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Christie Administration Allocates \$15.5 Million In Federal Funds For Health Initiatives For Sandy-Impacted Families And Communities

Thursday, October 24, 2013

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration today announced that \$15.5 million in federal funding has been allocated for various health initiatives to help families and communities recovery since Superstorm Sandy struck nearly one year ago.

"Families still recovering from Superstorm Sandy need our help," said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Mary E. O'Dowd. "The Departments of Health, Children and Families and Human Services are working collaboratively to ensure that families, especially children, have comprehensive services to support them during recovery."

In addition to the previously announced health programs and initiatives for Sandy-impacted families, the Christie Administration today announced three new initiatives that will provide:

Up to \$4 million in federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds to community health centers, hospital clinics and ambulatory care centers to hire social workers or behavioral health specialists to screen individuals in primary health care settings for domestic violence, substance abuse and behavioral health issues;

\$2.2 million in federal funds for three studies to analyze the health effects and recovery status of New Jersey residents and recovery workers impacted by Superstorm Sandy; and

\$293,000 to the Rutgers School of Public Health in New Brunswick to conduct additional free mold remediation classes for homeowners, business owners and local health and code enforcement officials.

"The free mold remediation training classes that we have funded were so successful - with nearly 900 homeowners and local officials participating - that we are providing an additional \$293,000 to the Rutgers School of Public Health to offer more classes," continued Commissioner O'Dowd.

The Commissioner also encouraged New Jersey Federally Qualified Health Centers, hospital clinics and ambulatory care centers to apply for up to \$4 million in federal funds to screen patients for post-Sandy behavioral health issues.

Federal funding for the three studies includes \$490,000 from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health to study work-related injuries and illnesses among first responders, Red Cross volunteers and tree care workers; \$540,202 from the federal Centers for Disease Control to examine health impacts among vulnerable populations; and nearly \$1.2 million to study families exposed to and recovering from Superstorm Sandy.

The comprehensive list of funding and program announcements made by the Department of Health to support health-related recovery efforts include:

\$3.4 million was awarded to county health departments, hospitals and community agencies last month to expand case management for children with special health needs;

\$3 million is being awarded to county health departments to coordinate health-related services to individuals who were impacted by Superstorm Sandy;

\$1.6 million was awarded to the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) for Parent Resource Specialists to work with families and refer them to local, state and federal services to help their families succeed;

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Nearly 4,800 uninsured individuals impacted by Sandy received \$267,000 in free, one-time 30-day refills of prescription medications through the federal Emergency Prescription Assistance Program (EPAP);

\$125,000 for mold remediation training, with nearly 900 people completing training;

Distributing 12,000 copies of Mold Guidelines for New Jersey Residents in English and Spanish;

\$400,000 to the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES) for its poison hotline and training for local health departments on environmental health hazards including Carbon Monoxide;

\$118,000 for portable radios distributed to 21 County Office of Emergency Management/EMS coordinators to ensure 24/7 emergency communication and coordination when landline and cellphone systems fail; and

\$122,000 for a West Nile Virus Public Education campaign including radio Public Service Announcements and rail and bus advertising.

For additional information about DOH recovery efforts please visit

http://nj.gov/health/er/hurricane_recovery_resources.shtml

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