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Kasich Administration to provide \$1.8 million to Cuyahoga County to stabilize, treat individuals in mental health or addiction crisis

Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) Director Tracy Plouck announced today that the department will partner with the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County to establish a 72-hour observation approach to augment crisis services. The state will provide \$1.8 million to develop short-term treatment units to stabilize individuals who are in psychiatric or substance abuse crisis and transition them to community services upon discharge.

"This concept was proposed by a group of Cuyahoga County hospitals, community providers and the ADAMHS board last fall," said Plouck. "We thought that it was an excellent idea, as it has the potential to triage individuals in crisis away from hospital emergency departments, avoid ultimately unnecessary psychiatric hospitalizations, and more efficiently connect folks with community-based services. At the time, though, there was not a source of one-time funds available to help us get this started."

Individuals in a health crisis related to substance abuse or psychosis often have nowhere to turn other than the emergency room. In that environment, it is difficult for clinicians to rapidly discern a primary diagnosis and determine the appropriate course of care, and the wait times and noise of an emergency room may not be the environment most conducive to treatment for an escalating brain disorder.

William M. Denihan, CEO of the ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County, added, "This is a pro-client public policy decision that addresses integrated critical client care both in mental health and addictions, and a more efficient use of limited resources. I am pleased and supportive of Director Plouck's decision and we are looking forward to working with ODMH during implementation of this important service."

Seventy-two hour crisis units will provide psychiatric stabilization and acute detoxification in conjunction with integrated medical services and connection to community services. Comprehensive services in a more appropriate setting will improve care for vulnerable people and decrease the use of services in other costly settings, like the emergency room.

"Many psychiatric and substance-induced crises can be successfully managed with brief crisis treatment," said ODMH Medical Director Mark Hurst, M.D. "For example, in the case of a person who is exhibiting psychiatric symptoms and has been drinking alcohol or using other drugs, it is difficult to determine specific treatment needs. The intoxicated person may become severely depressed and suicidal. A brief crisis stay is often helpful in providing a safe environment for simple alcohol detoxification and brief therapy to aid in resolution of symptoms. This can avert hospitalization, enable the person to return to his or her life in the community more rapidly and link them to appropriate continuing treatment that is essential for ongoing success."

Plouck considers these units a great addition to the continuum of care, especially in Ohio's urban areas. "By providing a setting for clinicians to stabilize individuals and determine who may or may not need inpatient care, it will alleviate stress on both public and private hospitals," she said.

ODMH leadership will meet with the ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County on September 7 to discuss the details of this new program. Representatives from area hospitals and community mental health providers will attend to give input on locations for services and to identify additional partners for the project.

Funding for this project is made possible through the state's Health Transformation Innovation Funds from the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act performance bonus Ohio received for enrolling more eligible children in Medicaid and CHIP.

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John R. Kasich, Governor • **Tracy J. Plouck**, Director

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