

VNS Health gets \$4M federal grant to open certified community behavioral health clinic

Amanda D'Ambrosio September 25, 2023

Home care and community health care nonprofit VNS Health received a \$4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to open a certified community behavioral health clinic in the South Bronx, the organization announced Thursday.

The federal grant, which will be allocated over four years, will help VNS Health expand its current mental health offerings in the South Bronx. While the organization provides substance use care management services at its clinic, it does not offer treatment, which will change once it opens a certified community behavioral health clinic, said Jessica Fear, senior vice president of behavioral health at VNS Health.

Certified community behavioral health clinics have recently [expanded in New York state](#), due to an allocation in this year's state budget. The clinics offer holistic health services, and give providers the opportunity to receive bundled payments that account for the full cost of care for mental health, substance use and primary care services. VNS Health will open a clinic funded by the federal government, which has provided funding in addition to the state expansion.

"It's truly integrated care," Fear told *Crain's*, noting that it's not just the merging of mental health and substance use treatment—but also addressing physical and social determinants of health through an interdisciplinary approach.

"That's the goal, is to treat the whole person and to get them into care as soon as possible," Fear said. "We want to eliminate all the roadblocks that keep people from getting into care quickly and staying in care."

Fear said the clinic is aiming to treat 1,500 patients during the grant time period.

The Biden administration distributed 128 grants to expand certified community behavioral health clinics across the country, 14 of which were distributed to organizations in New York.

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