

NEWS RELEASE



Governor Bob Taft

TAFT ANNOUNCES OVER \$14 MILLION AWARDED TO OHIO TO TRANSFORM MENTAL HEALTH CARE

COLUMBUS (October 3, 2005) - Governor Bob Taft today announced Ohio has been awarded more than \$14 million by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) over the next five years to assist in transforming the delivery of quality mental health services across the state.

"Ohio is transforming mental health care to better serve individuals with mental illnesses and emotional disorders," Taft said. "This federal funding is essential for improving collaboration across the multiple state and local agencies providing services to persons with mental illness."

The Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant Program is part of the federal response to the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. The Commission was chaired by Ohio Department of Mental Health Director Mike Hogan, Ph.D.; it was charged by President Bush to make recommendations to improve mental health care, and overcome the fragmentation of health and mental health care. Its report, *Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America*, was released in July 2003.

The grant resources, and collaborative relationship between Ohio and the federal government that comes with it, will help Ohio transform its mental health system to one that is more consumer and family driven.

"The Commission's goal, one that we embrace in Ohio, is that every person with a mental illness should have a realistic expectation of recovery and resiliency," Hogan said. "We know mental health is integral to overall health. This grant will help us address mental illnesses with the same urgency as other medical problems, and to assure that all Ohioans with mental illness can live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities."

To implement the grant, Governor Taft will convene a Cabinet level group to look at and improve the approach to mental illness care across many areas of government (e.g. health care, criminal justice, education). The Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) will work with organizations representing county mental health boards, mental health providers, consumers, families and advocates to assure that Ohio's approach increases quality and availability, eliminates duplication and fragmentation and assures that quality programs and services are provided. Transformation within the ODMH-funded mental health system will be guided by the Strategic Advisory Committee, a diverse group of mental health system representatives.

Funding for Ohio includes \$2,388,700 dollars in the first year and \$2,750,000 in the second year. The expected funding for the last three years of the grant is \$3 million per year.

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