

Memo to the Grants Committee

Feb. 11, 2025

From: Liz Blackwell-Moore, Public Health Director

Subject: Proposal in response to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework RFP

The Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently released a Request for Proposals for the "Strategic Prevention Framework- Partnerships for Success for Communities and Tribes". The program is intended to build prevention capacity throughout communities and to strengthen the capacity of local community prevention providers. The purpose of the program is to reduce initiation and progression of substance use and expand the capacity of local community prevention providers serving communities with evidenced-based prevention strategies. Based on the population of Cumberland County, the Public Health Department would be eligible for \$425,000 per year for 5 years totaling \$2,125,000. If awarded, the project would begin October 1, 2025 and run through September, 2030.

The Cumberland County Public Health (CCPH) currently receives about \$400,000 per year from the State of Maine to implement substance use prevention within communities in the county. With that funding we currently have 3 full time staff working on substance use prevention and we fund local community organizations and contractors to support additional efforts. With 28 communities, 15 school districts, 36 Middle and High Schools, many youth serving organizations and a population of over 300,000, our current capacity is not enough to meet the prevention needs of our communities. Since the start of the state grant 2 years ago, we have been offering high quality prevention work that gained notice. The requests for our support and prevention efforts has grown exponentially while our capacity has remained the same. Capacity building funds through the SAMHSA grant would allow CCPH's substance use prevention team to meet that growing demand and better meet the behavioral health needs of our communities. Early use of any substance puts young people at much greater risk for substance use disorders later in life. Middle school is a key developmental period and a time when a young person's life trajectory can shift substantially. Through our work in communities, we know school districts struggle to have smooth transitions from middle to high school, especially with young people who have the greatest behavioral health needs. CCPHD is proposing two goals with a focus on young people in middle school and the transition to high school.

Goal 1: Prevent and reduce the initiation of Cannabis and alcohol use, the two most commonly used substances by young people in Cumberland County.

Strategies to meet goal 1:

- Work with schools and community-based organizations to have systems for identifying youth at highest risk for substance use.
- Strengthening access and delivery of the appropriate services to meet the individualized needs of youth at high risk.



- Increase opportunities for youth at high risk to engage in pro-social, resilience building opportunities at school and through youth serving organizations.
- Increase wrap around supports for youth at high risk and their families.

Goal 2: Expand and strengthen the capacity of CCPH to deliver community-defined and evidenced-informed prevention services.

Strategies to meet goal 2:

- Build collaborations and increase coordination between youth serving organizations through Cumberland County.
- Establish and facilitate a youth advocacy board to inform the systems improvements.
- Build the capacity of CPCH to provide meaningful support to families to help prevent substance use among their children.
- Enhance relationships with school district we are not currently supporting or connected to.

A .5 FTE Project Director and .5 Data Analyst are required FTEs of the grant. Angela Giordano is already the Substance Use Prevention Team Lead and well suited for the role of Project Director. Eilish Carpenter is a Substance Use Prevention Specialist and has experience in research and evaluation and interest in taking on the data analyst role. Bridget, Angela, and Eilish are currently funded through the Maine Prevention Network grant. We would shift their time to account for the changes listed below and then hire a full-time substance use prevention specialist to replace their work on MPN.

The SAMHSA budget proposal includes the following:

- .1 FTE Bridget O'Connor, Chronic Disease Prevention Manager, to Supervise the project
- .5 FTE for Angela Giordano, Project Director
- .5 FTE for Eilish Carpenter, Data Analyst
- 1 FTE for a Program Coordinator
- 1 FTE for a new Substance Use Prevention Specialist
- Additional funding for contracted services to support training and technical assistance
- The County will receive indirect funds through this grant to support the Public Health Grants and Finance Specialist position as well as any added work needed from finance, IT, and HR.

No matching funds are required for this grant and no additional funding will be needed from the County in order to complete the requirements of this grant. With all grant funding, people take on the roles knowing that they are funded for the length of the grant period. We make every effort to find additional funding to continue their work or similar work, but there is no expectation that the position be funded with general funds once the grant is over.