Address the opioid crisis through prevention and treatment

Issues:

- Opioid addiction is devastating families and communities in Minnesota. Opioids account for more overdoses than any other drug. In 2017, 422 Minnesotans died from opioid overdose.
- More children are in out-of-home care across Minnesota. Almost 40,000 children were involved in screened-in child protection reports in 2017, up from 26,000 in 2014. Drug abuse by parents is the most common primary reason for children being placed out of their homes.
- It can take 25 days or longer for a person with substance use disorder to get into treatment. Most Minnesotans who enter treatment complete it and show considerable improvement.
- American Indians are experiencing the opioid epidemic more severely than other Minnesotans. American Indian Minnesotans are five times more likely to die from a drug overdose than white Minnesotans. Conventional behavioral health interventions have not been as effective for American Indians as for other groups.

Proposal:

Governor Tim Walz proposes the following steps to improve opioid treatment:

- Establish an opioid stewardship advisory council to make recommendations and provide oversight of funding in the opioid stewardship account. The stewardship advisory council will develop and oversee a comprehensive and effective statewide effort to address the impacts of the opioid crisis in Minnesota. The council will be made up of legislators from both bodies, Tribal nations, state agency representatives, providers, advocates, and individuals personally impacted by the opioid crisis, as well as representation from law enforcement, social service agencies, and the judicial branch.
- Targeted investments to county and tribal social services agencies to support child protection activities within communities most impacted this crisis.
- More use of the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) tool will allow faster access to substance use disorder treatment services, including immediate short-term support while longer-term treatment services are connected.
- More access to traditional healing will benefit American Indian communities across Minnesota. Grants will go to tribal nations and five urban American Indian communities to provide culturally specific services.
Benefits:

- More people will get opioid use disorder treatment and recovery services. More doctors will be authorized to provide medication-assisted treatment.
- Sustainable funding to fight the opioid epidemic, and therefore more sustainable treatment and recovery services across the state.
- Access to opioid treatment and services will be faster for people identified in health care settings.
- Disparities for chronic mental health and substance use issues experienced by American Indians will be addressed. Traditional healing for American Indians has outcomes equivalent to conventional interventions in other populations.

Fiscal impact:

- Invests $17.4 million in FY 2020-21 and $21.5 million in FY 2022-23

Related information:

- DHS opioids webpage: https://mn.gov/dhs/opioids/

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