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# Press Release

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## **Weymouth Health Department Among Coalition Partners Awarded South Shore Health Grant**

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Weymouth, MA – The Town of Weymouth’s Health Department was one of 11 partnering agencies awarded funding through South Shore Health System’s [South Shore Community Behavioral Health Initiative \(SSCBHI\)](#). South Shore Health announced the program in March of 2019 and accepted proposals from non-profit agencies to address social determinants of health with a focus on behavioral health. In May of 2019, South Shore Health awarded \$1.8 million in grants to two agencies, Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) and Bay State Community Services, Inc. The Town of Weymouth collaborated with Bay State Community Services, along with 9 other agencies, to form the Greater South Shore Behavioral Health Collaborative and submit a proposal. The collaborative was awarded \$930,000 by SSCBHI.

“Weymouth is proud to partner with South Shore Health, Bay State Community Services, and the many other agencies in this collaborative to address the barriers impeding access to services for those with behavioral health needs,” **said Mayor Hedlund**. “This program will help us better serve the residents of Weymouth as well as residents across the South Shore, and we are excited to be a partner.”

The grant, which will be allocated over 5 years, provides funding to the awarded agencies for the implementation of a three-pronged strategy to address barriers to accessing care for behavioral health needs, including mental health and substance use disorders. The three strategies include: the formation of a Governance Committee comprised of chief executives from each agency to address systemic and operational barriers to care; the creation of a resource pathway tool that will provide one electronic platform for all care providers to access resources and manage cases;

and care coordination amongst the care providers, all led and overseen by a Program Manager.

The objective of the program is to provide top-down support through the Governance Team as well as improve access to wrap-around services through the common pathway tool and care coordination. The goal is to ensure that those with critical needs that are identified as the highest utilizers or most at-risk are receiving the services they need.

"This grant presents us with an amazing opportunity to strengthen pre-existing relationships and serve the people of Weymouth who need behavioral health services in a timely and innovative manner," **said Paul Williams, Weymouth Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator.** "We are looking forward to this collaboration and excited about the work ahead."

The 11 partnering agencies that comprise the Greater South Shore Behavioral Health Collaborative include: Bay State Community Services, Inc. (BSCS) as the lead agency; Aspire Health Alliance; Brockton Area Multi Services; Inc. (BAMSI); Blue Hills Community Health Alliance (CHNA 20); Father Bill's & MainSpring; Manet Community Health Center; Quincy Community Action Program (QCAP); Quincy Asian Resources, Inc. (QARI); South Cove Community Health Center; South Shore Community Action Council (SSCAC); and the Weymouth Public Health Department.

All of the partners met for several weeks to create the proposal and 5-year program that secured the funding. In addition to the creation of the pathway tool and the hiring of a Program Manager, partnering agencies will contribute about \$110,000 of in-kind support and the funded partners will receive approximately \$16,250 for four years to implement care coordination services.

"Together, we will coordinate and harness existing resources, provide care coordination and navigation, and work collaboratively to address barriers and gaps in services," said **Daurice Cox, Chief Executive Officer of Bay State Community Services.** "We are grateful to the generosity of South Shore Health System for this opportunity to respond to the needs of our community."

The program is anticipated to begin in July with the Program Development Phase. The Program Implementation will commence in January of 2020 and conclude in December of 2022. Final evaluation will take place in 2023. The program is designed to be evaluated intermittently and sustained beyond the life of the grant, to ensure continuous provision of services.

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