

Dept. of Health Services: Gov. Evers, DHS awards \$1 million in grants to help reduce disparities in behavioral health care system

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Gov. Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) have awarded \$1 million in grants to increase access to mental health and substance use care for underserved communities. Ten organizations will each receive \$100,000 to develop projects that build on the ability of behavioral health professionals to support people with diverse values and beliefs.

“The past few years have been especially difficult for folks across our state, including exacerbating behavioral and mental health challenges. I declared 2023 the Year of Mental Health because failing to address this issue head-on could have devastating consequences for generations,” said Gov. Evers. “The organizations receiving these grants are doing the kind of work we must continue to invest in to ensure that all our Wisconsin communities have adequate access to mental and behavioral health services.”

The following organizations and their respective projects were awarded funding:

- **Arbor Place, Menomonie:** Forums on how to meet the needs of people who live in rural communities.
- **Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin, Menasha:** A series of trainings on the needs of people with autism and how to better serve them.
- **Chrysalis, Madison:** Facilitation of a diversity, equity, and inclusion learning community for certified peer specialists. EOTO is a partner in this work.
- **Community Advocates, Milwaukee:** A series of trainings on the needs of

the LGBTQ+ community and how to provide an inclusive therapeutic experience for sexual and gender diverse people.

- **HIR Wellness Institute, Milwaukee:** A three-day forum focused on the mental health needs of Black, Indigenous, and people of color.
- **Hmong American Friendship Association, Milwaukee:** Workshops and webinars on how to engage and support members of the Hmong community.
- **Meta House, Milwaukee:** A forum on the treatment model used by the Meta House to serve people who identify as female and their children and families from all backgrounds.
- **Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services, Milwaukee:** Trainings for Milwaukee County staff and provider partners on how to address gaps in the county's system of care. Uplifting Impact is a partner in this work.
- **Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition, Milwaukee:** A three-day conference and several one-day workshops focused on the needs of Muslims.
- **SOAR Case Management Services, Madison:** A series of trainings focused on improving the quality of peer supports for multiple communities.

“It is critical that all state residents have access to mental health and substance use care, no matter their language, social, or cultural needs,” said DHS Deputy Secretary Deb Standridge. “The projects supported by these grants are a step toward developing a more welcoming network of services that values and embraces equity and inclusion.”

Behavioral health professionals interested in getting updates on the projects can [sign up to receive email notices](#). Projects must be completed by the end of this year.

A [request for applications](#) for this funding was issued in September 2022. Twenty-five organizations submitted applications.

The grants are funded by Wisconsin's share of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding allocations that states receive from the U.S. Department of Treasury. More than \$100 million in [funding from the American Rescue Plan Act](#) is being used to transform Wisconsin's system of care for mental health and substance use.