

Substance Abuse Treatment for Children and Pregnant Women

FACTSHEET

Status:

- The 2006 federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health estimated that 270,000 Arkansans needed treatment for alcohol or drug abuse. In that same year, only 16,000 or six percent (6%) were admitted for treatment in Arkansas.
- State governments pay dearly for the failure to effectively treat alcohol and drug abuse problems. For example:
 - 75% of youth committed to the ADHS Division of Youth Services (DYS) had substance abuse and mental health disorders (2007).
 - Children affected by maternal alcohol and drug abuse are at increased risk for developmental disabilities. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome affects estimated 300–800 newborns in Arkansas annually. Estimated lifetime costs per person are \$2–\$4 million.

Program:

Allocate funding to provide substance abuse treatment for adolescents as well as pregnant and post-partum women.

Impact:

- Evidence that treatment of alcohol and drug abuse is effective is extensive and compelling. Outcome studies, nationally and in Arkansas, indicate that treatment leads to a clinically significant reduction in substance use. It also results in increased employment and income, improved parenting and decreased child maltreatment, decreased mental health symptoms, decreased arrests and incarceration, and decreased overall health care costs.
- Multiple studies demonstrate that every \$1 spent on treatment saves \$3–\$12, depending on the populations served and scope of outcomes studied.
- A 2002 study in Arkansas showed the cost benefit for specialized women's treatment to be \$17,143 for each individual served (French, et al., 2002).

How it Works:

- ADHS would collaborate with a variety of partners throughout the state such as the Arkansas Departments of Health, Community Corrections and Workforce Services in addition to primary care, mental health and substance abuse practitioners and facilities to provide substance abuse screening and treatment services.

Administration/oversight: ADHS will allocate monies throughout the biennium to provide substance abuse treatment for adolescents as well as pregnant and post-partum women.

Funds to support these services will be appropriated by the Arkansas General Assembly to Arkansas Medicaid. Arkansas Medicaid is conducted as a partnership between the state and federal government. The program is overseen by the Arkansas Department Human Services and the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

