

The Office of Governor Dannel P. Malloy

Press Releases



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

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Gov. Malloy Announces Launch of Innovative Opioid Treatment Program for Youths in Connecticut

Youth Opioid Treatment Model is the Only One of its Kind in the Country

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Department of Children and Families (DCF) Commissioner Joette Katz today announced the launch of a new, innovative treatment program for young people who misuse opioids that is now available to help families in towns throughout Connecticut.

Known as the ASSERT Treatment Model (ATM), the program provides youths up to age 21 and their families with six months of evidence-based intensive family treatment, medication assisted treatment, and recovery support services for up to 12 months. It has the capacity to serve as many as 94 youths and families at a time.

“The opioid crisis – which includes the misuse of prescription medication – impacts every single type of person of every background in life, no matter their ethnicity, wealth, location, or age,” **Governor Malloy said**. “It is tragic, but this crisis is hitting young people just as it is adults, and it is critical that we provide treatment as soon as it is discovered. No longer can we brush addiction under the rug – to truly have an impact the best method is to seek treatment immediately. An innovative program like this one that targets youth will have an impact.”

Commissioner Katz explained that the opioid crisis has had a big impact on child welfare agencies around the nation, but Connecticut is among the leaders in addressing it among both adults and youths.

“Until now, opioid treatment has been aimed at adults – largely ignoring the growing problem of heroin and prescription drug misuse among youth,” **Commissioner Katz said**. “We are working to change that in Connecticut by using federal funding in an innovative manner that holds real promise because our experience shows the treatments are effective.”

Administered by DCF, funding for the program comes through a federal grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. DCF has partnered with four private providers in regions across the state that will run the program.

The ATM approach is currently only used in Connecticut. After speaking with advocates, young adults, and families about their treatment experiences, officials at DCF worked with local and national experts in family therapy and recovery management to build the model. It combines several evidence-based treatments that are usually stand-alone services into a single, integrated program. The goal of the program is to provide a “one-stop shop” for youths and their families, eliminating barriers to receiving multiple needed services to combat opioid addiction.

Commissioner Katz said that officials at DCF are optimistic that this new treatment program will stem the rise in opioid addiction among youths by blocking the pipeline from misuse to addiction, and prevent opioid overdose deaths. The ATM program is a critical piece of DCF’s efforts to combat the opioid crisis, which also includes using private funding to provide in-home intensive substance use treatment services to parents at risk for having their child enter foster care.

Those seeking more information on the services provided by this program can contact one of the four ATM program providers:

- **Meriden/New Britain area:** Wheeler Clinic, 860-810-0857 or Mtalbolt@Wheelerclinic.org (<mailto:Mtalbolt@Wheelerclinic.org>)
- **Hartford/Manchester area:** Community Health Resources, 860-978-3096 or Kfontaine@CHRHealth.org (<mailto:Kfontaine@CHRHealth.org>)
- **Danbury/Torrington/Waterbury area:** Connecticut Junior Republic, 203-757-9939 or Sarguelles@cjryouth.org (<mailto:Sarguelles@cjryouth.org>)
- **New London/Norwich/Willimantic area:** United Community and Family Services, 860-822-4292 or Cpalma@ucfs.org (<mailto:Cpalma@ucfs.org>)

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