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Cook County Board of Commissioners  
  
Israel Rocha, Jr.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Cook County Health  
  
LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, MPH, MBA  
Chief Operating Officer

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CCDPH awarding over \$14 million in community grants for behavioral health interventions**  
*Initiative will expand behavioral health and harm reduction services in suburban Cook County*

FOREST PARK, Ill – Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Health Chief Executive Officer Israel Rocha, and Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) Chief Operating Officer Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, at a press conference today, announced CCDPH will be awarding over \$14 million in grant funding across four years to expand mental health and substance use prevention, treatment and support in suburban Cook County.

“Today’s announcement demonstrates our commitment to the well-being of all Cook County residents,” said President Preckwinkle. “This investment in behavioral health as part of our Building Health Communities Initiative ensures that we’re taking a holistic approach to healthcare that prioritizes mental health, as well as physical health.”

Grants will range from \$250,000 to over \$1 million each, and are part of the Building Healthy Communities Behavioral Health Initiative, funded under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

“The vision of achieving health equity for all residents of Cook County drives all of our work. This grant program will allow us to support organizations in effecting positive change and implementing behavioral health strategies at the community level in areas where they are needed most,” Israel Rocha, CEO, Cook County Health.

Data shows that behavioral health needs have increased globally and in the U.S. [The global presence of depression and anxiety increased by more than 25% in the first year of the pandemic. Nearly 50% of Americans reported recent symptoms of an anxiety or depressive disorder](#), and 10% felt their mental health needs were not being met.

“We know the pandemic has exacerbated mental health and substance use challenges for Cook County residents and families,” said Dr. Hasbrouck. “But while anyone’s mental health can be affected, some people are more likely to be affected than others.”

According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), people who are more likely to experience mental illnesses or disorders during the COVID-19 pandemic, include: children, mothers and pregnant people; black, indigenous, and people of color; people with financial or housing insecurity; people with disabilities; and people with pre-existing mental illnesses or substance use problems.

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(continued - CCDPH awarding over \$14 million in community grants)

“We are excited to work with our communities to meet the needs of our residents and families and chart a healthier path forward,” said CCDPH Behavioral Health Unit Director Jennifer Brothers. “We are calling on all organizations who are eligible, to apply. Whether you are a small community-based organization housed in the basement of a local church, a local middle school that is committed to raising future generations, or a community health center that has been working in the community for decades: We want to work in partnership with you.”

The Building Healthy Communities Behavioral Health Initiative will be built on a foundation of equity and inclusivity. To that end, CCDPH streamlined the grant application process to encourage all interested organizations and agencies to apply. For those not familiar with receiving grants: optional, capacity-building workshops are being offered to familiarize applicants with legal requirements and grant application skills, such as program design, monitoring and reporting.

Applications are now being accepted thru Dec. 7, 2022, and awards will be announced in January, 2023. For more information and to apply online, visit our website at: [BHCopenline.com](https://www.bhcopenline.com).

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