

# New Journeys Programs: First Episode Psychosis Program and Early Psychosis Initiative

## Overview

Early identification of and intervention for serious mental illness promotes recovery and positive outcomes for individuals and families. Achieving early intervention requires increasing community understanding of early signs of psychosis and decreasing the stigma which can sometimes delay people from seeking help.

In 2014, Congress appropriated funds to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to address the needs of individuals experiencing early serious mental illness.

SAMHSA directed states to use a 5 percent set aside from their Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) to serve youth ages 15 to 25, experiencing a first episode of psychosis. In 2015, the set aside was increased to 10 percent.

This funding provided the opportunity for Washington to launch New Journeys, a program to provide services to individuals experiencing early serious mental illness. DBHR opened one site in 2014, two sites in 2015, one site in 2017, , and a fifth site in 2018. SAMHSA also adjusted the maximum age of eligibility to 40 years old to accommodate populations likely to experience their first episode of psychosis after the age of 25.

DBHR also is working to improve skills and knowledge among educators, law enforcement, primary care providers, school professional, and health professionals positioned to detect and treat these disorders. To achieve this goal, early psychosis educational materials have been distributed to 12,000 mental health, juvenile justice, and school-based professionals; law enforcement, primary care providers, and community members. The information addresses the following major goals: increase awareness of schizophrenia and psychosis,

reduce stigma, encourage people to get the facts about the illness, and increase early identification and referrals for young people experiencing first episode psychosis.

## Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for New Journeys, participants must:

- Fall within the program's catchment area.
- Have no more than 18 months of prior cumulative treatment with antipsychotic medications.
- Have any duration of untreated psychosis greater than one week and less than 2 years. Eligible diagnoses includes: schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, schizophreniform disorder, brief psychotic disorder, and psychotic disorder not otherwise specified.
- Be between 15 and 40 years of age.
- Have psychotic systems that are not known to be caused by the temporary effects of substance use or medication.
- Have psychotic symptoms that are not known to be caused by a medical condition.
- Be willing to be part of New Journeys and consent to treatment modalities that include, but not limited to, individual counseling, supported employment/education, family psychoeducation, peer support, case management, and psychiatric care.


## 2019-21 budget

The 10 percent set aside for the program for federal fiscal year 2019 is \$1,604,888.

## FY 2018 costs & numbers served

Site implementation and sustainability funding:

- New Journeys served more than 100 individuals in FFY2018.

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- Trained and fully launched a new site.
  - More than 500 individuals received education, technical assistance, and training including mental health providers, school professionals, juvenile court and institutional professionals, and primary care providers.

### Key partners

DBHR is partnering with

- The University of Washington School of Medicine
- Washington State University Behavioral Health Innovations
- NAVIGATE Consultants
- Central Washington Comprehensive Mental Health
- Valley Cities Mental Health
- Behavioral Health Resources
- Thurston/Mason Behavioral Health Organization (BHO)
- Great Rivers BHO
- Community Services Northwest
- Pat Deegan and Associates
- The Washington State Behavioral Health Advisory Council
- Apple Health (Medicaid) managed care organizations
- Beacon Health Options

### Oversight

- HCA Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery
- The Washington State Behavioral Health Advisory Council
- SAMHSA

### For more information

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