



LifeStream Receives HHS Grant Award

LifeStream Behavioral Center, a ValueOptions® provider-partner in north Florida, is one of 43 agencies nationwide to be awarded a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services. The grant, in the amount of \$496,862 per year for up to four years, is to provide primary care services to individuals with behavioral disorders in Lake and Sumter counties.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius awarded more than \$26.2 million in grants to support and promote better primary care and behavioral health services for individuals with mental illnesses or substance abuse disorders. The majority of the grants are funded by the Affordable Care Act's Prevention and Public Health Fund to improve health status by improving the coordination of healthcare services delivered in publicly funded community mental health and other community-based behavioral health settings.

“These awards represent a long overdue investment in the health of some of our most vulnerable populations,” said Sebelius. “The long-established split between ‘mental’ and ‘physical’ health is not justified in research and should not be perpetuated in health care. These grants are part of an unprecedented push by the Affordable Care Act to help prevent and reduce chronic disease and promote wellness by treating behavioral health needs with equality to other health conditions.”

The grants include up to \$20.9 million to help 43 community behavioral health agencies integrate primary care into their services. Up to \$500,000 per year will be available for four years to each grantee, depending on the availability of funds, need and the progress achieved by the grantee.

The National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, Washington, DC, will receive the remaining \$5.3 million in grant funds to establish a national resource center dedicated to integrating primary and behavioral health care. The center, which will be funded jointly by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), will provide training and technical assistance to community behavioral health programs, community health centers and other primary care organizations. The center will also help develop models of integrated care. From these models both primary and behavioral health care practitioners can learn to address the comprehensive health needs of patients no matter where individuals obtain care.