

Davis Announces Opioid Response Planning Grants for Rural Communities

June 3 2019 1:24 AM



WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis (R-Ill.) today announced federal help for many communities fighting the opioid epidemic. The Health Resources and Services Administration has awarded Rural Communities Opioid Response planning grants to five organizations and agencies in central and southwestern Illinois. Each of the awards is in the amount of \$200,000.

"These grants will go along way in helping our communities address the opioid epidemic their areas," said Davis. "Last Congress, we made fighting this epidemic in our rural communities a priority. I held multiple meetings with local officials, first responders, and law enforcement to understand the needs of our communities in crisis and we passed more than 60 bills to help address opioid addiction from every angle.

Today, I'm glad to see these efforts are reaching many of the communities we intended to help."

Below are the organizations and agencies that received the funding through this program:

Jersey Community Hospital District- These funds will establish the Community Addiction Recovery and Education Services (CARES) Consortium in collaboration with a group of local member organizations and develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan, Workforce Plan, and Sustainability Plan to address the extreme need for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) prevention, treatment, and recovery services in Greene County and two rural census tracts of Jersey County, Illinois. In 2017, Jersey County had the highest rate of fatal overdoses in the state of Illinois. Greene and Jersey County rank either first or in the top five of several of the drug arrest rates, with Jersey County being first in the state for the rate of arrests for Drug Paraphernalia, first in the state for the rate of arrests for Hypodermic Syringes & Needles, and second in arrests for controlled substances. This program will help provide treatment, education, and recovery services within this region.

St. Francis Hospital, Third Order (Litchfield)- The grant will fund a one-year project that creates the Heroin Opioid Prevention Education (HOPE) Telehealth Consortium. This funding is provided for planning to support treatment for and prevention of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) in several rural Illinois communities. Activities include conducting a detailed needs assessment and analysis, developing a comprehensive strategic plan and workforce plan, and completing a sustainability plan. The long-term project goal is to strengthen organizational and infrastructural capacity to address prevention, treatment and recovery.

Macoupin County Health Department - Macoupin County has been designated as a mental health professional shortage area (HPSA) since 2005, with a current shortage of five mental health professionals to serve the Macoupin County population. The funding from this grant will be used to create a detailed analysis to identify opportunities and gaps in opioid use disorder prevention, treatment, and/or recovery workforce, services, and access to care within the target area.

Chestnut Health Systems - Chestnut will use the grant to create a plan for substance use disorder treatment services in Clinton, Bond, Jersey, and Montgomery Counties in Southern Illinois. Those counties have been designated by the state as "desert" counties where there are few – if any – medication assisted treatment (MAT) providers. Chestnut will hire 1.5 full-time-equivalent coordinators and four recovery coaches to work with coalitions in those counties to determine the needs of individuals with opioid and other substance use disorders. This planning grant will help us develop a plan for long-term, sustainable resources for this population.

Southern Illinois University School of Medicine - SIU is charged with developing a data-driven strategic plan with the main goals of reducing opioid overdose, morbidity and mortality focused on the six counties represented by Western Illinois Counties Alliance (WILCA). WILCA Is a multi-sector alliance of the following counties: Adams, Brown, Hancock, McDonough, Pike and Schuyler. Community based research will help to identify areas of opportunity and disparity where it can develop programs, enhance community education, improve mental health disparity and support current medical providers with a focus on reducing the impact of the opioid crisis in this region.