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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ingham County selected to participate in national initiative to expand opioid treatment in jails

LANSING, Mich. – Ingham County today announced it has been selected to participate in a national program to expand medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorder in jails.

The county will receive expert guidance on how to overcome barriers to providing opioid treatment and scholarships for staff members to attend trainings in Washington, D.C. Experts will work with jail officials to create treatment guidelines, manage administration of the medications, and educate jail staff about addiction. The Ingham County team includes six people representing: the Ingham County Health Department, the Ingham County Sheriff's Department, the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office, the 55th District Court-Probation and Treatment Courts Division, and Community Mental Health of Clinton, Eaton & Ingham Counties.

“With the expertise, dedication and resources of the Ingham County team, I know we will bring home and implement real change to improve the health of inmates and those released back into the community,” said Linda S. Vail, Ingham County Health Officer.

Ingham County will also develop a plan with local health care officials to ensure people can access treatment after they are released. The program is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, and Arnold Ventures, a national philanthropy headquartered in Houston, Texas. In addition to supporting efforts to expand treatment for opioid use disorder, the philanthropy is also working to improve the criminal justice system through reforms to policing, pretrial, probation and parole, and reintegration services.

Jails are at the epicenter of the opioid crisis. Tens of thousands of people with opioid use disorder pass through the corrections system each year. But only about 30 of the 3,200 jails in the country offer the opioid medications methadone and buprenorphine, which have been shown by research to be the most effective forms of treatment. Most individuals instead go through detoxification, which lowers tolerance levels without curbing opioid cravings and dramatically raises the risk that people will overdose after they are released.

Ingham County is one of 15 jurisdictions that will participate in the Planning Initiative to Build Bridges Between Jail and Community-Based Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder. The selected sites span the country from Lewis and Clark County Detention Center in Helena, Montana, which has 80 beds, to Cook County Jail in Chicago, the largest single-site jail in the United States.

For more information about the Planning Initiative to Build Bridges Between Jail and Community-Based Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder, visit <https://www.arnoldventures.org/work/the-opioid-epidemic>.

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About Arnold Ventures

Arnold Ventures is a philanthropy dedicated to tackling some of the most pressing problems in the United States. Founded by Laura and John Arnold in 2010, Arnold Ventures' core mission is to improve lives by investing in evidence-based solutions that maximize opportunity and minimize injustice. The philanthropy has offices in Houston, New York, and Washington, D.C.