U.S. Rep. Kind: Works to expand access to substance abuse treatment in rural communities

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Contact: Aaron White
Phone: 202-225-5506
Aaron.White@mail.house.gov

Bill will also create grant aimed at preventing opioid and drug abuse for youth in rural communities

La Crosse – Today, **U.S. Rep. Ron Kind** cosponsored the *Medicaid C0verage for Addiction Recovery Expansion (CARE) Act*, which will expand access to substance abuse treatment centers for tens of thousands of Medicaid beneficiaries. Expanding access to treatment and increasing access to mental health care through Medicaid expansion are two priorities of Rep. Kind's Drug Epidemic Action Plan, which he introduced in April of this year.

"The *Medicaid CARE Act* targets two important tools to combat Wisconsin's growing drug epidemic: prevention and treatment," said **Rep. Ron Kind**. "Our rural communities are often underserved and need more resources and treatment centers that specialize in breaking the cycle of addiction. Now more than ever, a strategic and robust approach is needed so we can start the process of healing our communities."

Currently, only one out of nine people fighting addiction is receiving treatment. The *Medicaid CARE Act* will expand access to care by increasing the number of Medicare-funded treatment centers. It will also establish a new $50 million youth inpatient addiction treatment grant program to help support facilities that provide

treatment to underserved, at-risk Medicaid beneficiaries who are younger than 21 years old. The grant program will have an emphasis on rural communities.

Over 64,000 people in the United States died from drug related overdoses in 2016 – 42,000 from opioids alone. In Wisconsin, emergency room visits for opioid overdoses more than doubled over the course of a year.

Read Rep. Kind's full Drug Epidemic Action Plan here.