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Governor's Budget Invests in Mental Health
Rep. Greta Neubauer Applauds Today's Budget Announcement

MADISON – Today, Governor Tony Evers announced that his proposed 2021-23 State Budget will include substantial investments in mental health for both adults and children. Representative Greta Neubauer (D-Racine) issued the following statement in support:

“Long before the pandemic, mental health care accessibility and affordability have been major areas of need in the Racine community and across Wisconsin. The COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the need for comprehensive, affordable, and accessible mental health resources in our community.

“Investments in our mental health care infrastructure in Racine was one of my major requests for the new biennial budget, and I am pleased and grateful that the Governor has prioritized this care for adults, youths, and children in Wisconsin. This proposal touches every part of our community, including \$46 million to expand access; \$55 million for student mental health; \$25 million to address substance abuse and the opioid crisis; and \$25 million to reform crisis intervention and emergency detention.”

In total, the Gov. Tony Evers is proposing more than \$150 million in expanding access and affordability for mental healthcare for Wisconsinites. For a list of policies included in this proposal, please see below:

Increasing Access to Care- More than \$46 million over the biennium

- Expanding BadgerCare to extend reliable and affordable coverage to folks who lack access to needed mental health services and treatment;
- Ensuring that folks with private insurance have access to telehealth services, including telepsychiatry, by adopting a telehealth parity law;
- Investing more than \$40 million into Medicaid rates to bolster access to access to outpatient mental health services, substance use disorder treatment, and child-adolescent day treatment psychiatric services – all services critical to preventing mental and behavioral health crises and suicidal ideation;
- Providing funding to expand the Medicaid Psychosocial Rehabilitation Benefit to improve access to the continuum of behavioral health care and improve outcomes;
- Funding a new behavioral health treatment program to ensure folks who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind have access to critical and more effective healthcare services;
- Funding Behavioral Health Technology Grants to assist Wisconsin providers in integrating emerging technologies to improve healthcare delivery and health information exchange;
- Expanding the Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program to support veterans who may have a mental health condition or substance use disorder, as well as promote suicide prevention and awareness amongst traditionally underserved veteran populations; and
- As previously announced, providing funding for the Farmer Mental Health Assistance program and creating a Regional Farmer Mental Health Support Program to strengthen outreach and mental health services for Wisconsin's farm families.



Strengthening Student Mental Health Supports- More than \$55 million over the biennium

- Investing more than \$54 million in student mental health and wellness through aid to public schools, grants, and DPI programming in order to meet the growing mental health needs of Wisconsin youth; and
- Expanding the Child Psychiatry Consultation Program to cover the entire state.

Addressing Substance Use Disorders and the Opioid Crisis- More than \$25 million over the biennium

- Funding to expand BadgerCare to cover room and board costs for Wisconsinites receiving treatment in residential substance use disorder treatment facilities;
- Authorizing and funding Medicaid reimbursement for acupuncture services to ensure Wisconsinites have access to alternative methods for managing chronic pain;
- Increasing Medicaid rates for Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) to bolster access to medications, counseling, and behavioral therapies associated with this “whole-patient” approach to treating substance use disorders;
- Additionally, providing \$1.5 million to fund Medication-Assisted Treatment Grants aimed at supporting treatment centers, mobile treatment services, and a tribal MAT provider seeking to meet the recovery needs of Wisconsin’s tribal communities;
- Providing funding for Substance Use Harm Reduction Grants to support strategies aimed at reducing harm to those affected by substance use disorder, such as needle exchanges, peer support and recovery coaches, NARCAN Direct, among others;
- Funding to support the deployment of a Methamphetamine Addiction Treatment Training Program designed to promote best practices in treating folks affected by methamphetamine addiction; and
- Providing resources to support the procurement of an Addiction Treatment Platform that offers location, assessment and standards information to improve patient access to addiction treatment facilities.

Reforming Crisis Intervention & Emergency Detention- More than \$25 million over the biennium

- Provide funding to support the multiple Regional Crisis Centers that would provide crisis urgent care;
- Funding to support multiple Regional Crisis Stabilization Facilities to support a community-based treatment approach that aims to reduce the need for future intensive care;
- Increasing funding for the Crisis Intervention Training Grant program to provide enhanced training for law enforcement regarding situations involving mental health crises;
- Funding to support additional staff for county and peer-run respite center crisis phone lines;
- Providing funding to support a new Emergency Response Collaboration Grant to establish collaboration programs between local law enforcement and behavioral healthcare providers to simultaneously respond to 911 calls;
- Funding to support Milwaukee County Crisis Mobile and Trauma Response Teams to support a expand response to behavioral health crisis without law enforcement; and
- Funding to support a Behavioral Health Bed Tracker to provide “real-time” in-patient, peer respite, and crisis stabilization capacity and bed availability to reduce logistical challenges and improve the medical clearance process

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