

## **Systems of Care Grant**

### **November 2021**

The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) is providing one-time funding up to \$25,000 to County Mental Health Departments to expand or implement the Systems of Care approach<sup>1</sup> with other cross-systems partners to support children, youth, young adults, and their families. These resources are intended to support children, youth, and young adults with serious emotional disturbance (SED), in alignment with the design and intent of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act. Specifically, the Mental Health Block Grant “is designed to provide comprehensive community mental health services”, including “strengthening a coordinated system of care” to yield greater “support for crisis and school-based services that promote access to care for children with SED.”

#### **Eligible applicants:**

County Mental Health Departments to expand or implement the Systems of Care approach.<sup>1</sup> Counties applying will be doing so in collaboration with and on behalf of their cross-system partners to support System of Care work. Counties may apply for ONE (1) grant of the two grant opportunities listed below.

Counties currently a designated site of the NYS OMH Systems of Care Expansion grant (i.e., Essex and Yates Counties), counties which received a Systems of Care Expansion mini-grant from RFMH in the last 12 months following NYS OMH Systems of Care Action Planning, and counties with a current SAMHSA System of Care Expansion grant are ineligible to apply.

#### **Expansion Funds.**

Eligible applicants for expansion funds of \$25,000 are county mental health departments expanding or enhancing their existing formal Systems of Care efforts. These efforts are evidenced by:

- The existence of a cross-systems infrastructure that meets, or will meet after expansion, the outlined components of the Systems of Care framework. This infrastructure includes: all child-serving systems<sup>2</sup>; informal community supports; families and youth; a regular meeting structure; identified leadership; funding or resource development; communication vehicles; and data driven decision making.
- The existence of a cross-systems work plan with established goals and objectives targeted at meeting the needs of children, youth and young adults with SED and their families. The work
- plan needs to demonstrate having been developed by a cross-systems collection of participants, including families and youth.

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<sup>1</sup> **Recommended reading** - Stroul, B.A., Blau, G.M., & Larsen, J. (2021). The Evolution of the System of Care Approach. Baltimore: The Institute for Innovation and Implementation, School of Social Work, University of Maryland.

<sup>2</sup>Systems should include Mental Health, Child Welfare, Medical/Healthcare, Care Management Agencies, School districts or BOCES, Community Providers, Addiction providers, Crisis, Public Health, Juvenile Justice, and Developmental Disabilities.

### **Start-up Funds:**

Eligible applicants for start-up funds of \$25,000 are county mental health departments interested in implementing a formalized System of Care framework. Applicants agree to engage in activities that will yield:

- The development of a cross-systems infrastructure that will meet the outlined components of the Systems of Care framework.<sup>3</sup> This infrastructure includes: all child-serving systems<sup>4</sup>; informal community supports; families and youth; a regular meeting structure; identified leadership; funding or resource development; communication vehicles; and data driven decision making.
- The development of a cross-systems work plan with established goals and objectives targeted at meeting the needs of children, youth and young adults with SED and their families. The work plan will need to be developed by a cross-systems collection of participants, including families and youth.

### **Goal of Funds:**

The intent of this funding is to improve systems coordination that promotes access to care for children, youth, and young adults with SED through implementation of the Systems of Care framework. Funding is to be used by the county mental health department to address the present volume of need for coordinated mental health crisis response and services and launch targeted activities that support the expansion, implementation or revitalization of the Systems of Care framework, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Personnel costs to coordinate Systems of Care implementation;
- Training or consultation costs to assist in readying the community for commitment to Systems of Care;
- Data collection and dissemination that can contribute to better communication, decision making and access to services across systems;
- Consultation costs to explore potential braiding or blending of funds to expand services to serve a greater number of children/families;
- Efforts in recruiting, hiring, onboarding and retaining more qualified staff for the growth and expansion of access to services;
- Stipends or consultant fees to support the inclusion of families/caregivers and youth into cross-systems structures and decision making;
- Creation or improvement of formal mechanisms to facilitate step-down from or diversion to residential or hospital out-of-home placement to community-based services and return home;
- Development of structures and protocols to address children, youth, and young adults that have longer than needed stays in emergency rooms, residential settings or hospitals due to systemic barriers with access to community-based care;
- Creation of pathways and communication mechanisms to ease the transition of young adults from the children's to adult service system.

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<sup>3</sup> Stroul, B.A., Blau, G.M., & Larsen, J. (2021). *The Evolution of the System of Care Approach*. Baltimore: The Institute for Innovation and Implementation, School of Social Work, University of Maryland.

<sup>4</sup> Systems should include Mental Health, Child Welfare, Medical/Healthcare, Care Management Agencies, School districts or BOCES, Community Providers (formal), Addiction providers, Crisis, Public Health, Juvenile Justice, and Developmental Disabilities.

### **Anticipated Outcomes:**

OMH is committed to supporting efforts to achieve the underlying intent of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act so that children, youth, and young adults with SED and their families have access to needed intensive community-based services. This funding allotment is intended to achieve the following:

- Systems changes that institute better collaborative structures, communication and outcomes;
- Local infrastructures and mechanisms that can be used to address the needs of complex cross-systems-need youth;
- Increased community awareness and education regarding the services and their availability, and how to access them across the various child-serving systems. These activities should include focus not only on the human services workforce, but awareness and education for families.

### **Technical Assistance Resources:**

The NYS System of Care team at OMH is available for technical assistance upon award of this funding.

Other resources regarding the System of Care framework include:

- NYS System of Care website (<https://nyssoc.com/>)
- Institute for Innovation and Implementation, University of Maryland <https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/> where 17 System of Care modules on various aspects of the framework can be found after creating an account (<https://theinstitute.myabsorb.com/#/login>) as well as other System of Care written materials (<https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/our-work/national/network/policy/resources/>)

### **Timeframe:**

- Date that applications must be received by: December 31, 2021
- Date that expenditure is available against funds: September 15, 2021
- Providers must expend funds by December 31, 2022

### **To participate in this funding, providers will be required to:**

(1) Submit the application for funding as outlined below via email at:

[Childrenfamilyservices.blockgrant@omh.ny.gov](mailto:Childrenfamilyservices.blockgrant@omh.ny.gov)

➤ **Subject line of the email must read: System of Care Expansion**

(2) Awardee will be expected to work collaboratively with OMH and the Conference of Local Mental Health Hygiene Directors (CLMHD) on System of Care efforts and provide regular updates on the following, at least on a quarterly basis:

- a. Progress on anticipated activities
- b. Indication of need for technical assistance in achieving goals

(3) Attend the NYS System of Care Summit to be held in Albany, June 14-15, 2022.

(4) Complete a System of Care Action Planning Workshop before December 31, 2023, led by the NYS System of Care team at OMH, if this has not already been achieved.

(5) Counties must submit an end of grant report. Reports must include the following data and narrative descriptions on completed activities and achieved outcomes:

- Systems of Care implementation/expansion steps completed, and the demonstrated outcomes related to these activities.
- Number of children/families served/addressed as a result of Systems of Care implementation/expansion and established mechanisms and protocols.
- Changes to services or systems protocols as a result of the funding.
- Number of additional/new FTEs engaged to work on the System of Care work/structure and their roles.
- Achieved sustainability of activities.

(6) Submit a Grant Expense Report due December 31, 2022

**Application Process:**

OMH is allocating a total pool of \$500,000 for this funding opportunity (up to 20 awards). Applications will be reviewed in the order received. Approved applicants will receive funds on a first come/first served basis until funds are exhausted. **Failure to be responsive to any section below will disqualify applicant from funding.**

To participate in this funding opportunity, eligible counties must submit an application (single-spaced, no less than 11-point font of your choice) requesting funding. Applications will be reviewed against the criteria below:

- I. Background (no more than one page)
  - Name of county
  - Name and contact information of the lead individual who will be overseeing the project.
  - Indication of application for either Expansion or Start-Up Funding.
  - Brief narrative statement of demonstration of need and description of the current implementation of System of Care framework, with particular attention to explaining the infrastructure and inclusion of family/youth voice.
- II. Summary (maximum of **2 pages**) of proposed county goal(s) and methods to meet intended goal(s) of funding which should include:
  - Systems of Care implementation/expansion activities proposed to meet goal(s)
  - Outline of any new stakeholders to be added to any existing collaborative, or description of how existing partnerships will be strengthened. Particular attention should be paid to how families and youth will be included in decision making and implementation.
  - Plans to sustain efforts beyond the grant period and create an ongoing System of Care Framework within the county.
- III. The application should be accompanied by a Letter of Support jointly signed by county cross-systems partners documenting discussion and decision on proposed use of the funding. The letter should demonstrate commitment by cross-systems partners to engage in the work being proposed. At a minimum, three additional child-serving systems outside of mental health should be represented (additional partners will be expected as work is expanded or implemented).