# Kulongoski urges adoption of mental health budget

*by Bend Weekly News Sources*

Governor also awards seven housing projects for Oregonians with mental illness in five counties

Salem, Oregon â€“ Governor Ted Kulongoski this week announced more than $500,000 in grants to assist the development of seven community housing centers for Oregonians with serious mental illnesses. The announcement was made at a mental health rally with the National Alliance on Mental Illness on the steps of the state capitol. â€œProviding quality, community-based services for people with mental illness is critical to our efforts to reform Oregonâ€™s mental health system,â€• Governor Kulongoski said. â€œMy 2007-09 budget makes investment in mental health a priority â€“ not just for the state hospital, but to enable our friends and family members to get the help and support they need close to home. These grants will help us move closer to that goal.â€• The funds being distributed come from the $12 million sale of the Dammasch State Hospital in Wilsonville in 2004. Seventy percent of the interest earned by the Dammasch sale can be invested in community housing and up to 30 percent can be used to improve conditions in the stateâ€™s three psychiatric hospitals in Salem, Portland and Pendleton. The following counties and housing projects received awards:

Clackamas County: $60,000 each for Villebois Community Apartments and Cornerstone facility in Wilsonville.

Linn County: $99,472 for a Trillium Family Services residential treatment home in Albany that serves young adults.

Multnomah County: $60,000 for The Martha Washington, a 78-unit Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare development in downtown Portland, which dedicates units for people with serious mental illness; and $60,000 for Portlandâ€™s Extended Recovery House.

Umatilla County: $100,000 for a combined acute care and residential treatment facility being built in Umatilla.

Wallowa County: $100,000 for Wallowa River House, a residential treatment facility in Wallowa for residents with mental illness and chronic health conditions.

Other counties that have already received grants include Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Crook, Curry, Klamath, Lane and Polk. Grants can be used for housing for people who live independently with support or reside in state-licensed facilities with 24-hour staffing. At the rally Tuesday at the Capitol, the Governor also highlighted the need for the legislature to enact his 2007-09 budget to redesign Oregonâ€™s mental health system. â€œTogether we created the roadmap to transform Oregonâ€™s mental health system,â€• the Governor told hundreds of mental health advocates. â€œAnd now itâ€™s time to put that plan into action.â€• Consistent with the recommendations from a taskforce he appointed in 2003, and with The Oregon State Hospital, Master Plan Phase II report, the Governorâ€™s budget invests both in the expansion of community services for people with mental illness and in the construction of a new State Hospital System. In total, the Governorâ€™s budget invests $120 million to improve Oregonâ€™s statewide system of mental health care, including:

$83 million in certificates of participation to begin the process for replacing Oregonâ€™s existing state mental hospital system, including the Salem campus.

$10 million to dramatically enhance Oregonâ€™s community mental health services. Those dollars will allow the state to: 1) increase mobile outreach and respite services for people in crisis; 2) develop more resources for local hospitals, including those in rural areas, to manage the increasing demand for mental health

services; 3) strengthen Oregonâ€™s community-delivered services to help people with mental illness transition from hospital-level care back to living as independently as possible; 4) pilot projects targeted at better meeting the mental health treatment needs of individuals with serious mental illnesses being released from local jails; 5) strengthen employment support services for people with mental illness; and 6) stabilize state-funding for locally delivered crisis services across the state.

More than $4.0 million to expand statewide access to early proven early intervention and treatment services for children, youth and young adults showing early signs of psychosis.

More than $13 million to improve the quality of care delivered at the Salem campus of the Oregon State Hospital. These resources will support the development of more community placements, the hiring additional staff, and additional training opportunities for existing staff to improve the hospitalâ€™s ability to serve increasing numbers of psychiatric patients who also are addicted to alcohol and other drugs.

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