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MCHD among agencies receiving funds to battle HIV epidemic

MOBILE, Alabama — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), has awarded approximately $117 million to expand access to HIV care, treatment, medication and prevention services. The Mobile County Health Department is among five agencies in Alabama to share in the funding.

This investment is a critical component of the Administration's Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America (EHE) initiative, which aims to reduce the number of new HIV infections in the United States by 90 percent by 2030.

The EHE initiative and this week’s awards focus on 48 counties, Washington, D.C., and San Juan, Puerto Rico, geographic areas where more than 50 percent of new HIV diagnoses occurred in 2016 and 2017, as well as the seven states with a substantial rural HIV burden.

“HRSA is a leader in working to end the HIV epidemic in the U.S.,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “These investments will support partnerships between organizations that are on the front lines of preventing and reducing HIV transmission, as well as improving the overall health outcomes for people with HIV.”

HRSA’s Health Center Program awards will be used to identify at-risk individuals and engage in preventive services, test for HIV and prescribe pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) when appropriate. Awards made to HRSA’s Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program recipients will be used to link people who are either newly diagnosed with HIV, or diagnosed but currently not in care, to essential HIV care, treatment, and support services, helping them reach viral suppression and reduce HIV transmission.

HRSA awarded nearly $54 million to 195 health centers with service delivery sites in geographic locations identified by the EHE initiative. MCHD received $284,155 in funding. This first-of-its-kind program emphasizes outreach, HIV testing, partnerships, and workforce expansion to increase access to and use of PrEP, as well as linking individuals who test positive for HIV to treatment.

HRSA awarded approximately $63 million to 60 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program recipients to link people with HIV to essential HIV care and treatment and support services, as well as to provide workforce training and technical assistance. This includes more than $55 million to 39 metropolitan areas and eight states, which are Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B jurisdictions, to enable recipients to implement strategies, interventions, approaches, and core medical and support services to reduce new HIV infections in the U.S. The state of Alabama received $1 million in funding.

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