

# DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

## • Strategic Plan Highlights •

FY18 Second Quarter

### DMH Focuses on Opioid Prevention and Awareness

#### Goal 1, Objective 1.9 — Provide a comprehensive array of substance use disorder treatment, prevention and recovery support for services

Over the last six months, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) has worked to increase awareness and prevention efforts surrounding opioid use in the state.

Efforts began in May 2017, when DMH, in partnership with several Mississippi agencies, including the Department of Public Safety, the Bureau of Narcotics, the Board of Pharmacy, and the Mississippi offices of the FBI, hosted the first of 19 town hall meetings across the state. The series of town hall meetings are open to the public and held throughout the state to educate communities about the growing issue of opioid abuse. More than 3,000 people have attended the meetings and additional town halls are scheduled beginning in the Spring of 2018.

Shortly after the town hall meetings began, DMH started efforts to educate and distribute naloxone, a life-saving medication that blocks or reverses the effects of opioid overdoses, to law enforcement officers in high risk areas to combat overdose deaths. DMH is providing the naloxone through funding provided by the State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis grant awarded as part of the 21st Century Cures Act passed by Congress in December 2016.

As of December 2017, DMH has distributed 5,892 doses of naloxone and provided education to more than 3,950 law enforcement officers in 104 different agencies in 49 counties. Of that, 25 doses have already been used and 23 lives have been saved. There are likely many others that have not been reported.

To increase awareness of the problem in our state, on December 6, 2017, DMH and six other state agencies announced the launch of Stand Up, Mississippi, a comprehensive media campaign to address the opioid epidemic. The Stand Up, Mississippi campaign is funded through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). As part of the campaign, DMH and its partners have launched a comprehensive resource website ([www.standupms.org](http://www.standupms.org)) that includes educational information about opioids, where to find treatment centers across the state, information about drop box locations, and other resources. In addition, Stand Up, Mississippi outreach efforts include presentations to local and state level organizations to educate citizens on opioids and combat the stigma of addiction. DMH and its partners have presented to high schools, local Rotary Clubs, Lyons Clubs, Mississippi Hospital Association, Dental Associations, MS Association of Realtors, to name a few.

“We hope to inspire Mississippians to work together to build healthier communities by understanding the dangers of opioids, learning the signs and symptoms of addiction, and finding out about treatment for themselves or people they know who may be suffering,” said Diana Mikula, DMH Executive Director. “The partnerships we have are essential in helping us educate communities about the impact addiction is having on our state.”

According to the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, for the past three years there were 486 reported drug overdoses in Mississippi. Of those reported, 394 were opioid related.

Understanding addiction and strong prevention efforts is key to keeping Mississippi families safe.



FY18 Second Quarter

## Juvenile Outreach Programs Improve Transitions

**Goal 1, Objective 1.7, Strategy 1.7.3—Offer services through the Juvenile Outreach Programs that are necessary for a successful transition from a detention center back to the community**

What began as an effort to develop a collaborative partnership for Juvenile Outreach Programs (JOP) in 2010 has turned into a sustained program that served 1,587 youth in FY17. During the first half of FY18, JOP have already served 847 youth.

DMH supports 14 JOP operated by Community Mental Health Centers throughout the state, all of which provide linkage and access to mental health services to youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system. The programs provide assessments, community support, wraparound facilitation, and a number of other services to youth with serious emotional disorders and/or mental illnesses who are in detention centers or the juvenile justice system.

The JOP services provide not just access to treatment while youth are in a detention center, but aftercare or follow-up services for six months as well. The goal for the youth is to improve their behavioral and emotional symptoms, and also to prevent future contacts between them and the youth courts.

“Services provided by the JOP have resulted in mental health services becoming a regular and very beneficial part of the lives of the youth staying at the Forrest County and Jones County Juvenile Detention Centers,” said Szilvia Legradi, JOP therapist for the Forrest and Jones County Detention Centers.

Youth participate in individual and group therapy multiple times a week and can request sessions any time they feel the need to talk to the JOP therapist. They all participate in the treatment planning process as well, from initial assessment through discharge from the detention center. They also decide what mental health, educational, and vocational services they will receive, and provide feedback about the services.

In short, they receive a number of services that involve them and take their feedback into account, and the results have spoken for themselves. In Forrest and Jones Counties, 95 percent of youth were successfully transitioned back to their homes and the recidivism rate dropped three percent in FY17.

In Region 10’s JOP in Lauderdale County, the program has allowed the constant and consistent presence of a mental health therapist at the juvenile center.

“Having a JOP mental health therapist available to collaborate with youth court counselors has really improved matching youth with the appropriate mental health services,” said George Dancy, Region 10. “The JOP mental health therapist has helped our mental health center develop programs better suited for both adjudicated and non-adjudicated youth who have been served through the juvenile center.”

Outcomes throughout the state in FY17 have shown positive results for the youth served and the results are continuing in the first half of FY18. In Lee County, 69 percent of youth in the program showed significant improvement in their symptoms. Leflore County had 90 percent of their clients participate in individual and family therapy sessions.

Sandra Parks, Director of the Division of Children and Youth at DMH, said the JOP has been a win-win for all people and agencies involved.

“The local youth courts and detention centers are better equipped to understand and refer youth to services quickly. The Community Mental Health Centers have strengthened their partnership with their local court systems and have experienced positive youth and family outcomes,” Parks said.

