

# SMART ALERT

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse

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Bruce Rauner, Governor · James T. Dimas, Secretary · Maria Bruni, Acting Director

## ILLINOIS HELPLINE FOR OPIOIDS AND OTHER SUBSTANCES

The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (IDHS/DASA) is pleased to announce the establishment of the Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances. The Helpline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week for individuals experiencing opioid use disorders, families, and anyone affected by the disease. The Helpline is confidential and free. Helpline specialists are trained in evidence-based approaches to help connect callers with treatment services and recovery support services. To reach the Helpline, call 1-833-2FINDHELP.

Establishing the Helpline was one of several key programs highlighted in Executive Order 17-05, which created the Opioid Task Force and set a goal of reducing opioid overdose deaths in Illinois by one-third within the next three years. Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) data show that in 2016, opioid overdoses killed 1,946 people in Illinois – more than one and a half times the number of homicides and nearly twice the number of fatal motor vehicle accidents. In addition, data from the Illinois Department of Human Services estimates that approximately 248,000 Illinois residents need, but do not receive treatment for illicit drug use. Concerned that stigma is preventing individuals from coming forward and asking for help, IDHS/DASA ensured that funds were included in the Opioid State Targeted Response grant to establish the Helpline.

The goals of the Helpline are to:

- Provide individuals and families with information and timely access to opioid use disorder (OUD) behavioral health treatment, rehabilitation and recovery support services.
- Provide individuals and families with information and referral to a comprehensive range of OUD services and resources available to meet their needs.
- Assist callers with eligibility and insurance enrollment resources.
- Offer outreach and engagement to assist in connecting callers to care, when possible.
- Provide OUD behavioral health crisis intervention services.



Providers are encouraged to distribute the Helpline number widely. DASA has FREE business cards available that providers may order to help with distribution within your community. Please access the order form at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27896/documents/FINAL.pdf>.

The Helpline will be operated by Health Resources in Action, Inc., a non-profit, public health organization with expertise in developing, implementing, and evaluating public health solutions for clients who share a vision of healthier communities. HRiA is based in Boston, and developed a comprehensive call center and website that provides information and referral for those struggling with substance use disorders (SUD), their loved ones, and service providers/professionals in Massachusetts. HRiA developed and has implemented the Massachusetts Helpline for nearly 20 years, and lends this experience to Illinois. The Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration through the Opioid State Targeted Response grant administered by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse.

The Governor launched the Helpline in a press conference this morning. The video will be available at <http://multimedia.illinois.gov/gov/gov-102717.html>.