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By [Allyson Blair](#) | August 26, 2019 at 5:04 PM HST - Updated August 27 at 2:24 PM

HONOLULU, Hawaii (HawaiiNewsNow) - The city has awarded the state's only psychiatric street medicine team \$500,000 to help get more homeless people with mental illness off the streets and into treatment.

On Monday, Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced the city's new partnership with the Institute for Human Services.

"Today is about stepping up and trying to do more," Caldwell said.

The IHS street medicine team is led by a psychiatrist and goes into homeless camps to engage and treat patients. Over the past two years, it's treated and housed 40 people — many of whom spent decades living on the street.

IHS Executive Director Connie Mitchell estimates there are close to 200 more who need help on Oahu.

“We will be triaging chronically mentally ill homeless persons into treatment through assertive outreach, through the use of guardianship — meaning someone else consenting for them to get medication or assisted community treatment,” she said. “That is court ordered treatment for people who just can’t say yes for themselves.”

Money for the program will go toward the cost of psychiatric care and legal fees.

The boost in funding couldn’t have come at a better time.

In June, the governor signed off on an updated version of Hawaii’s Assisted Community Treatment law, making it easier to force people suffering from mental illness into treatment.

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