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**MAYOR EMANUEL, SENATOR DURBIN ANNOUNCE \$1 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT TO ADDRESS TRAUMA IN CHICAGO'S NEIGHBORHOODS AND IMPROVE CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING FOR FIRST RESPONDERS**

*Grant Will Support Reforms Implemented by the Mayor's Citywide Mental Health Response Committee*

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D., today announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has awarded the Chicago Department of Public Health \$1 million to strengthen and improve how Chicago's first responders serve individuals with mental illness. Today's funding was awarded through HHS' Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) grant program, which supports violence prevention and community youth engagement programs as well as access to mental health services, and is renewable for five years.

"Investments in addressing trauma and mental health issues will help foster stronger, healthier and more resilient communities throughout Chicago," said Mayor Emanuel. "This federal funding is a welcome addition to our ongoing efforts to strengthen youth and community engagement, increase access to behavioral health services and enhance the training of first responders on mental health related issues and interactions with individuals in mental health crisis."

"For every family that has tragically lost a loved one to gun violence, there are many more living with its emotional and psychological consequences. We must work together to stop this senseless violence and ensure that all victims – including those whose scars may not be visible – get the help they need," said Senator Durbin. "I thank our dedicated community partners, without whom we cannot achieve our goal of a safer city, and I will continue to work alongside Mayor Emanuel to find solutions that provide much-needed relief to the Chicago communities most plagued by violence."

The new funding will support the critical work of the Mayor's Citywide Mental Health Response Steering Committee, which was assembled by Mayor Emanuel in January 2016. The Committee was tasked with recommending reforms for the City's training and response to individuals with mental illness, developing new ideas for improved service delivery, implementing reforms and policy recommendations, and helping evaluate the City's progress.

"This is a critical step forward in addressing the needs of our community around mental health, addiction and trauma, and we applaud the Mayor, Commissioner Morita, Senator Durbin and community partners for pursuing this with the urgency it demands," said Kelly O'Brien, The Kennedy Forum's Executive Director. "It is our hope that this investment will further leverage the

additional philanthropic, business and community engagement that it is going to take to turn a corner and show progress."

"This federal grant will help to advance the City's goal of helping first responders to better identify and compassionately respond to the challenges of dealing with people suffering from mental illness," said Alderman Edward M. Burke, the Chairman of the Committee on Finance. "The work of police officers and OEMC call takers will greatly benefit from this additional training and I commend Mayor Emanuel for his vision in launching this multi-faceted program."

All told, more than 15,000 Chicago individuals will be directly served or trained during the first year of the grant. Specifically the funding will result in the following activities:

- Establish a Chicago ReCAST (Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma), Institute to design and deliver trauma-informed training to staff from City agencies and partners organizations as well as residents, building greater capacity in neighborhoods most impacted by violence on how to identify, respond and support recovery from to various forms of trauma.
- Expand the Chicago Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team training, mental health awareness training for Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) call takers and dispatchers, a public awareness campaign to reduce mental health stigma and public awareness of CIT and other resources. As a result, more than 12,000 Chicago police officers and all OEMC 911 call takers and dispatchers will receive basic mental health and trauma training.
- Support, train and link leaders from communities most vulnerable to civil unrest to ensure local involvement and feedback in citywide transformation efforts.
- Implement, launch and promote Chicago Connects, a comprehensive resource directory, crisis text line and web application to improve community organizations' and residents' access to necessary services.

More than 130 Chicago-based community partner organizations have publicly supported the goals outlined in the new grant through their participation on the Commission for a Safer Chicago. Multiple organizations provided technical assistance and input during the application process including Adler University, Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, National Alliance on Mental Illness Chicago, The Kennedy Forum Illinois, Community Justice for Youth Institute and Thresholds.

"From government and business to faith communities and residents, we must all work together to stop violence in our communities," said Susan Johnson, of Chicago Survivors, a Commission for a Safer Chicago member organization that provides support services to families who have lost a loved one due to violence. "This new funding provides us even more opportunities to work together to make Chicago a safer and healthier city for all people."

The activities supported by the new funding are in line with the recommendations made by the Mayor's Mental Health Response Steering Committee, which includes representatives from the Mayor's Office, Chicago Police Department, Office of Emergency Management and Communications, Chicago Fire Department, Department of Public Health, The Kennedy Forum Illinois, National Alliance on Mental Illness Chicago, The Kennedy Forum, Thresholds, University of Illinois at Chicago, Sinai Health System, and others.

The grant also reflects the priorities presented in Healthy Chicago 2.0, the city's comprehensive plan to improve health equity across Chicago's communities. Specifically, these activities will seek to strengthen the integration of behavioral health services and other community systems to address social determinants of health that can contribute to health outcomes and create more equitable access to trauma-informed community behavioral health resources.

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