

Nevada to expand mental health services with new community-based clinics



Dr. Lesley Dickson is shown outside of her office at 1311 S. Casino Center Blvd. in Las Vegas on Thursday, May 15, 2014. (Bill Hughes/Las Vegas Review-Journal)

By BROOKE WANSER LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL
March 17, 2017 - 3:50 pm

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced Friday that Nevada will expand mental health care services with the implementation of new community-based behavioral health care clinics.

“The whole idea is to try to provide better integrative care to individuals that have both substance abuse and mental disorders,” said Lesley Dickson, executive director of the Nevada Psychiatric Association. “We’ve never done well in this state, and probably most other states, in coordinating so that patients are getting care by the same team.”

According to a news release on the initiative, the two-year Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, also known as CCBHC, will offer 24-hour mobile crisis services, outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment as well as recovery support.

Nevada is one of eight states to receive grant funding for the program that will involve two current health care providers in Clark County, Westcare and Bridge Counseling, along with one each in Washoe, Churchill and Elko counties.

Nevada selected care systems for the program that are using data and evidence-based therapies effectively at an individual level.

Dickson pointed to the way reimbursement to clinics would be handled as a key feature: “Ultimately, they’re going to be a Medicaid enhancement.”

Given the Republicans’ proposed health care cuts to Medicaid, though, Dickson is wary of whether they will take off at all.

The community-based ideal of mental health care that the clinics are modeled off of began during the Kennedy administration after state hospitals released patients. Many states began administering medications and making care a community priority.

But, Dickson said, “Nevada never did,” likely because of its then-small population.

Dickson says the clinics will be “an attempt to get something like that going.”

Contact Brooke Wanser at bwanser@reviewjournal.com. Follow [@Bwanser_LVRJ](https://twitter.com/Bwanser_LVRJ) on Twitter.

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/life/health/nevada-to-expand-mental-health-services-with-new-community-based-clinics/>