



DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator for Michigan

NEWS FROM SENATOR STABENOW

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Senator Stabenow, Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist and Director Hertel Announce Launch of Transformational Mental Health and Addiction Initiative in Michigan

Stabenow-created effort is largest step forward in ensuring full permanent funding for community mental health and addiction services

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Chair of the Health Subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee, Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist and Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Elizabeth Hertel today announced the start of a transformational behavioral health initiative in Michigan. Starting this month, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in Michigan will begin to be reimbursed through Medicaid for the full cost of providing services—the same way we fund community health centers for physical care. This increase in funding will allow our clinics to expand access to quality, comprehensive services in our communities. This means people will not be going to jail or sitting in emergency departments because there are no community services.

With the support of the legislature and Governor Whitmer, MDHHS is able to allocate \$26.5 million of state and federal dollars to support CCBHC's across the state.

“Today is a monumental moment. This is the most significant step forward we have taken in decades to transform how we deliver behavioral health services in our community,” **said Senator Stabenow**. “No person struggling with mental health issues or addiction should ever go without the treatment they need because grant funding runs out. Health care is health care - whether it is above the neck or below the neck. That’s why I have been so dedicated to creating a way to fund all health care needs as part of our health care system. Now we are finally making that a reality.”

“Thanks to the tireless work of Senator Stabenow, we are changing the way we treat mental healthcare in Michigan,” **said Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist II**. “Bringing Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics to our state will expand access to critical services to ensure that all Michiganders can get the care they need. Senator Stabenow’s efforts will save lives, and result in better, healthier futures for Michigan residents, families, and communities.”

“Everybody deserves access to quality, affordable health care when and where they need it,” **said MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel.** “And it is just as important that someone have access to care to treat behavioral health as it is to treat physical health. Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics provide an array of services to facilitate access, stabilize crises, address complex mental or behavioral health diagnoses and substance use and emphasize physical-behavioral health integration. I’m excited about the expansion of this program and the potentially lifechanging, or even lifesaving, benefits it will provide to people across this state.”

“The recent announcement of Michigan as a participating state in the federal Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Demonstration initiative is welcome news and is a testimony to the commitment, vision, and grit of the senior senator from Michigan, Senator Debbie Stabenow, the co-sponsor of the bill upon which the CCBHC initiative is founded,” **said CEO of the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan Robert Sheehan.** “Today signals a new day for Michigan’s public mental health system and the hundreds of thousands of Michiganders who are served by that system every year.”

“Today’s announcement is incredible news for Michiganders. Now more than ever, it’s critical that we invest in mental health services,” **said Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence.** “This pandemic has devastated our communities physically and mentally, and these comprehensive services will continue to address barriers in our healthcare system. I look forward to continue working with Senator Stabenow to ensure Michiganders continue to receive the mental and behavioral health care they need and deserve.”

“Investing in mental health services in Kalamazoo has changed our community for the better. Integrated Services of Kalamazoo formerly, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services provides services for adults and families with mental illness, substance abuse issues and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Senator Stabenow’s work to improve the way we fund centers like the one in Kalamazoo will provide people across Michigan the resources they need,” **said Kalamazoo County Sheriff Richard Fuller.**

“The help that I received from Easterseals has been life changing. Everyone should be able to receive the services they need and this announcement will help make that possible,” **said Karen Block, a recipient of services at Easterseals Michigan.**

For years, Senator Stabenow has been leading the effort to fund health care above the neck the same way we fund health care below the neck. She authored the bipartisan *Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Act* with Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO), which was signed into law in 2014.

Senator Stabenow’s legislation accomplished two critical needs:

- **Created high-quality standards through Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.** These clinics are required to provide a comprehensive set of behavioral health services to anyone who walks through their door, including 24/7/365 crisis services; outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment services; immediate screenings, risk assessments, and diagnoses; and care coordination with emergency rooms, law enforcement, and veteran groups.
- **Established a nationwide initiative to permanently close the gap in funding between physical and behavioral health care.** Rather than depend on grant funding, Senator Stabenow created a completely new model where Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics will receive reimbursement through Medicaid for the full cost of services they provide at higher, more competitive rates than community mental health centers currently receive.

Since 2018, Senator Stabenow has secured \$135 million in start-up grants through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to begin funding 33 Michigan Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, and that number is growing. For a complete list, click [here](#).

In 2020, Senator Stabenow secured Michigan's selection for her full nationwide initiative. Starting this month, 13 Michigan clinics are now eligible for full Medicaid reimbursement for their services in addition to grant funding with the goal of allowing any clinic in the state and country to participate in full funding.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, people who receive services at Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics:

- Had 63.2% fewer emergency department visits for behavioral health.
- Spent 60.3% less time in jails.
- Saw a 40.7% decrease in homelessness.