VERMONT HEALTH CENTERS TO EXPAND COMPREHENSIVE SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES

HRSA awards $2.8 million to expand access to quality substance use disorder and mental health services

MONTPELIER, VT – September 20, 2018 – Ten Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Vermont were recently awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) to further expand access to substance use disorder and mental health services in response to the national opioid crisis. The $2.8 million in new funding will expand access to integrated services by increasing personnel and enhancing infrastructure.

HRSA recognizes that primary care settings, like the community health centers supported by HRSA’s Health Center Program, have increasingly become a gateway to integrated care for individuals with substance use disorder and primary care needs. "HRSA is committed to fighting this crisis by supporting our grantees with resources, technical assistance, and training," said HRSA Administrator George Sigounas MS, Ph.D. “These funds enable HRSA grantees to continue to implement or expand substance use disorder and mental health services across the Nation.”

“We appreciate HRSA’s recognition of the critical role Community Health Centers play in addressing the opioid crisis in Vermont and nationwide. The grant awards will support the expansion of substance use disorder treatment programs, including medication-assisted treatment, a combination of medication and behavioral therapies effective in the treatment of substance use disorders,” said Tess Stack Kuenning, CNS, MS, RN, President and CEO of Bi-State Primary Care Association. “The health centers are committed to hiring at least one new full-time equivalent substance use disorder or mental health services professional.” In 2017, over 1,500 Vermonters received medication-assisted treatment at a Vermont FQHC.

The VT FQHCs receiving HRSA’s 2018 Expanding Access to Quality Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Services awards include: Battenkill Valley Health Center, Community Health Centers of Burlington, Community Health Services of Lamoille Valley, Gifford Health Care, Little Rivers Health Care, Mountain Health Center, Northern Counties Health Care, Northern Tier Center for Health, Springfield Medical Care Systems, and The Health Center.

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About Bi-State Primary Care Association
Bi-State Primary Care Association is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that represents New Hampshire and Vermont’s 29 Community Health Centers that serve more than 300,000 patients annually through their 128 health center sites. Bi-State promotes access to quality, affordable primary health care with an emphasis on reaching underserved populations. Bi-State Primary Care Association was founded as a 501(c)3 charitable organization in 1986 with offices in Bow, NH and Montpelier, VT.