



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GRANT HELPS EXPECTANT MOTHERS, COMBATS ADDICTION

Uniontown, PA – Allegheny Health Network has been awarded an \$800,000 grant to help expectant mothers battling opioid addiction in Fayette County.

The grant, written by Michele Beener, President of Aspire Grant & Development, will be dispersed in \$400,000 increments by the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs over the next two years.

Beener worked with the Department of Women's Health to draft the grant in September, through the DDAP's Pregnancy Supportive Services Grant Initiative Funding. She said her goal was to help AHN support the launch of Perinatal Hope in Fayette County.

Designed to support underserved women battling substance/opioid abuse disorder, Perinatal Hope is western Pennsylvania's first all-inclusive program for maternal addiction that combines obstetrical care; drug and alcohol therapy; and medication-assisted treatment in one clinic visit.

"This application had synergy with the 2017 award made to AHN by Governor Wolf, designating the system as an Opioid Center of Excellence," Beener said, adding Aspire also worked with the Center for Inclusion Health in seeking the grant.

The grant is part of a \$55.9 million U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf secured to further combat the ongoing opioid crisis statewide.

"Pennsylvania continues its leadership role in the national, statewide and local fight against the scourge of opioids with a focus on all those affected by this crisis," Wolf said. "These grants will go a long way to create or expand programs to help vulnerable pregnant and postpartum women get the services they need to treat opioid use disorder and start a healthy life for them and their newborns."

Wolf signed an executive order in July, strengthening protections for vulnerable populations. The order supports providers, such as Allegheny Health Network, that offer innovative and critical services to pregnant and postpartum women with substance abuse issues.

"As public servants, we have an obligation to help all individuals, but especially (those) that greatly influence the future of Pennsylvania, like our children," Wolf said. "I look forward to the innovative services this funding will support and its positive effects on the health and safety of our youngest Pennsylvanians."

The grant can be used to assist women as they engage in evidence-based treatment programs, providing postpartum physical and mental health care, child care during periods when the mother is undergoing treatment, and education services for parenting-, nutritional- and employment-readiness.

DDAP Secretary Jen Smith said, while Pennsylvania has made great strides against the opioid crisis, there are still too many citizens suffering in Fayette County and beyond - and making an impact will require continued offering of innovative services for those in need.

“With the unprecedented amount of federal funding flooding Pennsylvania, we are committed to creating services and supports that wouldn’t be available otherwise, while focusing on building a drug and alcohol treatment system that can adequately address all Pennsylvanians, including priority populations like pregnant women,” Smith said.

For more information, contact Beener at mbeener@aspiregrantdev.com or visit www.ddap.pa.gov.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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