

NEWS RELEASE

Department of External Affairs

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FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Fulton County Awarded \$3.9 Million Federal Grant to Improve Health Literacy

The Health Literacy program will focus on socially vulnerable populations who have experienced a significant COVID-19 impact

ATLANTA – The Fulton County Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (BHDD) was awarded a \$3.9 million federal grant from the Office of Minority Health in the Department of Health and Human Services to improve health literacy outcomes for minority populations.

This innovative Health Literacy program will reach African American and Latinx residents who have experienced a significant COVID-19 impact by increasing awareness of COVID-19 mitigation efforts and behavioral health services; increase COVID-19 testing and vaccine uptake; decreasing stigma related to behavioral health while increasing behavioral health literacy; and increasing usage of behavioral health services in Fulton County.

“This grant award is an exciting opportunity for the Fulton County Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities to collaborate with community partners to reach one of the most vulnerable groups in our county,” said Anna Roach, Esq., Fulton County Chief Operating Officer. “It is imperative to not only increase awareness surrounding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, but to also search for opportunities to expand behavioral health literacy throughout Fulton County.”

In demonstrating its commitment to reaching minority populations in Fulton County, the Department of BHDD will partner with Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM), a minority serving institution, for quality improvement activities and program evaluation. Other partners will include the Fulton County Board of Health.

The Health Literacy program will address personal and organizational health literacy through culturally appropriate strategies including:

- Formation of a Community Coalition Board.
- Implementation of a primary and behavioral health integration strategy to address the current needs resulting from COVID-19 as well as pre-existing and future needs in minority and socially vulnerable populations.
- Deployment of a mobile behavioral health unit in minority and underserved neighborhoods.

- Creation of a team of six Outreach Workers who will become experts on the underserved and minority populations in their district and also receive culturally specific training.
- Implementation of a dynamic online hub for care coordination.
- Community events with topics related to COVID-19 and behavioral health.
- Conducting a culturally and linguistically sensitive visibility and outreach campaign.

“COVID-19 has severely impacted our communities, with the new Health Literacy funding we are dedicated to educate, connect, and serve our citizens through a holistic approach to health focusing on prevention, availability of resources, and increased access to care,” said LaTrina Foster, director of Fulton County DBHDD.

For more information, please contact the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities at 404-613-7013.

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