

HHS Provides \$50 Million to Expand Treatment for Substance Use, Mental Health

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The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced its plans to provide \$50 million to expand treatment for substance use disorders and mental health.

The funds will be used to hire staff, add services and employ team-based models of care.

The funds will go to approximately 200 community health centers, UPI reports.

"Most behavioral health conditions are treatable, yet too many Americans are not able to get needed treatment," Health Resources and Services Administration Administrator Mary K. Wakefield said in a news release. "These new Affordable Care Act funds will expand the capacity of our network of community health centers to respond to the mental health needs in their communities."

The president's fiscal year 2014 budget also includes \$130 million to help teachers recognize signs of mental illness in students and refer them to services, and to support innovative state-based programs to improve mental health outcomes for young people. It also provides funds to train 5,000 more mental health professionals.

The number of people seeking addiction treatment could double under the Affordable Care Act. Under the new law, four million people with drug and alcohol problems will become eligible for insurance coverage. How many new patients will seek addiction treatment will depend in part on how many states decide to expand their Medicaid programs.