

Dept. of Health Services: Additional grants awarded to help reduce disparities in behavioral health care system

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The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) today announced four organizations have received funding to help providers better serve communities that continue to experience barriers to accessing behavioral health care. Each organization has received \$85,762 in one-time grants as part of an ongoing effort by DHS to improve health equity and access.

“With these grants, we are working towards improved health outcomes. We need to meet people where they are with respect, dignity, and understanding of cultural differences to meaningfully address the gaps in services,” said DHS Secretary-designee Kirsten Johnson. “We know when people have access to a system that respects the whole person and addresses an individual’s needs, beliefs, and preferences, they are empowered to create healthier outcomes for themselves and their communities.”

Grants have been awarded to the following organizations:

- **Dane County Department of Human Services, Madison:** To help staff better serve youth who identify as LGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous, and people of color.
- **Employment Resources, Madison:** To host five open forums to identify how to better support African American, Native American, Hispanic/Latinx, Hmong, LGBTQ+, people for whom English is not a primary language, and the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing populations.

- **N.E.W. Community Clinic, Green Bay:** To create a training series for clinic staff that will focus on how to better support Black, Indigenous, and people of color, and those experiencing homelessness.
- **Wisconsin Community Services, Milwaukee:** To hold four open forums focused on identifying and addressing the barriers people in Milwaukee face when accessing supports.

Gov. Evers declared 2023 the Year of Mental Health, and with today's grant awards, DHS has invested more than \$1.3 million this year across projects managed by 14 organizations to make Wisconsin's behavioral health care system more inclusive. [Ten organizations shared \\$1 million in grant funds earlier this year](#). The four projects funded by the grants awarded today must be completed by the end of March 2024. All the projects are funded through federal funds allocated to Wisconsin as part of an effort to respond to the behavioral health challenges created by COVID-19 pandemic.

Behavioral health professionals interested in getting updates about the all of the projects can [sign up to receive email notices](#).