



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Trustees

**FROM:** Julia Lopez, Board Secretary/Treasurer **BOARD ACTION REQUIRED**

**DATE:** November 15, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Accept funds received from the Missouri Department of Mental Health to support the GROW STL (Grassroots Reinvestment for Optimal Well-being) initiative

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### BACKGROUND

#### MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH PILOT APPROACH

To address the ongoing increase in overdose fatalities, the Missouri Department of Mental Health requested assistance at the local level to develop a strategy to reduce these deaths. DMH agreed to pilot a radically innovative inside-out approach to empower and build the capacity of "grassroots" entities as viable partners. The primary investment strategy was based on the principle that the people who live in the neighborhoods/communities that DMH hoped to positively impact are the experts on the problem they hoped to solve.

To launch the pilot, DMH partnered with the Missouri Mental Health Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Jefferson City dedicated to raising awareness about mental health. As a long-standing DMH partner with an existing contract, the Missouri Mental Health Foundation was able to quickly receive and distribute funds on behalf of DMH, acting as a passthrough. Their low-barrier approach to partnership provided rapid investment in community-led solutions that would not have been possible using the traditional DMH procurement and contracting processes. DMH also enlisted the Behavioral Health Network to receive funding from the Missouri Mental Health Foundation as a fiscal sponsor for the five grassroots organizations that comprise the GROW-STL network. The Behavioral Health Network served as a local point of contact between the GROW-STL network and the state partners at DMH and the Missouri Mental Health Foundation. These three entities have successfully supported the pilot phase of GROW-STL since its launch in October 2021.

#### GROW-STL PILOT APPROACH

The intended impact and approach of GROW-STL are as follows:

1. Create an inside-out approach based on the recognition that there are people and embedded community organizations that have expertise, trust, and a love for their community, who are working hard to make a difference, generally with few resources.
2. Create new innovative approaches to engage people of color and the communities they live in, including collaboration with community-led efforts to address overdose disparities.
3. Eliminate the barriers between the community, its residents, and the established system of treatment providers, recovery support providers, and prevention resources.
4. Locate stable housing or recovery/respice housing for those at risk for homelessness or

who have nowhere to safely detox.

5. Build a public health infrastructure that is embedded in the community and led by trusted people in the most impacted communities.
6. Provide timely connections and access to treatment providers, recovery support providers, and any additional healthcare treatment that is needed.
7. Provide effective transportation solutions to substance use treatment.

In less than three years, GROW-STL has served more than 6,500 individuals grappling with substance use disorders, over 2,600 individuals specifically dealing with opioid use disorders, and has referred over 600 individuals to substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services. Additionally, they have connected over 1,500 individuals with recovery support services. These figures underscore the critical role GROW-STL plays in addressing the pressing needs of its communities.

### **DMH REQUEST TO MHB**

DMH remains fully committed to the success of GROW-STL and credits this local initiative as having direct impact on the recent decline in opioid deaths in the population of focus. In recognition of the importance of supporting this community-driven initiative, DMH has requested support from MHB in building out additional local support for project management in partnership with the Behavioral Health Network. Beginning in January 2025, DMH proposes to provide approximately \$800,000 to MHB to serve as the passthrough for state funding to support the GROW-STL network. This is intended to support the network through June 30, 2025. DMH has also committed to providing ongoing funding for GROW-STL pending approval by the Missouri legislature.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Committee met November 12, 2024, to discuss the request to accept funding from the Department of Mental Health to serve as a passthrough for the GROW-STL initiative. MHB's role will be to help DMH transition to local management of the GROW-STL initiative for the remainder of the 2025 fiscal year. This will include meeting with key partners to assist with the development of financial and programmatic reporting requirements. DMH will pay an administrative fee to MHB to cover indirect and direct staff costs associated with accepting and administering this funding. The Executive Committee recommends that MHB accept DMH funding to serve as a passthrough for the purpose of supporting the GROW-STL initiative.

**CITY OF ST. LOUIS MENTAL HEALTH BOARD OF TRUSTEES (MHB)**

**AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE GROW-STL INITIATIVE**

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the City of St. Louis, Missouri has levied taxes pursuant to the laws of the State of Missouri Sections 205.975 – 205.990 RSMo. to fund the Community Mental Health Fund and Sections 210.860 – 210.861 RSMo. (2005 and 2020) to fund the Community Children’s Services Fund (CCSF); and

**WHEREAS**, this Board is desirous to implement its responsibilities to ensure high quality-behavioral health services for adults ages 18 and older and children and youth from birth to age 18 residing in the City of St. Louis; and

**WHEREAS**, MHB’s reputation for engaging in collaboration, trust-based philanthropy, participatory grantmaking, and exemplary stewardship of public tax dollars have positioned it to leverage funding from the Department of Mental Health; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Mental Health desires to execute an agreement with MHB to distribute the funds received this fiscal year to address overdose fatalities and substance use addiction in North St. Louis City and North St. Louis County;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

The Board of Trustees authorizes the Executive Director and Board Chair to enter into an agreement with the Department of Mental Health to distribute the funds received this fiscal year to support the GROW-STL initiative in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

**APPROVED THIS 21<sup>st</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER 2024:**

Board Chair/Officer Name (printed):	Signature:
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**ATTEST:**

Board Officer Name (printed):	Signature:
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