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Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Across The Nation | Oregon Receives \$1.2M Grant To Provide Rent, Support Services for HIV-Positive People Living With Mental Illnesses
[Nov 05, 2007]

The [HIV Care and Treatment Program](#) in the Oregon [Department of Human Services](#) recently received a three-year, \$1.2 million grant from the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) to provide support services and rental housing for HIV-positive people living with mental illnesses, the [Eugene Register-Guard](#) reports. According to state officials, Oregon is one of four applicants nationwide to receive the grant (Palmer, Eugene [Register-Guard](#), 11/1).

According to the [Oregonian](#), the funding will be used to provide services to as many as 30 HIV-positive residents of the five-county Portland metropolitan area, as well as 20 people living with the disease in eight other counties along the Interstate 5 corridor. The two areas have the state's highest concentration of people living with HIV/AIDS, the [Oregonian](#) reports. The treatment program will allocate the funding to [Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare](#), which will provide mental health services, and [Cascade AIDS Project](#), which will provide housing support (Colburn, [Oregonian](#), 11/1). According to Victor Fox, manager of the state treatment program, about 4,000 people are living with the disease in Oregon, but other estimates indicate that an additional 2,000 people in the state might be HIV-positive. Health experts estimate that as many as 60% of those living with the disease experience some form of mental illness, the [Register-Guard](#) reports (Eugene [Register-Guard](#), 11/1). If the program is successful, HUD might replicate it in other states, Fox said.

Jim Hlava, vice president of residential services for CBH, said affordable housing often is the most pressing need for HIV-positive people with mental illnesses. "It's hard for people to get better

unless they have good stable housing," Hlava said, adding, "They can survive, but they don't get better." According to Fox, HIV-positive people in most cases experience depression, but it is the more severe diagnoses, such as schizophrenia, that make it hard for people to maintain housing. "They get evicted," and "people choose not to rent to them," Fox said, adding, "We're saying to those landlords: 'If you allow us to place them in your facility, they'll have ongoing services, HIV case management and mental health services'" ([AP/Oregonian](#), 11/2).

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