

THE PLAIN DEALER

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Coping with a drug, mental health crisis? Cuyahoga County gets \$1.8 million to help

By Sarah Jane Tribble

CLEVELAND, Ohio — The Ohio Department of Mental Health announced Thursday that it will give Cuyahoga County \$1.8 million to create an alternative treatment solution for people suffering from a psychiatric episode or substance abuse.

The short-term option, proposed by Cleveland's biggest hospitals and community providers, would move people out of emergency departments to a dedicated, 72-hour unit that is expected to provide better care and reduce costs.

"What we are attempting do here is to demonstrate whether there are positive budget and clinical outcomes that can occur," said Tracey Plouck, Ohio's mental health director. "Intuitively, we think the answer is yes."

Individuals arrive daily at local emergency rooms with psychotic-like symptoms, including being disoriented and confused, according to local health experts.

Emergency rooms are not only a costly way to provide treatment, but they usually release individuals after 23 hours, said Esther Pla, chief executive of Connections, a non-profit mental and behavioral health agency that helped create the proposal for state funding.

Article continued here:

http://www.cleveland.com/healthfit/index.ssf/2012/09/cuyahoga_county_gets_18_millio.html

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