRAIN will be supported by an advisory board that will include state and city leaders; first responders; individuals who have experienced substance use disorder and homelessness; and prevention, treatment and recovery professionals.

A team led by Lyn O’Connell, Ph.D., associate director of the division of addiction sciences at the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine and chair of the Huntington Mayor’s Council of Public Health and Drug Control Policy, wrote the grant application with assistance from Jan Rader, director of the Mayor’s Council of Public Health and Drug Control Policy.

“While Huntington has gained recognition as a city that develops innovative solutions to address the substance use epidemic, we acknowledge that this epidemic is constantly evolving, and we must always be vigilant and prepared,” Mayor Steve Williams said. “The TRAIN project will ensure that fewer individuals suffering from this scourge fall through the cracks in treatment and recovery and that those who are on the front lines are better equipped.

“I also would like to thank Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, Sen. Joe Manchin, state and county officials, Marshall Health, PROACT, state and county officials, the Cabell-Huntington Health Department and several of our community agencies for supporting this project. This is yet again a testament to the partnerships that our community has built to address our most challenging issues.”

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