



National Association for Rural Mental Health

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NACBHDD-NARMH JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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New NACBHDD Initiative

Developing Essential County Behavioral Health Services to Reduce the Prevalence of Persons with Mental Illness and Substance Use Conditions in County Jails

NACBHDD is delighted to announce a new initiative to develop county behavioral health services, programs, and management to reduce the prevalence of persons with mental illness and substance use conditions in county jails.

Several key NACBHDD Corporate Partners will join in this initiative. These include Alkermes, Inc., Centene Corp., Johnson and Johnson Health Care Systems, Inc., Optum, Inc., Otsuka America Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Takeda Pharmaceuticals America, Inc. In addition, our NACBHDD affiliate, the National Association for Rural Mental Health, will participate in the initiative.

The number of persons with mental illness and substance use conditions in county jails has become an acute national problem. Multiple sources estimate that up to 25% of this jail population has a mental condition and up to 50% has a substance use condition, with a high level of comorbidity between the two. Thus, on any given day, county jails are caring for more than 550,000 persons with these illnesses. To begin addressing this issue, the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the Council of State Governments (CSG) have undertaken a Stepping Up Initiative.

NACBHDD believes strongly that a critical key to the success of this initiative will be the transformational activities and programs undertaken by county mental health/substance use/behavioral health departments. Therefore, NACBHDD simultaneously is undertaking a new program to provide related assistance to these county departments. To make the necessary expertise, documents, and

collaborations available, NACBHDD is contracting for expert assistance, specifically to organize focus groups and learning communities, and to offer webinars, consultations, and other needed tools to improve and transform county behavioral health programs.

The new NACBHDD program will be initiated on October 1, 2015.

Please see the attached initiative overview for additional details.

For questions and inquiries: Ron Manderscheid, PhD, Executive Director, NACBHDD/NARMH, at rmanderscheid@nacbhd.org or 202-942-4296.