



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – July 31, 2012  
Contact: Claudia Sloan, Behavioral Health Services, 602-364-4755

**ARIZONA RECEIVES \$7.5 MILLION TO REDUCE  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

New \$7.5 million federal grant will allow Arizona to identify substance abuse problems and begin intervention in primary care offices and the emergency room. The Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) grant will help primary care providers identify patients who are at risk for or who have underlying substance abuse problems that might otherwise go unnoticed and untreated.

Over the next five years, the grant will help reduce the number of substance use related deaths and the prevalence of substance abuse disorders in the five northern Arizona counties: Apache, Coconino, Mohave, Navajo, and Yavapai.

“We are focusing our efforts here because data show that the rates of injuries and deaths due to alcohol and other drugs are the highest in this region of the state” said Dr. Laura Nelson, Deputy Director for Behavioral Health Services. “Using a standardized approach gives providers an effective way to screen individuals for potential substance abuse and then take the most appropriate action.”

Through this grant, medical providers at several community health centers and one emergency department will be trained to effectively use a proven screening tool to identify those at risk. They’ll also learn how to conduct a brief intervention which may include education about binge drinking, heavy drinking and/or the effects of drugs on the body.

Integration of behavioral health services into primary care centers and the hospital emergency rooms provides opportunities for early intervention with at-risk substance users before more severe consequences occur.

The Governor’s Office for Children, Youth and Family, the Department of Health Services and the Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority applied for the grant together. The grant was issued by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Authority (SAMHSA) which is a public health agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. SAMHSA’s mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America’s communities.

###

About SAMHSA's SBIRT grants:

Since 2003, SAMHSA has funded seventeen (17) Medical Residency Cooperative Agreements, fifteen (15) State Cooperative Agreements, and twelve (12) Targeted Capacity Expansion Campus Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) Grants. For more information, please see: <http://www.samhsa.gov/prevention/sbirt/grantees/index.aspx>.

About ADHS/DBHS:

ADHS/DBHS is the single state authority to provide coordination, planning, administration, regulation and monitoring of all facets of the state public behavioral health system. ADHS/DBHS contracts with community based organizations, known as Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs), to administer behavioral health services throughout the State. RBHAs function in a fashion similar to a health maintenance organization.