

Dear State Mental Health Commissioner:

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is directed by Congress through its FY 2016 Omnibus bill, Public Law 114-113, to set aside 10 percent of the Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) allocation for each state to support evidence-based programs that provide treatment for those with early serious mental illness (SMI) and a first episode psychosis (FEP). This is an increase from the previous enacted 5% set aside. The appropriation bill specifically required the 10 percent set-aside to fund only those evidence-based programs that targets FEP. The law specifically states:

“.....the funds from set-aside are only used for programs showing strong evidence of effectiveness and targets the first episode psychosis. SAMHSA shall not expand the use of the set-aside to programs outside of those that address first episode psychosis”.

SAMHSA recognizes that during its FY 2016-17 Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) applications, states submitted the budget and narrative based on the 5% set-aside guidance developed previously. The attached “*Guidance for Revision of the FY2016-2017 Block Grant Application for the new 10 percent set-aside*” will provide more information regarding this new set-aside requirement.

Apart from the increase percentage of the set-aside, Congress also increased the funding of total MHBG by an additional \$20 million. States are required to submit an updated narrative in WebBGAS, through a global revision request, on how they will be spending the additional set-aside. States must also resubmit their State Agency Planned Expenditure Tables 2, through a second global revision request in WebBGAS, by March 14, 2016. The attached excel table provides the revised total allocation and set-aside funding based on the FY 2016 appropriation.

I encourage you to use the on-site and off-site technical assistance that is available for states and territories regarding this initiative. Please feel free to contact your State Project Officer with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Cyntrice Bellamy

Attachments:

1. Revised Guidance
2. Total allocation and Set-Aside Funding table