

\$6.8 million in new federal money coming to Mass. for drug treatment

By Felice J. Freyer Globe Staff March 11, 2016

Twenty community health centers in Massachusetts will share \$6.8 million in grants to expand substance abuse services, particularly treatment of opioid addiction, the US Health and Human Services Department announced Friday.

The money from the Health Resources and Services Administration is part of \$94 million for 271 health centers across the country. Federal officials said the money would allow the hiring of 800 people to treat nearly 124,000 patients nationally.

“The opioid epidemic is one of the most pressing public health issues in the United States, and we have particular acuity here in New England,” said Rachel Kaprielian, HHS director for the New England region.

In Massachusetts, the grants are going to [nine health centers in Boston, as well as 11 others from Springfield to Salem](#), creating 96 full-time positions. US officials said the centers, selected in a competitive grant process, will be able to treat more patients and train health professionals in appropriately prescribing opioids.

The Dimock Center in Roxbury is one of the winners, with a \$325,000 grant this year and the same amount expected next year. Dr. Myechia Minter-Jordan, Dimock’s president, said the grant would let the center treat 295 more people with buprenorphine, which helps control opioid cravings.

Dimock, which devotes a third of its \$35 million budget to substance abuse treatment, offers detox, long-term residential treatment, and outpatient care. The center is wrapping up a \$16 million capital campaign to add 10 beds to its 35-bed detox unit.

Minter-Jordan said the federal money helps ensure that each aspect of care is available to patients. “Getting more funds into each of those buckets is really critical,” she said.