MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Mental Health Programs Receive Grants to Improve Services

Genesee and Calhoun County Programs to receive more than $1.3 million

LANSING, MI, June 16, 2020 – The Michigan Supreme Court announced today that mental health programs in Genesee and Calhoun counties will be receiving federal Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) grants totaling over $1.3 million from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Courts order individuals with serious mental illness into AOT programs because they have been proven to help them avoid hospitalization, homelessness, arrest, incarceration, harm to self, and harm to others. Grant amounts include:

- Genesee Health Program Specialized AOT Program $808,173
- Calhoun County AOT Program (Summit Pointe) $549,231

"By helping people function successfully out of the hospital, these court-sponsored programs are the key to helping them stick to a treatment plan and stay healthy," said Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack. "These additional resources will help judges, court staff, and mental health professionals support patients as they reclaim their independence, regain confidence, and realize their potential."

Calhoun County Courts Chief Judge Mike Jaconette observed: "This grant will allow Calhoun County to build on the innovations involving community-based mental health treatment through more focused use of the Assisted Outpatient Treatment process championed by longtime Wayne County Probate Judge Milt Mack. Probate court involvement with those experiencing serious mental illness used to be more crisis-driven with an associated emphasis on emergent in-patient hospitalizations. Under the AOT model, and especially with the programming now possible through the grant, we will be able to increase the availability of effective community-based services to help meet the treatment needs of people under AOT orders, which hopefully will lead to fewer hospitalizations and reduced involvement with the criminal justice system."

The Genesee Health System specialized AOT program serves residents with severe mental illness, and who do not voluntarily engage in treatment and may be placed on AOT court orders. Key aims of the program are to increase education and collaboration of key community partners, increase engagement of individuals and their support persons in treatment, and reduce returns to the hospital.

"We are thrilled with the news that Genesee County will be receiving this grant," said Duncan Beagle, Chief Judge of Genesee County Circuit and Probate Courts. "This will allow Genesee Health System and community partners to continue to provide the necessary AOT resources and personnel to those who need it most – the severely and persistently mentally ill who suffer in the cycle of continuing hospitalizations. An enhanced AOT program will help tremendously in improving the overall treatment for the mentally ill population on all fronts, including the probate court, community-treatment providers, local hospitals, and families and support persons."

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"This grant is invaluable to build upon the efforts we have been making for the last two decades to support the mentally ill in our community from all walks of life," said Genesee County Probate Judge Jennie E. Barkey. "I'm very proud to have started the first Mental Health Court in Michigan in 2007 with the cooperation and dedication of our community partners. The program has improved lives and kept people from the cycle of continuing hospitalizations and incarcerations. A specialized AOT program now possible through the grant will only serve to further this endeavor."

SAMHSA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. For a complete list of the 2020 recipients, view the announcement here.

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