

KDADS Awarded \$3.1 Million Grant

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) has been awarded \$3,114,402 for the first year of a two-year grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for the prevention and treatment of opioid abuse in Kansas.

“Opioid addiction and abuse is a growing problem in Kansas, as it is in the rest of the country,” KDADS Secretary Tim Keck said. “Kansas is the 16th highest opioid prescribing state in the country. We are working to address this critical public health issue before it gets any worse.”

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) reports that, between 2013 and 2015, Kansas’ prescription opioid overdose death rate increased by 28 percent and heroin deaths increased by 71 percent.

Increases in opioid-related drug misuse and deaths parallel the increase in prescription opioid availability. According to data from Kansas Tracking and Reporting of Controlled Substances (KTRACS), the Kansas prescription drug monitoring program, there were more than 4.2 million Schedule II-IV prescriptions and more than 256 million pills dispensed in Kansas in 2014. Furthermore, more than 100,000 Kansas patients had overlapping prescriptions for opioids and benzodiazepines and more than 75,000 patients had more than 90 morphine-milligram equivalent per day of opioid prescriptions in 2014.

The grant funding, announced today by HHS Secretary Tom Price, is part of the first of two rounds provided for in the 21st Century Cures Act. It is being made available through the State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis Grants administered by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

KDADS’ Behavioral Health Commission will implement, oversee and monitor grant activities; 80 percent of the grant funding will be used to pay for treatment and recovery activities, with the remainder going to prevention, early intervention and public education.

The agency plans to issue an RFP to identify prospective providers to manage all elements of the project within four targeted regions, West, Southeast, Northeast and Southcentral (Wichita area), including quality assurance and timely care, and to communicate progress to the state. In addition, a special project under the grant will focus on methadone treatment clinics. KDADS licenses and regulates nine methadone clinics in five counties that treat individuals for heroin and other opioid addictions.