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Billion Dollar Funding Fuels Options for Opioid Epidemic

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BY GENA HUFF, *Editor*

October is National Substance Abuse Prevention Month. The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) celebrates this month by showcasing the services and programs offered across the state to help decrease the use, or misuse, of legal or illegal substances. Agencies, families, communities, and organizations come together to raise awareness about the importance of substance use prevention and the importance of investing in prevention first.

“Early intervention is key. We must address and encourage healthy behaviors through our programs and in partnership with community-based efforts. With proactive supports, we can increase positive outcomes and reduce the negative consequences of addiction before they occur,” said Commissioner Lynn Beshear.

The ADMH has a partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) called the Courage for All initiative which offers information on the topic of the epidemic of opioid addiction in the nation and Alabama and focuses on awareness and treatment of opioid addiction.

“There are low cost treatment options for those with substance abuse addiction in our state. We want to get the word out that recovery is possible with support and courage from family, friends, and community substance abuse treatment providers,” said Beshear.

When doing a Google search of “Opioid Addiction Facts,” the first thing that comes up is a Public Health Alert stating the US is in the midst of an opioid overdose epidemic. The condition of opioid addiction is classified as a “common” malady with over 200,000 cases a year.

Opioids are prescribed for pain. Within a week, a person can become physically addicted to the medication. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the likelihood of long-term use increases sharply after the third and fifth days of taking a prescription, and spikes again after the 31st day.

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