



For Immediate Publication
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Casa Esperanza Warns of Dire Impact of Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Agency Cuts

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which has already lost about 10% of its staff, could see further [reductions up to 50%](#), according to senior agency officials and congressional aides briefed by the Trump administration. SAMHSA provides lifesaving support for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders. However, reports indicate that funding for centers serving specific populations—such as Latine, Black, and LGBTQIA+ communities—is unlikely to be reauthorized. Further reductions in SAMHSA's workforce could lead to a surge in relapse rates, greater strain on the healthcare system, and poorer health outcomes overall.

“As a culturally-focused provider of behavioral health services, Casa knows how vital these resources are. SAMHSA cuts will erode the fragile foundation of equitable and accessible care that has emerged in recent years and perpetuate cycles that organizations like Casa have worked for decades to break,” said Emily Stewart, Chief Executive Officer of Casa Esperanza. “Eliminating vital resources, especially for historically marginalized groups, ignores the reality that health disparities are the legacy of silence, indifference, and systemic dehumanization that erode the well-being of all Americans.”

According to the Center for Health Information and Analysis, Massachusetts has one of the highest drug overdose deaths in the country; in 2023, the Commonwealth had a rate of 36.8 per 100,000 compared with 21.6 per 100,000 nationwide. The number of opioid-related overdose deaths among Latines increased by 16%, from 39.1 to 45.5 deaths per 100,000

residents, between 2021 and 2022 while the state's mortality rates due to stimulant-related overdose deaths increased by 26% over the past ten years for Latines.

The demand for substance use and mental health supports among Latines has surged in recent years. In response, Casa has steadily expanded its telehealth capabilities, recovery support services, and increased its medical and clinical teams to ensure continued access to critical services. "Eliminating these services would have devastating and irreversible consequences," Stewart cautioned. "Funding is critical to addressing the addiction and mental health crisis across all communities, this includes people living in the margins, people who are homeless, and people who do not have the linguistic capacity to navigate our unnecessarily complex healthcare system. These people are not expendable. We should all be taking the stance that behavioral health treatment is a human right, and these cuts are a violation of those rights.

While Casa Esperanza remains committed to providing accessible, high-quality culturally responsive care, these cuts threaten critical referral networks and nationwide access to essential services. The impact will be far-reaching, and the need for sustained funding has never been more urgent.

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About Casa Esperanza, Inc.

Casa Esperanza, Inc. was founded in 1984 as a grassroots response to the cultural and linguistic barriers Latinx patients with substance use disorders (SUDs) faced accessing treatment. Casa's mission is to empower individuals and families to recover from addiction, trauma, mental illness, and other chronic medical conditions; overcome homelessness; and achieve health and wellness through comprehensive, integrated care. Casa's continuum of care includes Conexiones Clinical Stabilization Services (up to 32 adult patients); two residential addiction treatment programs, Latinas y Niños (20 adult recovery beds with 6 mothering suites serving up to 12 children under 10) and Casa's Men's Program (29 beds for adult men); 37 units of supportive housing; and Familias Unidas Outpatient Clinic which provides in-office and telehealth clinical treatment for SUDs, Serious Mental Illnesses (SMIs), and Co-occurring SUDs and SMIs (CODs), including targeted case management, peer support, reentry support, and other wrap-around services. Familias Unidas is also home to Boston's only Spanish-language Structured Outpatient Addiction Program (SOAP) and offers HIV/AIDS screening, treatment, and prevention; and co-located primary care through a partnership with Boston Health Care for the Homeless.