



**Office of  
Mental Health**

# **2023 OMH Community Engagement Feedback Sessions Results**

**September 12, 2023**

# Background

# OMH 2023 Community Engagement Sessions

- 890+ participants attended 4 virtual sessions in February & March 2023
- 835 participants attended 35 in-person sessions in March & April
- In-person sessions offered both an evening session and morning session
  - Western & Finger Lakes: Olean, Buffalo, Rochester
  - Southern Tier: Corning, Binghamton
  - North Country: Plattsburgh, Watertown
  - Central & Mohawk Valley: Utica, Gloversville, Syracuse
  - Capital District & Mid-Hudson: Albany, Monticello, Valhalla (Westchester)
  - New York City: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Staten Island
  - Long Island: Melville (Nassau), Hauppauge (Suffolk)
- Participants included individuals with lived experience, family members, providers, community leadership, and advocates

# Approach to Community Engagement Feedback Sessions

- Provide an **opening presentation** on the mental health investments and system reforms in the budget and planned in the coming years.
- **Breakout into groups** to gather feedback on how we can ensure health equity in both access and outcomes of new and existing public health services.
- **Identify creative ideas and examples from local communities** on how to best implement and target the funding, so it reaches the New Yorkers who need it most.
- Gather information about what **success** will look like for each region and community in the State. Identify **challenges** to achieving results along with ideas for overcoming these challenges.
- Notes from the breakout sessions were **analyzed into themes** to be used in the implementation planning for these new initiatives.

# Virtual Statewide Sessions

February 17, 21, March 2, 7, 2023

# Virtual Sessions Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees shared that a <b>2% COLA is not sufficient</b> to retain workforce and does not signal an incentive for people to enter the workforce. An 8% COLA was proposed amongst attendees to attract people to enter the workforce.</li> <li>The administrative burden of documentation and compliance timelines, especially with large caseloads, was cited by participants as a barrier to workforce retention.</li> <li>There was a recommendation for more of a <b>balance amongst new and experienced staff</b> across care delivery teams.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>provide Nurse Practitioners with increased privileges</b> to work and perform functions in programs, in addition to allied health professionals such as occupational therapists.</li> <li>Attendees suggested beginning <b>recruitment efforts</b> as early as high school.</li> <li>Many attendees agreed that <b>loan forgiveness</b> for licensed staff is an important lever for retention and recruitment.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some attendees expressed concerned about a shortage of peer specialists and requested that the <b>pay for peer specialists match other service providers.</b></li> <li>The <b>Qualified Mental Health Associate (QMHA) Credential was well-received</b> as many attendees believed it could mitigate workforce shortages.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>expand the immigrant workforce</b> through foreign credentialing to promote culturally sensitive care.</li> <li>Beyond a broader provider shortage, there is a need for providers who are particularly <b>equipped to serve youth.</b></li> </ul>

# Virtual Sessions Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a common <b>sentiment among community members of not understanding all the services provided or supported by OMH.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendees asked where information about OMH services are consolidated.</li> <li>○ Attendees suggested television and social media campaigns to understand the support that is available. This may even include tapping into influencers and social media to destigmatize mental health.</li> <li>○ Targeting information to schools may be an avenue to share details about OMH services.</li> <li>○ Community-based organization representatives requested printed materials about services available to supplement information on the NYS website.</li> <li>○ On the flip side, some attendees expressed that families and people with lived experiences could be overwhelmed by the number of services offered to them. There is a need to balance how information is presented so it is not overwhelming. Further, family and peer advocates can provide the level of listening that families need to find what works for them.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of <b>access to reliable transportation</b> was emphasized regardless of geographic region; attendees in urban areas emphasize cost of transportation and weather challenges, whereas rural areas grapple with reduced public transportation options.</li> <li>• An attendee suggested having <b>partnerships with cultural communities</b> so there are "translators" both in language and experience. More trainings are needed across the state for interacting with families that have more diverse backgrounds.</li> </ul>

# Virtual Sessions Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services (Cont.)
Peer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees suggested that <b>peer respite programs</b> could help fill some of the gaps when individuals are in crisis, including a <b>long-term peer respite</b> to offer a bridge from crisis to community.</li> <li>Some attendees suggested <b>peers being stationed in emergency programs</b> to help families.</li> </ul>
988 Hotline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>988 hotline was well-received</b> amongst attendees, saying that it has been successful in having a nurturing and caring conversation, triaging crises, disseminating issues and concerns to the right agency and mental health professional, and more.</li> <li>Some attendees asked for <b>clarification about 988 functionality</b> (e.g., does 911 divert to 988, does 988 serve as a suicide hotline, can 988 help with access?)</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized the importance of <b>preventative services and resiliency building</b> with children and families.</li> <li>There were suggestions to <b>create a universal referral system for children</b> with providers so that families are not sharing the same information over and over.</li> <li>Attendees shared that <b>transition services</b> are needed for youth aging out of group homes.</li> <li>Additional <b>programs within communities</b> would be helpful in reducing need for travel and expanded hours of operations would improve access.</li> <li>There was concern that <b>open access works well for a first appointment</b>, but the second appointment takes weeks or months to schedule.</li> </ul>



# Virtual Sessions Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Cross-Agency Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity for cross-agency collaboration, such as with the <b>Department of Education</b>, to support children who are homeless, experiencing trauma at home, or have parents that are justice involved.</li> <li>• There was also a recommendation for collaboration between OMH and the Department of Education on requirements for <b>teacher trainings and Continuing Education requirements</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees suggested there be trainings available for talking with youth about issues related to <b>race, ethnicity, and orientation</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Youth Mental Health First Aid training</b> would be helpful in schools, for example to help teachers recognize signs that a child is struggling so they can help with early intervention. Special education teachers were specifically mentioned as needing more training around mental health.</li> <li>• Additional trainings are needed for parents of children receiving services from schools so that parents can <b>be better advocates</b> for their children.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees emphasized <b>expanding children's mental health programs</b>, especially for teenagers.</li> <li>• Having <b>youth peer specialists</b> available for every school may be helpful.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>insert community programs in schools</b> (with clear guidelines/delineation of roles), coordinate outpatient services between schools and mental health providers, and include schools in the high-fidelity wraparound process.</li> <li>• <b>Mental Health days</b> for children was proposed by attendees as an idea to support children's needs.</li> </ul>

# Virtual Sessions Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity for hospital inpatient programs, emergency rooms, and Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs) to <b>partner with community peer programs</b> to enhance social supports upon discharge.</li> <li>• Hospitals may consider partnerships with the <b>Single Point of Access (SPOA)</b> programs to ensure appropriate discharge planning.</li> <li>• Some attendees reflected that the readiness for release to the community can be addressed earlier in the treatment process through <b>person-centered treatment</b> and understanding an individual's needs related to community living.</li> <li>• Attendees emphasized concerns about youth aging out of the system with nowhere to go; these young adults (14-21) have <b>limited life skills</b>.</li> </ul>
Social Determinants of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees requested an <b>automatic status conversion</b> from forensic to civil once time has been served.</li> </ul>
Insurance Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some attendees shared that providers face pressure from insurance companies (Medicaid, commercial) to <b>discharge patients too quickly</b>.</li> </ul>

# Virtual Sessions Themes: Housing / Inpatient

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Needs and Requests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees are noticing a need for <b>safe and affordable housing across geographic regions</b>.</li> <li>An <b>inability to staff supportive housing</b> is a barrier to implementation of the new housing investments. Additionally, case managers are requested to be present and working with housing staff to support client needs.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to better <b>support housing needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities</b> by coordinating between OMH and OPWDD.</li> <li>As new housing units are being built, attendees request that <b>wraparound services be paired with the new housing</b>.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>housing for special populations</b>, such as for youth, older adults, and families (e.g., if a child has a high level of need, provide housing for the child and their caretakers). Some people also struggle with the application process for housing.</li> </ul>
Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was a common sentiment that inpatient psychiatric environments <b>are not welcoming</b> and would be improved if they were more “home-like.” Attendees suggested re-instituting “Least Restrictive where the Individual can Live and Function Safely.”</li> </ul>
<b>Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to have enough <b>open beds in hospitals</b> to support the size of their community.</li> <li>Some attendees reflected that individuals who are not able to access emergency care often become <b>justice-involved</b>.</li> </ul>

# Virtual Sessions Themes: Insurance

Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An attendee shared that Family Peer Services do not fit well into a <b>Medicaid Billing model</b>.</li><li>• There are demonstrated <b>barriers in schools</b> gaining access to Medicaid related to credentials and licensure.</li><li>• Attendees feel <b>many programs are currently only available to Medicaid beneficiaries</b>. This challenge often impacts young people and dependents more than adults.</li><li>• Providers requested a <b>Medicaid rate increase</b> for outpatient services.</li></ul>

# Olean

March 20-21, 2023

# Olean Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
<b>Recruitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a common sentiment of <b>strengthening the mental health workforce</b> in the region. A reduction in workforce has resulted in longer wait times to access services.</li> <li>• <b>Adequate pay</b> was cited as the largest barrier to recruiting the workforce.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee from a local non-profit and a Health Home Care Management leader emphasized that job postings will not receive applicants without clear salary expectations.</li> <li>○ Clinicians are increasingly choosing to work in private practice due to the pay opportunity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It would be beneficial to have diverse/bilingual providers, although Cattaraugus County now has reported making progress in recruiting Spanish speaking bi-lingual staff.</li> <li>• .There has been an <b>influx of new talent</b> in Chautauqua. However, existing programs are losing the historical knowledge from experienced staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers are often <b>overwhelmed with paperwork</b>. An attendee further explained how a clinician resigned because of open access, as the clinician had to manage walk-ins and crises on top of an existing caseload and administrative requirements.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to have more <b>peers in the workforce</b>. For example, peer-led Southern Tier Recovery Activities Without Walls has been beneficial.</li> <li>• There was a sentiment that <b>volunteers are underutilized</b> in Cattaraugus County. Coordination of volunteers would be beneficial.</li> <li>• The workforce increasingly seeks <b>flexibility in working from home or working fewer days a week</b> (e.g., 4 days a week). Beyond these benefits, retention may be bolstered by mental health days and free meals once a month.</li> </ul>

# Olean Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was <b>positive feedback about ACT teams</b>, as they have helped people build stability and have improved year-over-year.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cattaraugus County would benefit from more ACT teams.</li> <li>○ There was a concern that ACT team investments would be in more urban areas rather than rural regions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There was a suggestion to have ACT, Critical Time Intervention (CTI) Team, or mobile crisis teams to <b>respond to ER</b> needs.</li> <li>• <b>Allegany County seeks a CTI team.</b> They are currently running a Home-Based Crisis Intervention program through reinvestment dollars, which would be nicely complemented by CTI teams.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transportation is a significant barrier</b> in the region, especially north of Olean and in rural areas.</li> <li>• There is <b>limited Medicaid transportation.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ VMC Transportation Services closed operations due to profitability concerns.</li> <li>○ The Medicaid transportation option that currently exists is not always reliable. This poses issues when clients become sanctioned by Department of Social Services for 30 days or they start over in a program due to missing an appointment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is <b>limited broadband for telehealth.</b> The Cattaraugus County library has a kiosk with internet to schedule appointments through OASAS.</li> <li>• Phone access can be an issue as clients often <b>lose their phones or run out of minutes.</b></li> <li>• There is a Native American reservation in Salamanca with certain unmet mental health needs. More engagement is needed with this population.</li> </ul>

# Olean Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to better <b>educate teachers</b> about mental health services, coping with burnout, and trauma-informed care.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be beneficial to have more <b>after-school enrichment programs</b> and transportation to/from after-school programs.</li> <li>• There was a common sentiment of <b>addressing bullying in schools</b>.</li> <li>• There is a potential <b>lack of awareness</b> about services. For example, an attendee who is a parent in the area was unaware there was a part-time clinician at schools in Olean.</li> <li>• An attendee from Chautauqua suggested pursuing <b>innovative ways of supporting children</b>, such as animal therapy, music therapy, dance therapy, and meeting with peers rather than social workers/counselors.</li> </ul>



# Olean Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
<p><b>Opportunity Identification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a <b>limited continuum of care in the region</b>, as there are not enough services provided when an individual is discharged.</li> <li>• There was a common sentiment among attendees across counties that individuals are <b>often discharged immediately</b> from hospitals.</li> <li>• Some individuals cycle between <b>jails, hospitals, and/or unsheltered homelessness</b>. Attendees stressed that something must be done to help.</li> <li>• There was an emphasis on ensuring that <b>every county has their own respite</b>.</li> <li>• A provider noted they often do not know their patients are in the hospital and are <b>unaware about their discharges</b>. It is then difficult to have post-discharge follow-up appointments.</li> </ul>

# Olean Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<p><b>Housing Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a significant need for <b>affordable and safe housing</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cattaraugus County has two shelters, and hotels/motels, and more supportive services are needed. Cattaraugus County is sending individuals to neighboring counties for housing, due to long waitlists.</li> <li>○ Southern Tier Environments for Living operates two group homes in the region.</li> <li>○ The sense from two attendees, one from Cattaraugus County and one from Chautauqua, is that the number of individuals with unsheltered homelessness has increased dramatically in recent years.</li> <li>○ Housing subsidies will not be helpful if there are not enough housing units to begin with.</li> <li>○ An attendee from Allegany County expressed concern about individuals who are homeless getting hurt, for example, by walking down country roads or not having proper clothing for the weather.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Embedding peers and mental health professionals</b> within homeless shelters would be beneficial.</li> <li>• Attendees reported that some housing is of <b>poor quality</b>, with bed bugs and cockroaches.</li> <li>• There is a common <b>"Not in My Backyard" (NIMBY) sentiment</b> in the region regarding public housing, which is a barrier to expanding housing.</li> <li>• There is a particular difficulty in finding housing for <b>mothers and their children</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landlord Partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>incentivize landlords to work with mental health agencies</b>. Attendees report that some landlords in Cattaraugus County have changed their attitudes since the onset of COVID-19 and have begun refusing calls from mental health housing agencies.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity <b>for training programs for landlords</b> or landlord community meetings. For example, there was a landlord luncheon in the region where they discussed tenant rights, among other topics.</li> </ul>

# Olean Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<p><b>Access to / Provision of Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees reported there are <b>not enough inpatient beds in the area</b>. Attendees were curious if OMH has a way to track when inpatient beds are not available.</li> <li>There are <b>capacity challenges</b> in Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs).</li> <li>In Allegany County, there are <b>no hospitals with behavioral health services</b>.</li> <li>An attendee was <b>not aware that there is children's care management</b> in Cattaraugus County. In response, an attendee stated that improvement is needed in the responsiveness from the care management team when contacted.</li> <li>A sense shared by some attendees is that the inpatient environment can feel <b>depressing and traumatizing</b>, especially for children.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<p><b>Billing Challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees were energized about the idea of <b>expanding Commercial insurance</b> as well as Medicaid to cover mental health needs.</li> </ul>

# Buffalo

March 21-22, 2023

# Buffalo Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Peer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for more <b>peer advocates</b> to help increase awareness and linkage of services amongst Black and Brown communities.</li> <li>• Attendees agreed that <b>peers should be paid adequately</b> due to the breadth of services they provide.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to hire a <b>more diverse workforce</b> (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender identity, languages spoken).</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to provide <b>financial incentives</b> to students. For example, students to receive loan forgiveness or tuition reimbursement if they commit to working in the region.</li> <li>• OMH may consider <b>partnering with community colleges and local learning centers</b> to create a workforce development pipeline.</li> <li>• Attendees recommended reflecting upon <b>requirements for positions</b> (e.g., do case managers need a bachelor's degree?). OMH may also consider developing certificate course programs with community colleges.</li> <li>• It takes years to become a physician or nurse. OMH should <b>leverage paraprofessionals</b> such as youth and certified peers.</li> <li>• <b>Occupational therapists</b> are an untapped workforce who are trained to work with individuals with psychosocial needs.</li> </ul>
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees emphasized that the <b>workforce will be critical</b> to sustaining existing programs and implementing new programs.</li> <li>• <b>Pay is the largest barrier</b> to retaining the workforce. An attendee cautioned that CCBHCs do not receive the COLA because they receive different rates, but the attendee felt staff there are still not adequately paid.</li> <li>• Employment requires <b>reliable childcare at all times of the day</b>. Most daycare programs only provide services from 7 am – 6 pm on weekdays.</li> <li>• There is a <b>stigma around people who work with individuals with mental illness</b>, and there may be an opportunity for OMH to help make mental health a respected career amongst the younger generation.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ OMH may consider having a robust media campaign to combat mental health stigma.</li> <li>○ OMH may consider presence at career fairs to get younger generations interested in the work.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Buffalo Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to partner with <b>doctor's offices, churches, and the Buffalo Urban League</b> to increase awareness of mental health services.</li> <li>• OMH may consider exploring central Statewide referrals through <b>Unite Us options</b> which would also enhance service awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT and Critical Time Intervention (CTI) teams should target environments serving individuals with chronic needs, such as <b>shelters</b>.</li> <li>• Many <b>rural counties do not have ACT teams</b>. Attendees requested expanding the Niagara County ACT team (48 to 64).</li> <li>• An attendee suggested there be an option for ACT teams to check in with <b>someone daily for 5 minutes</b> and for <b>peer ACT teams</b>.</li> <li>• ACT teams need <b>cars or better mileage reimbursement</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a large population of individuals with unsheltered homelessness. There was a suggestion for OMH to <b>bring services to shelters</b> and place care management teams on-site.</li> <li>• Attendees seek clinical and peer services at <b>non-traditional times</b> (e.g., late evenings, weekends).</li> <li>• There is <b>limited public transportation</b> in the region, especially in rural areas. There was a higher engagement in services when bus fare was free during COVID-19. Telehealth has been beneficial due to transportation issues. Attendees recommended creating free routes with Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) which would take riders to grocery stores and mental health/physical health agencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs) could <b>improve in making their environments more welcoming for clients</b>. Service recipients experienced long wait times due to staffing shortages, poor physical infrastructure, and limited transportation. Attendees requested a CPEP carve-out for kids.</li> <li>• Attendees voiced concerns about financial cuts to the <b>Health Home program</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees emphasized <b>moving away from a crisis-based model and using a holistic approach</b> to mental health.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This includes focusing on prevention and partnering with the Office of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Transportation to build a community center and opportunities for positive peer recreation.</li> <li>○ OMH has funded a lot of nontraditional services through a SAMHSA Grant, but that ends within a year. OMH should continue partnering with schools, churches, and business owners on these activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Buffalo Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees would like <b>administrative buy-in for suicide training</b> and safety in schools training for all school employees.</li></ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There is a need for more <b>peer advocates</b> in schools, as sometimes children are more comfortable going to peers than teachers or the principal.</li><li>Brain health and mental health should be <b>required education in schools</b>. This may include an assembly to which families are also invited.</li><li><b>Recess, movement, and arts</b> should continue to be included in school schedules.</li></ul>

# Buffalo Themes: Discharge / Housing

Category	Discharge Planning
<p><b>Opportunity Identification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity for <b>ACT teams to be embedded in hospitals</b> to help with discharge planning.</li> <li>• Providers are seeing kids who <b>do not have a discharge plan</b>. Some children do not have a safety plan when they are discharged from Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs).</li> <li>• Attendees sensed a <b>lack of peer bridges</b> to help with the transition from hospital to community settings.</li> <li>• CPEPs should have a <b>school liaison with hospitals</b> to ensure there is communication about a discharge plan.</li> </ul>
Category	New Housing Units
<p><b>Opportunity Identification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department of Social Services puts people in <b>hotels due to a lack of housing in the region</b>. Some of these hotel spaces are not safe due to a lack of accountability. Often, individuals would rather live outside than in the hotels. Attendees recommended regular inspections and audits at hotels.</li> <li>• Attendees asked if there is an opportunity for more housing that allows <b>roommates, minor modifications to make a place feel like home, and pets</b>.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>day shelters, sex offender housing, and transitional-age youth housing</b>. Transitional housing at Southern Tier Environments for Living (STEL) is understaffed.</li> <li>• To incentivize landlords accepting tenants with mental health needs, OMH could provide a <b>voucher for landlords</b> to make capital improvements for tenants.</li> <li>• It takes days to complete <b>paperwork for Single Point of Access referrals</b> for housing, which can cause an access barrier.</li> <li>• Attendees shared that there is only <b>one men’s shelter and one domestic violence shelter for women and children in Chautauqua County</b>. Attendees seek more housing units in the Western New York area.</li> <li>• Attendees recommended reflecting on successful models in Europe, such as creating a <b>community of tiny houses</b> to help learn life skills, mortgage, financial responsibility, and apprenticeships.</li> </ul>



# Buffalo Themes: Insurance

Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees emphasized that there is too much <b>inflexibility and regulations surrounding insurance coverage</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendees asked OMH to investigate regulations in Commercial insurance reimbursement and allow it to be easier to be a provider who bills for these services. Many mental health clinicians have moved to private pay only, decreasing accessibility.</li> <li>○ Attendees want to provide flexible services that are not driven by billing (e.g., outpatient program manager meeting individuals when they are discharged from hospitals, having longer appointments with clients that need more time, etc.).</li> <li>○ Peer mobile crisis teams have been successful, but there is a sense they cannot bill for half the services they provide.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attendees reported there is a large proportion of the population who <b>do not qualify for Medicaid</b>, and then do not qualify for mental health services as a result.</li> <li>• It would be beneficial for Medicaid Cab to reimburse <b>costs for transportation to non-clinical services</b> involved in an individual's recovery.</li> <li>• There was a sense that agencies should be held accountable for <b>responsible use of revenue</b> earned by billing and use it for clients and staff.</li> <li>• An <b>ID is needed to get Medicaid coverage</b>, and that can be a barrier for some individuals who are homeless.</li> </ul>

# Rochester

March 22-23, 2023

# Rochester Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees asked for a <b>minimum 8.5% cost of living adjustment (COLA)</b>.</li> <li>• Providers expressed <b>frustration with the amount of time spent on non-billable work</b> that would ideally be spent on treating patients.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendees suggested that OMH conduct an internal audit to better understand the paperwork required for clients and find opportunities to make reductions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The workforce is navigating <b>high levels of stress</b> and there is a need for promoting workforce wellness.</li> <li>• Attendees suggested that OMH <b>recommend clinics have a maximum caseload</b>, to prevent large caseload sizes and burnout.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>better collaborate with community college, field office, and county office staff</b> to support smaller agencies who are grappling with workforce shortages.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse populations have a historical mistrust of mental health services which may be contributing to a less diverse workforce. Attendees suggested providing targeted <b>funding, incentives, or loan repayments to underrepresented communities</b> entering the field.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>bilingual counselors</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees discussed if there is an opportunity to have <b>direct entry to select mental health professionals</b> without civil service exams.</li> <li>• Sometimes individuals are <b>scared to enter the mental health workforce</b> due to perceptions about the role (e.g., workload, flexibility, requirements for home visits). There is a need to increase pay and flexibility in an appealing manner.</li> </ul>

# Rochester Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
Service Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The OMH website <b>should be updated to be more accessible and user-friendly</b> so that it is more clear what programs are offered.</li> </ul>
Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some attendees suggested that ACT teams should be <b>comprised of at least three individuals</b> due to safety concerns, as ACT teams often work in communities experiencing violence.</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees requested <b>expanding hours and telehealth capabilities</b> for outpatient clinics so families can access services after 7 pm.</li> <li>Making <b>peer counselors more broadly available</b> would allow individuals to receive timely care; issues can be escalated to therapists or psychiatrists as needed.</li> <li>There is an opportunity for OMH to <b>provide services and outreach at locations people frequent</b>, such as barber shops and beauty salons.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to offer <b>peer certifications to barber shops and salons</b>.</li> </ul>
Social Determinants of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Transportation is an issue</b> in the region. The population of individuals who are homeless specifically lacks adequate transportation.</li> </ul>

# Rochester Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rochester City Schools should implement training</b> to educate teachers and mental health providers on picking up 'red flags' for suicide ideation and when they should call 211 or 988.</li> <li>• There needs to be <b>additional training for care managers</b>, as sometimes they do not have adequate experience with families and children with mental health issues.</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, there is a need for an <b>expanded role for mental health in schools</b> and a larger workforce in schools to serve more children.</li> <li>• Attendees expressed that <b>Mental Health First Aid (MFHA) training</b> should be mandatory for all school employees.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to have <b>support groups for parents</b> to assist them in supporting children with mental illness.</li> <li>• There may be an opportunity for OMH to offer incentives for providers to offer <b>in-kind or pro-bono mental health services</b> to schools.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity for schools to <b>collaborate with libraries and recreational centers</b> to provide additional support and share workforce resources.</li> <li>• A <b>more diverse school staff and mental health counselors</b> may be beneficial to children.</li> </ul>

# Rochester Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a need for <b>emergency respite, temporary housing, long-term housing</b>, and safe places for people to go besides the emergency room.</li><li>• An attendee suggested developing a <b>live and real-time map</b> where you can click on counties and see what the current housing options are within that area, including information such as availability, number of beds, etc.</li><li>• Attendees emphasized the importance of individuals being able to access housing if they do not have a <b>driver's license or birth certificate</b>.</li><li>• <b>The Home of Your Own (HOYO) program</b> is needed by individuals serviced by OMH, as inclusion into a community may be difficult for some individuals and families with mental health issues.</li><li>• Attendees suggested offering incentive programs to develop specialized housing units for people with a <b>history of arson and individuals with co-occurring mental health and opioid use disorders</b>.</li></ul>

# Rochester Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<p><b>Access to / Provision of Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees expressed that inpatient units in hospitals should be <b>designed to feel therapeutic and healthy.</b></li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>better integrate peer support from individuals with lived experiences</b> to inpatient care for youth and families.</li> </ul>
Category	
<p><b>Billing Challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an opportunity to increase Medicaid pay-outs for services provided as <b>reimbursements rates are too low.</b></li> </ul>

# Corning

April 11-12, 2023



# Corning Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
<b>Recruitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees asked if there is a way to bring <b>private practitioners back to Article 31 outpatient programs</b> or have OMH-licensed programs partner with them.</li> <li>• <b>Managed Care Technical Assistance Center (MCTAC), and the Community Technical Assistance Center of New York (CTAC) provide phenomenal training</b> to staff, but they do not provide services to kids during training. Also, some training is not applicable to regions outside of New York City (e.g., training on how to use the subway).</li> <li>• An attendee suggested a need for physicians to be trained in the <b>proper management of psychotic medications</b>, including antipsychotics and mood stabilizers to fill the gap of not having enough psychiatrists in the area. Primary care physicians can prescribe anti-depressants and anxiolytics but are not typically trained to prescribe antipsychotics.</li> </ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some attendees emphasized that they do not need new services, but they need <b>equitable pay and staffing</b>.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There were anecdotes from attendees, including a public school licensed social worker, who must do telehealth work on the side to make ends meet.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Case management work includes some <b>redundant paperwork</b>, which reduces time available to see clients. Attendees suggested getting rid of data entry into multiple electronic record databases (e.g., OMH, DOH databases).</li> <li>• Clinicians joined the <b>Chemung school district</b> because they provided additional benefits for workers.</li> </ul>

# Corning Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An attendee expressed that there is only <b>one ACT program for Steuben County</b> and is not sufficient to cover this county or neighboring counties.</li> <li>There is <b>no ACT program in Livingston</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees requested a <b>portal with live updates</b> on the status of providers and programs in each county, with wait times. This would prevent people from calling each program individually to inquire.</li> <li>Communications about mental health services should be shared through <b>school district mailings, health systems, social media, and TV commercials</b>.</li> <li>A Steuben County staff person created <b>booklets for foster children to understand their rights and the State's responsibility</b> towards them as foster kids. OMH may consider creating a similar tool, so people understand their rights when accessing mental health services.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outpatient services expansion should consider <b>transportation challenges</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medicaid transportation is hard to utilize for some clients and providers. There is also a shortage of drivers for Medicaid clients.</li> <li>There is only one transportation service for people with disabilities needs, and they have limited working hours.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Parents often have difficulty with transportation</b> (e.g., cannot drive, do not have a vehicle) and some cannot take children to clinics for mental health services.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized the <b>importance of telehealth</b>. Attendees also understand that telehealth has its limitations and does not often address all patient needs.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>crisis resources in the area</b>. Crisis residences are voluntary, and if a child requests to leave, a parent has to come and pick the child up.</li> <li>One attendee felt that the focus on individuals with "high needs" can sometimes take away from supports for people with more subtle mental health needs. These individuals could escalate to having high needs without the proper attention.</li> </ul>

# Corning Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendees emphasized a need for <b>better coordination between OMH and OPWDD</b>, especially regarding housing plans during hospital discharge.</li><li>• Some hospital <b>staff involved in discharge planning need more education about mental health services</b>.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some hospital staff make a discharge plan that includes services for which the client is not eligible. For example, a child may be referred for care management, but the child does not have Medicaid coverage and does not qualify for the service.</li><li>• Alternatively, a child may be referred to a pediatrician outside of their insurance network.</li></ul></li><li>• Many people <b>cycle between going to the hospital and returning to a shelter</b>.</li><li>• An attendee felt that individuals discharged to <b>hotels are not being set up for success</b>, due to risk of drug use and people being taken advantage of.</li></ul>

# Corning Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health and addiction services are <b>not adequately provided in hotels</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Often, individuals experiencing both homelessness and addiction problems are placed in the same hotel.</li> <li>○ There is known violence in some of the hotels.</li> <li>○ As a result, some children living with families in hotels continually return to a destructive environment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is a need for <b>additional residential units</b> to live in, as some individuals are comfortable with a higher level of care and prefer that compared to independent living settings.</li> <li>• Some families in Chemung County opened their homes to people with mental illness. These people get special training to also teach others life skills. <b>Family Homes</b> for people discharged from Elmira Psychiatric Center have worked well, with 4-5 people placed in one home.</li> <li>• An attendee recommended referencing <b>Landfear Court by Winfield</b> as a base model of care, as it combines housing, mental health services, and family care. This may help OMH build supportive housing models in the future.</li> </ul>

# Corning Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Access to / Provision of Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some hospital staff experience burnout with the high level of mental health services needed in Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs). More <b>CPEP beds are needed in the Southern Tier</b>, and there needs to be better separation within Emergency Departments for physical ailments and mental health needs.</li> <li>It can be <b>difficult to admit children to the hospital for inpatient treatment</b>. The hospital often emphasizes it is a “behavioral issue,” and do not provide a proper evaluation or treatment.</li> <li>An attendee shared that the Corning Police Department does not want to transport people over county lines, which can be a barrier for clients experiencing crisis in need of hospitalization. Previously, mobile crisis teams could transport patients to hospitals in a different county.</li> <li>Some attendees expressed that <b>Health Homes do not have the same level of engagement</b> as prior case management programs. Health Homes have more requirements for quality and reporting, and workers have less time to engage individuals.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Case management is no longer a billable service by the care management provider</b>, and as a result, providers face difficulties in coordinating care. Providers who are all trying to help the same client work independently and are not aligned about treatment for the client.</li> <li>Attendees asked if there should be a separate set of regulations for rural counties vs. urban counties.</li> <li>Although the State requires a certain number of social workers per number of students in schools, <b>school social workers cannot bill for mental health services</b>. They need to refer students out to mental health programs with therapists who can provide billable mental health services.</li> </ul>

# Corning Themes: RFP Process / Funding

Category	RFP Process and Funding
RFP Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The ability for programs to hire grant writers puts other <b>organizations at a disadvantage who do not have dedicated RFP writers.</b></li><li>• There should be <b>more equity and parity in the RFP process</b> and a preference for community-based providers vs. larger organizations.</li></ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A number of counties were worried about budget funding reaching their communities.</li><li>• Attendees emphasized the importance of <b>focusing on services in the region now</b>, rather than focusing on building more programs.</li></ul>

# Plattsburgh

April 24-25, 2023



Office of  
Mental Health

# Plattsburgh Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees noted that the proposed <b>2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is not sufficient</b> and advocated for an 8.5% COLA adjustment.</li><li>There is a widespread need for more <b>therapists and psychiatrists who can take on new patients</b> in the region.</li><li>The workforce is facing high levels of burnout as well as paying off student loans. They often go to <b>private practices that do not take high-need clients</b>.</li><li>There is an opportunity to <b>pay for provider transportation</b>, as staff can lose an hour of billable services driving to a site.</li><li>There is a need to <b>increase pay for peer staff</b> in order to compete with other industries.</li></ul>



# Plattsburgh Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franklin County has QR codes in clinics so <b>people can provide feedback about the services they receive</b>. There are also focus groups for input in planning. Attendees request funding for additional formal needs assessments and strategic focus groups.</li> </ul>
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need for a <b>forensic ACT team</b>.</li> <li>An attendee requested that OMH <b>collaborate with law enforcement</b> more closely in the region, as it relates to planning for ACT teams.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees requested having a <b>Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Services Program (CPEP)</b> in the area.</li> <li>A <b>Critical Time Intervention (CTI) team</b> would be helpful for people who present to the emergency room with psychotic symptoms.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prisons are located across the North Country and most individuals being discharged from the prison return to their county of origin. That presents a potential barrier for CTI success for this population, since they should be engaged prior to discharge and must include buy-in from parole and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.</li> <li>CTI teams would be helpful for the aging population being discharged from prison, who are on parole after long-term incarceration and lack support in the community.</li> </ul> </li> <li>There is an opportunity for OMH to <b>partner with the YMCA</b> to provide services and care for youth and families.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are not enough services provided in rural areas. It is difficult to provide Children and Family Treatment and Support Services (CFTSS) because of how <b>large and rural the county</b> is.</li> <li>The region lacks <b>adequate access to grocery stores</b>.</li> </ul>

# Plattsburgh Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers need <b>education about available services</b>, especially crisis services.</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees <b>emphasized the importance of school-based services</b>.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>more therapists</b> in schools.</li> <li>There are not enough services, support, or education for <b>LGBTQ+ youth</b>.</li> <li>There is a need for a <b>clinician, coordinator, family peer advocate, youth peer advocate, and crisis intervention program</b> to support students within schools.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to periodically bring <b>mobile clinics comprised of OMH and OASAS staff</b> to schools.</li> <li>An attendee suggested therapists be invited come to <b>visit students during suspension periods</b> to educate them about what they did wrong and provide support.</li> </ul>

# Plattsburgh Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees requested a <b>retirement community</b> with on-site staff for the aging population who can no longer live independently.</li><li>Attendees requested setting up a <b>3–6-month pilot program for long-term care</b> where rent and wraparound mental health supports would be provided.</li><li>Some attendees reflected there is a need for <b>housing for sex offending individuals</b> because they are often excluded by housing landlords, providers, or staff.</li></ul>

# Plattsburgh Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Access to / Provision of Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for greater access to intermediate care beds in the community.</li> <li>• An attendee reflected that <b>peer support should be in hospitals and emergency rooms</b> to support children and families.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>incentivize cooperation between schools, OPWDD, OTDA, and OMH</b> so there is collaboration over “who pays” and what is best for a child and their family.</li> </ul>

# Watertown

April 19-20, 2023



# Watertown Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees requested a better understanding of <b>employee incentive programs</b>.</li><li>Workforce shortages are impacting the hospitals, as there is a <b>lack of inpatient beds due to limited staff</b>.</li></ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Some areas have <b>limited or no cell service to receive phone calls</b>, which limits an individual's ability to interview for a job, speak to a potential employer, and connect to services.</li><li>The Social Security's <b>Ticket to Work Program</b>, which supports career development for Social Security disability beneficiaries ages 18 through 64 who want to work, is confusing for applicants and employers.</li></ul>

# Watertown Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of understanding of <b>services available at a county level</b>.</li> <li>• There is a concern that <b>information available about services</b> is not updated regularly.</li> <li>• Consumers seek a <b>one-stop resource</b> to identify services and availability.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Staffing shortages are a barrier to setting up new initiatives</b>. For example, Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units were ready to open last fall but did not open until mid-February due to staffing shortages.</li> <li>• There is confusion around CFTSS (Children and Family Treatment and Support Services), CORE (Community Oriented Recovery and Empowerment), and Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) <b>program changes and requirements</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transportation is a barrier</b> in the region, affecting both service recipients and the workforce.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>more telehealth services</b> due to transportation challenges.</li> <li>• Attendees underscored that kids should <b>receive services in schools</b> rather than offsite due to transportation challenges.</li> <li>• There is a need for training correctional staff on <b>Mental Health First Aid</b>. One attendee reflected that due to bail reform, providers lost the opportunity to engage clients on their first day in jail.</li> </ul>

# Watertown Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees recommend that <b>OMH attend school board meetings</b> proactively to educate them about the importance of mental health and available services.</li></ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>School-based clinics in school districts in the region are <b>very helpful overall</b>.</li><li><b>Not all schools have access</b> to school-based services and seek them. Schools often do not know how to access or request school-based services but know they want to better service students through this capacity.</li><li>There is a need for <b>cross-systems care for kids who have intellectual/developmental disabilities and have mental health needs</b>. There are not a lot of providers in the region who have the knowledge or understanding to work with this dually-diagnosed population in the region. If you do find someone who can serve this population, it can take months for that child to receive services.</li></ul>



# Watertown Themes: Housing / Insurance

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jefferson County is need of additional housing.</li> <li>• Attendees are concerned that some of the budget initiatives may <b>not be fiscally viable in the smaller counties</b>.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>pet-friendly housing</b>, as some people do not seek treatment or do not go to temporary shelters due to not wanting to lose their pet.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees shared that Watertown is ramping up advocacy and implementing more penalties with insurance companies, even to the extent of requiring insurance companies <b>to re-bid for services</b>.</li> </ul>

# Gloversville

April 3-4, 2023

# Gloversville Themes: Workforce / Housing

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An attendee reflected that over the past 18 months, agencies have lost staff who decided to go to <b>private practice</b>.</li> <li>There are <b>fewer regulations in private practice</b>, and providers can even be paid in cash.</li> </ul>
Category	New Housing Units
Housing Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a lack of accessible housing for <b>individuals with forensic histories</b>.</li> <li>There is a need for housing to <b>support children with sexualized behaviors</b>.</li> </ul>

# Gloversville Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees recommend that OMH use <b>simple language to explain and promote services</b>. Consumers often do not use program language because it can feel stigmatizing.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Transportation is a barrier</b> in the region. Many people do not know how to navigate transportation options and there are limited funds to support transportation needs.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services are often in the eastern part of the county, but there is a significant need in the western part of the county. It is hard to get transportation from the West to the East.</li> <li>Attendees felt that Medicaid transportation has not worked in the region. There are no taxi services or buses outside Amsterdam.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some attendees felt <b>Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)</b> may be the only option for some agencies to address access to care. There are gaps in care coordination, housing, case management, etc. and CCBHCs may help fill the gaps.</li> <li>Attendees from provider agencies emphasized a strong <b>need for more walk-in services and felt that there are barriers in regulation and funding</b>.</li> <li>Some attendees reflected it can take <b>45 – 90 minutes</b> for the police and emergency medical services to respond to a crisis.</li> <li>There was a concern about <b>proposed cuts to tiered levels in Health Home Care Management (HHCM)</b>. This may result in fewer services provided to individuals and limited transportation to get clients to other providers.</li> <li>Attendees described a high rate of suicide deaths in the area which was attributed to a lack of services.</li> </ul>

# Gloversville Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees emphasized that every teacher, bus driver, and teacher's aide needs to be <b>trained to recognize mental health needs</b>.</li><li>There should be a <b>staff development day</b> dedicated to Mental Health First Aid training.</li></ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Some attendees reflected that <b>mobile crisis units can take hours to respond</b>, and by then, a child might no longer meet criteria for evaluation.</li><li>There was a recommendation that OMH and OASAS need to better collaborate, specifically to support <b>children with trauma due to substance use of parents</b> in their household.</li></ul>

# Gloversville Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Access to / Provision of Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees were in support of additional inpatient services and a new CPEP program in area.</li> <li>Often, individuals are <b>held in facilities rather than being discharged</b> because providers feel they are at risk to return. Individuals also do not want to risk losing care due to wait list times for future services.</li> <li>There are individuals in the mental health unit who are <b>Amish and require an elder</b> to sit outside of the unit 24/7 to protect the soul. Licensed clinical social workers may be able to help Amish families.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An attendee shared that <b>Health Coaches through the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program</b> were very successful, but insurance companies would not pay for it.</li> </ul>

# Syracuse

April 18-19, 2023

# Syracuse Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
<p><b>Recruitment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a desire to hire a <b>more diverse staff</b>, including individuals with lived mental health experiences.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Job fairs may be an avenue to hire a more diverse staff.</li> <li>○ ‘Headhunters’ can also help target specific populations for recruitment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The <b>Qualified Mental Health Associate role</b> was well-received among attendees.</li> <li>• Attendees suggested <b>re-visiting job requirements</b> for posted job descriptions when recruiting. Are all those requirements truly needed?</li> <li>• It is <b>difficult to find providers for psychosocial rehabilitation</b>, as rates can be too low to hire staff and pay them a living wage.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There are waitlists for youth psychosocial rehabilitation services due to workforce shortages. It can also at times be challenging for parents to remember what provider they are on a wait list for, which further delays care.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



# Syracuse Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Cross-Agency Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An attendee reflected that Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs) and other OMH programs often <b>do not engage successfully with other agencies</b> because of difficulty in determining the level of care needed to provide services for specific individuals.</li> <li>Attendees asked OMH to improve <b>communications with the Department of Social Services</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of the program census is <b>Onondaga based</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would be beneficial to have programs located in rural areas.</li> <li>Partnerships in rural areas have worked well, and there is a sentiment that 'we are a creative bunch' in Central NY.</li> <li>Local communities should be able to provide feedback on programs.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Sustained funding</b> is needed to support programs.</li> <li>Attendees were curious about <b>what resources are being allocated to Central NY</b> out of the mental health budget.</li> <li>Attendees from Madison County felt they a community-wide needs assessment.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a good understanding of housing needs in the region (e.g., there is an RFP for landlords to develop housing in the region).</li> <li>School-based services are a main focus for the region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Transportation</b> is a barrier to receiving care.</li> </ul>

# Syracuse Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<p><b>Training</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>better train police officers</b> to handle mental health crises among children.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sometimes, police officers will not transport children to the emergency department (ED), citing that it is a “behavioral problem” and not worth the visit to the ED.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Prevention and Access to Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees recommended having a <b>liaison for each school district or county</b> to help coordinate between OMH, OASAS, OPWDD, Juvenile Justice, Department of Social Services, Special Education, etc. and reduce the burden on individual school psychiatrists.</li> <li>• There is a serious <b>need for early intervention in rural areas</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Early intervention is run differently in rural counties through Head Start programs, but some attendees felt improvement is needed.</li> <li>○ Some attendees felt children with mental health needs will be more successful in their schools if they had better school readiness as well as social and emotional awareness.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Syracuse Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees felt that <b>housing is unaffordable</b> in the region.</li><li>Some attendees sense that Madison County has a <b>landlord monopoly / network of landlords</b> which creates a culture of people not being able to afford or find housing.</li><li><b>Structural building safety</b> is a concern.</li></ul>

# Utica

March 20-21, 2023

# Utica Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendees reported <b>long waitlists</b> to get a new therapist in the community (not via a telehealth platform), suggesting that workforce is a critical challenge.</li><li>• There is a need for a <b>more diverse workforce</b> in the area, and attendees agreed that:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Providing grants through SUNY and CUNY may be an opportunity to recruit underrepresented populations.</li><li>○ Subsidizing education to students who commit to working in the region may help recruit a diverse workforce.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Peers are critical in the workforce.</b> There may be an opportunity to make the certification process easier and potentially provide stipends for peers to help pay for student loans.</li><li>• There was a suggestion to <b>coordinate with the State Education Department</b> on curriculum focused on mental health as well as job opportunities in the field.</li></ul>

# Utica Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oneida County requested a <b>Forensic ACT team</b> due to the volume of individuals being discharged from correctional facilities.</li> <li>• Attendees requested a <b>Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) in Utica</b> due to the closest CPEP being in Syracuse.</li> <li>• Attendees requested if there is a <b>possibility to carve out services from ACT</b> so individuals may receive multiple services and supports.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees emphasized that although they are excited about new mental health investments, a focus is needed on <b>sustaining existing programs and adequate staffing</b>.</li> <li>• When considering regional planning approaches, attendees recommending narrowing the focus to tailored programs and supports needed for smaller communities.</li> <li>• Additional <b>training is requested for first responders</b> on trauma-informed approaches to mental health crises.</li> <li>• Attendees suggested using <b>crisis stabilization centers as a support option for 9.41 calls</b> involving law enforcement</li> <li>• Herkimer County requested <b>24/7 access to crisis services</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation is a barrier in the region. Attendees requested <b>transportation to services or drop-in centers</b>.</li> <li>• Several individuals in the region <b>utilize outpatient and inpatient services to meet basic needs</b> (e.g., housing, transportation). There is an opportunity for OMH to collaborate with community-based organizations to help address basic needs.</li> </ul>

# Utica Themes: Housing / Discharge

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees hoped that <b>housing units would be allocated to the Utica region</b> rather than going to predominantly downstate areas.</li> <li>Attendees discussed the possibility of opening a “<b>one-stop shop</b>” where there are <b>mental health services provided within housing programs.</b></li> <li>There was a suggestion to develop mobile units to provide services to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.</li> </ul>
Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>incentivize weekend discharges</b> (right now, discharges are not allowed on the weekends).</li> </ul>

# Binghamton

March 22-23, 2023



# Binghamton Themes: Workforce / Housing

Category	Workforce
<p><b>Recruitment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees agreed that <b>bringing in certified paraprofessionals</b> will be essential to improving the mental health workforce.</li> <li>There is concern staff are leaving the industry for other systems due to <b>pay disparities</b>.</li> <li>Although there are workforce shortages in all disciplines, there is a <b>critical need for an inpatient services workforce</b>.</li> </ul>
Category	New Housing Units
<p><b>Housing Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to a need for additional housing in the area, there is a need to have <b>adequate staffing and counseling services</b> available in housing units.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>more transitional housing</b> in the area.</li> <li>Attendees requested a <b>specialty type of emergency housing designed to support individuals with substance use and mental health needs</b>.</li> <li>Attendees suggested <b>repurposing closed state psychiatric center grounds</b> for housing units.</li> </ul>

# Binghamton Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
Service Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>educate faith-based organizations</b> as to what services are available as they are a hub and trusted source of information in the community.</li> </ul>
Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be an <b>ACT team fully dedicated to youth</b>.</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Some attendees reported clinics have long wait times</b> for appointments and recommended improvements in customer service.</li> <li>• There was a suggestion to have <b>peer and wellness coordinators available in clinics</b> for clients while waiting for a counselor or prescriber, to help enhance engagement.</li> <li>• An attendee noted a <b>need for sufficient clinical expertise serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities</b> in the region.</li> <li>• Attendees were supportive of funding for <b>Home Based Crisis Intervention</b> programs for families.</li> </ul>
Social Determinants of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transportation is a barrier</b> in rural areas, as there are limited buses. Medicaid transport does not fill the gap.</li> </ul>

# Binghamton Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees recommended mandatory <b>Mental Health First Aid training</b> for all school staff.</li></ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There was concern over having enough treatment options or groups for <b>children impacted by substance use disorder</b>.</li><li>Attendees reported needing <b>more services for younger children</b> ages 10 and younger.</li><li>Attendees requested <b>peer support in schools</b>, so families have someone to relate to, especially in times of crisis.</li><li>There was a suggestion for <b>play areas for children in clinics</b> so they can play under supervision while parents and/or siblings meet with counselors and receive care.</li></ul>

# Albany

March 15-16, 2023

# Albany Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees shared that the proposed <b>2.5% COLA is not enough</b> to retain workforce and does not signal an incentive for people to enter the workforce. An 8.5% COLA was proposed amongst attendees to attract people to enter the workforce.</li> <li>There is a widespread <b>workforce shortage</b>, particularly for social workers and therapists. This is coupled with increased demand and is causing increased waitlists for clinic services.</li> <li>Some employees seek opportunities to <b>work from home</b>.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees suggested <b>offering sign-on bonuses</b> to recruit the workforce.</li> <li>Providers resonated with the use of <b>Qualified Mental Health Associate professionals</b> to further strengthen the mental health workforce.</li> <li>Although there is a workforce shortage, there should be an emphasis of <b>quality over quantity</b>.</li> <li>There may be an opportunity to partner with <b>nonprofit organizations with pre-development funding</b> to incentivize or support work opportunities when there are staffing shortages.</li> <li>A peer advocate emphasized that there needs to be more <b>training for paraprofessionals</b>.</li> </ul>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often, the <b>police department are the first people on the scene</b> of a mental health crisis and there is a need for training to help those responders handle a mental health crisis adequately.</li> <li><b>Ambulances / emergency personnel are often not equipped</b> to handle mental health situations. Trainings may help support these staff.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>leverage nurse practitioners</b> and advocate for services they can provide given their training / licensure.</li> </ul>

# Albany Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some attendees reflected there is a <b>stigma</b> associated with seeking mental health services. It can also feel isolating when entering the system for the first time, and feeling like they will never 'get out'.</li> <li>The agency <b>websites are often difficult to navigate</b>. Individuals with multiple diagnoses and who need cross-system support are uncertain about which system to start speaking with first.</li> <li>The Community Health Access to Addiction and Mental Healthcare (<b>CHAMP</b>) <b>Ombudsman Program</b> may help enhance clients' knowledge of available services.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>expand mobile services</b>, particularly in rural counties where families cannot access a provider due to a lack of transportation.</li> <li>Some attendees reported a <b>large discrepancy among services offered at a county level</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized the need for OMH to <b>coordinate with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)</b>.</li> <li>Although telehealth may help enhance access, telehealth is a challenge due to its <b>associated costs</b>.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>standardize communication</b> among hospitals, outpatient teams and counties to improve system of care.</li> <li><b>Home-Based Crisis Intervention (HBCI)</b> and other resources help support needs for rehabilitation in the community. However, there is a barrier when HBCI teams are organized across county lines.</li> <li>The <b>law enforcement assisted diversion program has been effective</b> for individuals experiencing homelessness, poverty, and mental health issues. Rather than being arrested, the individual is diverted from arrest, stabilized, and can connect with a provider. Sometimes mobile crisis teams will accompany the police on the call, which has been helpful.</li> </ul>

# Albany Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<p><b>Cross-Agency Collaboration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Office of Mental Health (OMH) has an opportunity to <b>work with the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS)</b> to optimize prevention programs in the schools and work with students on how to be emotionally well.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Training</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A provider in Albany noted the benefits of <b>teaching mental health in schools</b> but stated that there is a need for a formal curriculum to ensure that children are not 'over pathologized'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prevention and Access to Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an opportunity for clinicians to be <b>embedded within schools</b> to provide comprehensive services.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A hospital provider noted there is an opportunity for school resource officers (SRO) to serve as a connector among the hospital, law enforcement, and schools to ensure that there is not a communication breakdown if domestic issues arise.</li> <li>Another attendee emphasized that there should be a <b>mandate for all schools</b> to provide mental health services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Providers expressed that there is an opportunity to <b>reevaluate eligibility requirements</b> to avoid situations where a child is deemed ineligible to receive services due to not meeting the higher need threshold.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>extend services to college-aged individuals</b> so that services do not drop as soon as an individual turns 18 years old.</li> <li><b>Coordination of transitional services for children needs to improve.</b> And the regulations are often restrictive. For example, there is an opportunity to diversify reimbursements for the Part 599 Mental Health Outpatient Treatment and Rehabilitative Service (MHOTRS) regulations. The regulations can be restrictive as schools are pulling social workers out of their intended roles for other crises occurring during the school day.</li> </ul>

# Albany Themes: Discharge / Housing

Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A provider from Glen Falls <b>appreciated Critical Time Intervention (CTI) and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams</b>, as there is a need for extra support to bridge from day one of discharge until an individual's first appointment.</li> <li>• A provider from Saratoga County identified that there is an opportunity for a <b>community paramedic</b> with the technology of telehealth to treat patients within the community and check blood pressure, draw labs, and check activities of daily living (ADLs). This individual should have a connection to the community and know the area.</li> </ul>
Category	New Housing Units
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a demonstrated need for <b>safe and affordable housing across geographic regions</b>.</li> <li>• A <b>mental health supported housing package</b> is needed that includes services for cleaning, home health care, medication management, and oversight of activities of daily living (ADLs) to make sure individuals are not a danger to themselves and to maintain housing.</li> <li>• A <b>'road map' to housing services</b> available would be helpful, as people are often unsure as to where to go for information. Additionally, the Capital District Physicians' Health Plan suggested the development of an <b>electronic system</b>, like ones used for booking hotels, that would display vacancies and wait times.</li> <li>• There are several individuals receiving mental health care that also have <b>other comorbidities</b> (e.g., substance abuse disorders or intellectual disabilities) that are caught in the middle of service systems due to the silos of care, rather than addressing all needs together. Comorbidities should be taken into consideration and addressed holistically.</li> <li>• An ACT provider suggested having <b>shelter beds attached to the emergency department</b>. It would be beneficial for ACT teams to have active relationships with housing providers in general.</li> <li>• <b>Physician authorizations</b> are holding up housing approval for certified housing, highlighting an opportunity for coordinated access to housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other providers.</li> </ul>



# Albany Themes: Inpatient

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
CPEP / ACT / CTI Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs) are a <b>great opportunity to divert individuals</b> from the emergency department, but there are transportation challenges (especially if law enforcement is providing transportation).</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>embed Critical Time Intervention (CTI) teams within the hospital</b> with incentives.</li> <li>There is an opportunity for <b>more ACT teams</b> to help address existing struggles with inpatient availability.</li> <li>There currently exists a gap in care management, particularly with ACT services. There is an opportunity to <b>initiate the referral process while the individual is still inpatient</b>, while potentially billing for both services because the care management agency (CMA) can build a relationship and to create more proactive transitions for the individual.</li> </ul>
Access to / Provision of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>transition from hospital to inpatient</b> is a critical opportunity to access and support individuals who are in crisis.</li> <li>An attendee stressed the importance of <b>communication between the hospital and the patient's therapist</b>.</li> <li>The <b>Living Room Model</b> is a concept that should be sustained, as it provides a network of support as well as diversion from incarceration.</li> <li>OMH may consider using a <b>social day program model</b> rather than a personalized recovery-oriented services (PROS) model, particularly one that pairs younger and older participants to allow them to learn life experiences from each other.</li> <li>It was expressed that children and adults should be in <b>separate mental health facilities</b>.</li> <li><b>Regarding employment for individuals with mental illness, more education is needed.</b> A provider noted that with regards to SSI, clients may lose benefits upon receiving employment and therefore providers might discourage clients with SSI to seek employment.</li> </ul>
Peer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <b>peer-to-peer approach</b> is an effective module to link individuals with people who have lived experiences with mental illness.</li> <li>Another attendee reflected they have peer services; however, <b>peer services are currently not available at night</b> in their area.</li> </ul>

# Albany Themes: Insurance

Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is an opportunity to improve access to <b>trauma services through Medicaid and Medicare.</b></li><li>• A <b>lack of insurance should not restrict an individual</b> from receiving mental health care. More accountability is needed to ensure that insurance does not dictate the need for care.</li></ul>

# Monticello

March 27-28, 2023

# Monticello Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
<b>Recruitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some attendees in Sullivan County resonated well with the idea of additional <b>Qualified Mental Health Professionals</b> in the region.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>bi-lingual peer advocates</b> in Orange County. Peer advocates often serve as translators for school districts as well.</li> <li>• Attendees recommended <b>partnering with undergraduate and graduate schools</b> to speak about agency work, why these roles are so desperately needed, and what supports are available to pursue a career in mental health.</li> <li>• Attendees in Sullivan County suggested hiring <b>more interns from underrepresented communities</b>.</li> <li>• Some attendees suggested building a program where students are reimbursed for education if they commit to <b>working in the region for five years</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees suggested incentivizing <b>older adults with lived experience to go back to school</b>. Lived experiences may be part of select accreditation or licensing programs.</li> <li>• <b>Pay is no longer the only solution</b> to recruiting the workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some attendees have experienced a <b>low retention amongst peers</b> (especially youth peers). Often, they stay on for only months at a time. Employees in mental health need support to reduce risk of burnout.</li> <li>• An attendee expressed that some younger therapists are getting 'snapped up' by <b>private practice agencies</b> where they earn more money and get better support.</li> <li>• <b>Telehealth companies</b> are recruiting clinicians successfully from agencies.</li> <li>• One attendee shared that as a result of reducing caseloads to retain staff, some agencies are <b>turning people away from services</b> and only taking high-need cases.</li> <li>• Some attendees suggested providing <b>free housing for the workforce</b>.</li> </ul>

# Monticello Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Broadband access and public transportation are limited</b> in Sullivan County.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Transportation challenges limit access to food pantries, in addition to mental health services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Some attendees emphasized they feel like they are <b>'missed' in the State narrative</b>, as they are neither downstate nor upstate.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee from Sullivan County shared that the area has the second-lowest health outcomes, second-lowest educational outcomes, highest opioid use, and highest suicide rate in the State.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Families in Orange County often <b>live hours away from hospitals</b> (e.g., one hour's distance to Four Winds or NYS Presbyterian). This is difficult for families who lack adequate access to transportation or who have children with mental health needs.</li> <li>• The new teams that OMH is proposing should be in <b>counties that are further away from hospitals</b> (e.g., Orange and Sullivan Counties).</li> <li>• <b>Individuals who are undocumented</b> have challenges accessing services due to language barriers and not having a birth certificate.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been a feeling of disconnect since the onset of COVID-19 in terms of receiving <b>passionate, personal care</b>.</li> <li>• Sullivan County tried getting an Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team but did not get approved due to <b>a lower volume of eligible clients in the area</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees seek <b>blended funding across agencies</b>, as there are silos when trying to work with OMH and OPWDD (e.g., working with a child who has both autism and mental health needs).</li> <li>• An attendee shared that there is a <b>mobile crisis team in Sullivan County</b>, however they do not support quick pick-ups.</li> </ul>

# Monticello Themes: School-Aged Children / Housing

Category	School Aged Children
<p><b>Prevention and Access to Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees reflected that it is imperative to <b>work on preventative care</b>, as too many children are going into crisis.</li> <li>Some school-based clinics take <b>9 months – 1 year to set up</b> due to getting dedicated space and approvals from OMH. Attendees recommended establishing a streamlined approach and checklist to help open school-based clinics.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>bilingual staff to support children and their families</b>. Ulster County has one bilingual social worker who has been critical in calling families and explaining available services. Ulster County also requested statistics to make the case for additional bilingual staff.</li> <li>Attendees from Ulster County asked if OMH can offer a <b>grant or incentive to mid-size private practices to take more underinsured and uninsured patients</b>, especially children.</li> <li>There is not enough <b>communication between schools and hospitals</b>, resulting in relapses.</li> <li>Communication methods between schools and parents/guardians need to improve and need to take into consideration the reading level of parents and guardians.</li> <li>Attendees stated that <b>social-emotional learning in schools has become politicized</b>.</li> <li>Ulster County recommends having a <b>social and emotional learning curriculum</b> in school districts.</li> </ul>

# Monticello Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a sentiment that improvements are needed at community hospitals as far as their inpatient services and discharge planning.</li> <li>• One attendee felt that <b>State psychiatric centers</b> provide a higher quality of care for children and provide great discharge paperwork. Their experience is that State psychiatric centers are often the most funded, have expert care providers, and provide the best level of care as a result. OMH should not reference State facilities as a 'last resort' for children, because they are often able to meet their needs.</li> <li>• It was shared that hospitals in Ulster County need <b>translators</b>, which could also help with discharge planning.</li> </ul>

# Monticello Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are <b>not enough housing units</b> in Orange County.</li> <li>• Attendees from Ulster County <b>resonated well to 3,500 housing units</b>. However, they emphasized that the cost of housing has increased, and tenants need wraparound services in addition to housing itself.</li> <li>• Attendees recommended <b>educating landlords about the benefits of renting to supportive housing</b> recipients.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Landlords make it difficult to provide housing, as they require 750 credit scores, background checks, and housing deposits.</li> <li>○ The housing situation in Orange County has gotten worse due to COVID-19.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attendees felt there is a <b>“Not in My Backyard” (NIMBY) sentiment</b> in Dutchess County. There is a need for communication to emphasize the benefit to communities.</li> <li>• Having local county governments involved in housing developments is critical due to <b>zoning challenges</b>.</li> <li>• Ulster County’s <b>RUPCO organization</b> helps build homes, which has been beneficial.</li> <li>• An attendee shared that <b>Crisis Residences</b> are promising models. However, the process to set up a crisis residence is very long.</li> </ul>



# Monticello Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<p><b>Access to / Provision of Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees strongly underscored that <b>rural communities do not have the level resources</b> like other urban, larger counties do.</li> <li>• Attendees specifically asked for clarification on <b>where the new 150 State beds and 850 inpatient beds will be, and how many will be allocated for children.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Youth in this area are often sent out of county for inpatient hospitalizations, and that causes several challenges. For example, it is difficult for a person who lives in Poughkeepsie to get to Westchester without a car, which poses issues when children are sent out of the county.</li> <li>○ Some attendees shared that there are kids who remain in emergency departments for 10 days due to a lack of inpatient beds.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• An attendee shared there are <b>no adolescent beds in Sullivan County</b> (residents must often drive ~2 hours to find an available bed).</li> <li>• Although Sullivan County is building a 24-bed residential facility, the county seeks <b>additional residential programs for kids.</b></li> <li>• There is a need for <b>culturally responsive care</b> in inpatient and outpatient settings in Sullivan County.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<p><b>Billing Challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reimbursement rates are low.</b> It is difficult to pay for a psychiatrist and full team but only get reimbursed \$150/day in Dutchess County.</li> <li>• <b>Health coaches through the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program</b> were very successful, but insurance companies would not pay.</li> <li>• Peer services for Child &amp; Family Treatment &amp; Support Services (CFTSS) are <b>limited due to Medicaid requirements.</b> When services are provided, they need to be included in a child’s service plan. However, sometimes needs of children are identified later. Some attendees felt that service plans should be more flexible to accommodate these changes.</li> </ul>

# Valhalla

April 26-27, 2023

# Valhalla Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a <b>need for more competitive salary and benefits</b>. A large part of the workforce was lost to telehealth, a desire for work-from-home arrangements, and working with less intense clients for more compensation.</li> <li>• Social workers and psychologists <b>seek housing</b> to ensure that the workforce can practice within the community.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for <b>bilingual employees</b> in the region to serve the diverse population of the region.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to offer <b>incentives such as free tuition</b> to increase the workforce of qualified professionals.</li> <li>• OMH repayment loans should go towards <b>providers who work with children and families</b> due to the need in this area.</li> <li>• There is a need for funding for <b>more family advocates or navigators</b>.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to utilize students in Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselors (CASACs), Licensed Masters of Social Worker (LMSWs), and peer training programs to increase the workforce <b>through field placements and certification hours</b>.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>utilize accountants and lawyers</b> to do the back office tasks so they are not the responsibility of providers.</li> </ul>

# Valhalla Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community</b> are not aware of locally-based mental health resources.</li> <li>There is an opportunity for <b>education in psychiatric emergency rooms</b> to ensure people understand what resources are available in the community.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>enhance funding for NY Connects</b>, which provides information about long-term services and supports in the state.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a concern that <b>only hospital-affiliated or publicly-funded outpatient clinics will be able to afford to take on clients</b> because community clinics often cannot afford to take on new clients.</li> <li>OMH should explore the opportunity to integrate services when possible because <b>existing services are overwhelmed</b>.</li> <li><b>Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)</b> should provide walk-in access but often there are long wait times.</li> <li>The community seeks a <b>24/7 crisis stabilization center</b> where individuals can go when a hospital will not admit them or if they have not reached a high level of acuteness.</li> <li>The supporting documentation required to access <b>Health Home services</b> is a barrier to receiving care.</li> <li>Youth and families have challenges accessing medication management and connectivity to these services. <b>Single Points of Access (SPOA) teams with providers</b> may be able to help address this issue.</li> <li>There is an issue with some outpatient areas where <b>direct admission is not permitted</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Telehealth is beneficial</b> because it allows people to be treated while staying at home with family.</li> <li>Programs should be <b>tailored to different cultures</b> to ensure that diversity issues are adequately addressed.</li> </ul>

# Valhalla Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced training should emphasize that <b>mental health should be valued as much as physical health</b> to reduce stigma.</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to <b>increase children’s transfers to state hospitals</b> and improve their access to care there.</li> <li>There is a need for upstream interventions at schools as <b>school psychologists are often the catch-all.</b></li> <li><b>Peer advocates and family peer advocates</b> should be present in schools for both children and their families.</li> <li>There is a <b>gap among 15-18-year-olds</b> who are too old to get support from kids’ systems but also too young for adult systems.</li> <li>An attendee felt that <b>community-based services</b> are not equipped to support youth with multiple hospitalizations and serious mental illnesses; these children may need group work, individual work, daily monitoring, and medication management.</li> <li>Crisis respite or diagnostic centers would help fill the gap that exists for children who cannot consistently make it to psychiatric appointments.</li> <li>One attendee is noticing a tendency in the area to <b>use Child Protective Services (CPS)</b> for cases that should not involve CPS.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to have <b>crisis text lines</b> in schools.</li> <li><b>Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS)</b> would be beneficial to have in the senior year of high school as part of the educational experience to reduce fear and stigma about mental health.</li> </ul>

# Valhalla Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a need to <b>better connect schools and hospitals</b> to bridge the gap when a child is discharged from a hospital but is not ready to return to school.</li></ul>

# Valhalla Themes: Housing / Insurance

Category	New Housing Units
Housing Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for <b>housing for transition-aged individuals</b> between the ages of 18 – 26 years old.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>specialized housing for individuals who have mental illness and unsheltered homelessness</b> who typically go to shelters as a last resort.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
Billing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinics have a difficult time being financially sustainable when there is a <b>large privately insured population</b>.</li> <li>• An attendee felt that school districts should implement <b>Intensive Day Treatment (IDT) programs</b> in schools without health clinics and serve children on Commercial insurance plans.</li> <li>• A provider noted they used to hold <b>team meetings</b> with families, case managers, and other providers, but these no longer take place due to billing restrictions.</li> <li>• There is a need for adult Medicaid wrap-around service dollars.</li> </ul>
Partnership Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>partner with community-based organizations</b> that offer culturally appropriate services to assist those who do not have proper insurance.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity for <b>school-based services to accept Commercial insurance</b>.</li> </ul>

# Manhattan

March 27-28, 2023



# Manhattan Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
<p><b>Recruitment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a <b>widespread staffing shortage</b> in Article 31 clinics in the region.</li> <li>• An attendee shared that one recruiting challenge can be <b>hesitancy around providing integrated mental health and substance use care</b>.</li> <li>• People may be enticed to join the workforce by <b>waiving fees</b> for classes, license renewals, and continuing education units.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Retention</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help retain the workforce, attendees suggested <b>providing incentives</b> (e.g., more time off) and fewer credentialing barriers.</li> <li>• Attendees seek the <b>infusion of professional development and advanced training</b> into jobs.</li> <li>• People in the workforce themselves might have mental health needs and seek <b>wraparound services</b>.</li> </ul>

# Manhattan Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees seek <b>enhanced collaboration between Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs) and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams.</b></li> <li>One attendee reported that the CPEP <b>intake process often takes time</b>, and there was a sentiment of speeding this process up to receive services.</li> </ul>
<b>Data Analytics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees seek <b>real-time data about when services are available</b>, and whether there is a waitlist.</li> <li>Clinical staff seek <b>better access to PSYCKES</b>, as access is limited in some organizations.</li> <li>PSYCKES has been helpful in the Bronx to understand services clients use. An attendee asked if it possible to use this data to understand the social determinants of health needs of clients (e.g., a client went to an ER or CPEP for housing or food) to connect clients to resources.</li> <li>Attendees seek <b>better coordination within electronic medical record systems</b> / data interoperability.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was a positive sentiment about the budget proposals, and attendees emphasized the need to <b>sustain new programs long-term.</b></li> <li>Attendees encouraged the use of <b>regional liaisons with OPWDD and OASAS</b> to improve communication and treatment planning.</li> <li>Attendees suggested having <b>mental health and wraparound services in community centers.</b></li> <li>New York City’s <b>Mental Health First Aid program worked well</b> in engaging the community about how to support those having a mental health crisis. The prevention program “Connect” has also been beneficial, where a liaison supports the needs of communities.</li> <li>Attendees suggested <b>developing a Mental Health Service Roadmap</b> increasing awareness for programs from prevention to treatment.</li> </ul>

# Manhattan Themes: School-Aged Children / Discharge

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized the importance of collaboration between schools and community-based organizations; however, attendees felt <b>HIPAA is sometimes a barrier</b> to achieving this connectivity.</li> <li>Schools should receive up to date information about community programs and available mental health services.</li> <li>Specifically, there should be efforts to <b>break down silos</b> among schools, mental health agencies, and reproductive health / sex education efforts.</li> <li>It was recommended to have a better process for <b>aging-out of special education programs</b>.</li> <li>There was a concern that schools often <b>call emergency medical services (EMS)</b> rather than mobile crisis supports.</li> </ul>
Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized that there needs to be enhanced supports for <b>discharge planning for children, with support for parents</b>.</li> <li>There are often <b>communication limitations between inpatient and referring providers</b>.</li> </ul>

# Manhattan Themes: Housing / Inpatient

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a common sentiment about the <b>importance of housing on mental health outcomes</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees in Manhattan emphasized a need for <b>more single room occupancy units and housing for families</b>.</li> <li>• There was a suggestion for mental health housing agencies to <b>work with landlords</b> to provide housing for people with disabilities and mental health needs.</li> <li>• Attendees recommended there be enhanced <b>training for residential staff</b> to assist clients with complex needs and behaviors.</li> <li>• A more <b>streamlined approval process for developers</b> to build housing was recommended.</li> <li>• There should be a <b>simplified approval process to access housing</b> (e.g., individuals can apply directly with the support of housing navigators).</li> </ul>
Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a concern about clients having unmet needs in the Bronx and a request for more inpatient psychiatry beds.</li> <li>• Attendees emphasized <b>enhancing funding for community hospitals and smaller clinics</b> in communities rather than larger hospital systems.</li> </ul>

# Manhattan Themes: Insurance

Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees emphasized the importance of having <b>more psychiatrists accept Medicaid</b> (and insurance in general).</li><li>Several attendees resonated with the idea of a <b>single payer system for mental health services</b> to resolve insurance and coverage challenges.</li></ul>

# Brooklyn

March 28-29, 2023

# Brooklyn Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Peer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help address the workforce shortage, attendees recommended professionals such as peer advocates, family peer support, and Qualified Mental Health Associates to <b>serve as an initial contact</b> for people receiving mental health services.</li> <li>• Some attendees reflected a concern that <b>supervision for peer services needs improvement.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is a request for leadership development opportunities for peers.</li> <li>○ The comprehensive peer-training program helps peers attain jobs in cities, with the State, or at hospitals. How can we provide leadership development opportunities to peers who work in non-profit organizations?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for a <b>more diverse workforce</b>, specifically with regard to race/ethnicity and gender identity.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendees expressed concern that Master of Social Work programs require students to have a baseline level of financial security to attend graduate school and take out student loans. This limits the pipeline of talent and cultural competency of the workforce.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attendees felt that certain <b>education, career, and enrichment programs</b> have been helpful to address workforce challenges, however a shift is needed in the narrative about a career in mental health or incentives are needed to draw people into the field.</li> <li>• Some attendees suggested a need for mental health practitioners who <b>specialize in hoarding</b>, as this is an issue seen in New York City.</li> </ul>
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees seek <b>more flexible work arrangements</b>, such as working-from-home options.</li> <li>• The workforce is often unable to live close to their workplace due to <b>cost-of-living limitations.</b></li> <li>• There is a <b>high turnover amongst case workers</b>, limiting the connections that can be made and consistency in treatments.</li> <li>• Attendees emphasized a <b>concern about safety when conducting home visits</b>, especially when conducting home visits alone.</li> </ul>

# Brooklyn Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized a need for <b>education about the array of services available</b>, for both providers and consumers.</li> <li>Having a <b>directory of customer advisory boards on the OMH website</b> would be helpful.</li> <li>Attendees thanked the Governor for hosting this session, sharing comments such as we are “very appreciative,” “can’t say enough how important and special this is,” and the experience gives “voice to the voiceless.” Attendees <b>seek additional opportunities to meet and be part of the conversation</b>, especially consumers.</li> <li>Attendees offered to be <b>part of community meetings around mental health</b> and review language being used to describe services, saying “we can help clients understand what the process is like.”</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It would be beneficial to have a process to <b>pay for an Uber/taxi to get to appointments</b>, rather than having individuals rely on subways and trains.</li> <li><b>Housing is a critical need.</b> If a person cannot pay rent and utilities, managing mental health conditions becomes de-prioritized.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was a suggestion for more mental health training for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the police for responding to people in crisis or a need for mental health professionals to answer the call rather than EMS or police.</li> <li>An attendee expressed <b>concerns over bail reforms and the impact on the mental health community.</b></li> <li>There is a need for 24/7 services for mental health, not connected to a hospital or clinic, similar to urgent care in medical services.</li> <li>Attendees asked if <b>clubhouse activities could be supported in the budget.</b></li> <li>Attendees asked if there is a possibility to <b>pair seniors who face social isolation with teenager volunteers</b>, so these groups can help one another.</li> <li>New programs need <b>physical space to operate in</b>, which is a challenge in the region.</li> </ul>



# Brooklyn Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers may benefit from <b>training on working with kids who are neurodivergent</b> and have mental health needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some attendees emphasized that <b>teachers and school counselors are often not paid enough</b>, so may not have the incentive to manage more complicated situations such as supporting children with mental health needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to have a <b>liaison between school-based and housing programs</b>, especially with shelters.</li> <li>Attendees seek more school-based mental health support teams. An attendee noted that often <b>schools share one psychologist and social worker</b>, and it is not realistic for them to cover multiple schools across boroughs.</li> <li>An attendees felt that having a mental health clinic embedded or integrated into the school would be more effective than a clinic attached to or nearby a school.</li> <li>Kids overall need counseling in schools, especially due to concerns about <b>gun violence and bullying</b>.</li> </ul>

# Brooklyn Themes: Discharge / Housing

Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees from residential and care coordination programs reported <b>safety concerns due to a higher acuity among clients</b>.</li> <li>Some attendees reported clients are <b>often discharged from the hospital without a plan in place or without follow-up</b>. They felt this contributes to higher rates of hospital readmission.</li> </ul>
Category	New Housing Units
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need for <b>transitional and single-occupancy housing</b>.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>housing for people being discharged from jails and prisons</b>. Is there a way to allocate a portion of the new housing units for justice-involved individuals?</li> <li>Some attendees reported that application for housing services feels <b>long and outdated</b>.</li> <li>An attendee has experienced landlords increasingly <b>refusing to rent</b> to people with mental health needs. Further, landlords often <b>do not accept the CityFHEPS rental assistance supplement</b> administered by the Department of Social Services, which causes a barrier to housing for the individuals we serve.</li> <li>Is there an ability to have <b>supportive housing accept housing vouchers</b>?</li> <li><b>Staten Island and Brooklyn</b> were specifically described as needing additional housing units.</li> <li>There was a suggestion to pair housing services with comprehensive <b>training on activities of daily living</b>.</li> <li>The <b>requirement to be substance free is a barrier</b>. Many tenants face substance use disorder challenges or do not understand what type of housing they are in.</li> <li>Attendees proposed an idea of a <b>Housing Peer Corps</b>, where peers familiar with homelessness could be on-site to provide guidance and support.</li> </ul>

# Staten Island

March 29-30, 2023

# Staten Island Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees recommended an <b>8.5% cost of living adjustment</b> to retain and recruit staff.</li> <li>• Attendees felt that <b>staffing increases are required</b> in order to develop new programs and open hospital beds.</li> <li>• There is a <b>large turnover in the staff</b> who are providing clinical services; attendees noted that often staff new to the field come to Staten Island for supervision, get licensed, and then leave to practice elsewhere.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for <b>more peer services</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendees recommended peers be embedded within Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams to better support clients and help reduce workforce burdens.</li> <li>○ Salary ranges for peer support may need to be increased to be competitive.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is an opportunity to help interested <b>service recipients to enter the workforce as peers</b>.</li> <li>• There is a need to recruit a <b>more diverse workforce</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For example, there is a critical need for Spanish-speaking staff.</li> <li>○ Attendees reported that translation services are not well-versed in mental health and have long wait times.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Staten Island Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be more <b>community awareness of available programs</b> and a resource detailing all available services.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendees suggested having a Biannual Health Fair across agencies.</li> <li>○ There was a recommendation to increase marketing strategies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a <b>need for ACT teams in the region</b>, especially for families and adolescents.</li> <li>• There was a request that the <b>criteria for ACT be more flexible</b>, such as lowering the number of hospitalization visits required for eligibility.</li> <li>• Attendees requested a <b>geriatric ACT team</b> to help manage patients with dementia, Parkinson's Disease, and Alzheimer's Disease.</li> <li>• In addition to ACT teams, Staten Island seeks <b>Safe Options Support (SOS) Critical Time Intervention (CTI) Teams with outreach services</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Attendees requested respite services, mobile crisis units, another clubhouse, and Behavioral Health Urgent Care.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a suggestion that <b>care coordination teams meet in neutral settings outside of the home</b> such as coffee shops. These meetings should also be offered outside of traditional working hours.</li> <li>• Attendees seek another <b>On Track First Episode Psychosis Team</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees requested a <b>homecare psychiatric program</b> (e.g., a nurse and social worker can provide visits through a home care agency).</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees suggested funding an <b>anti-stigma campaign</b> to help increase individuals accessing services, especially minority populations and individuals seeking asylum.</li> <li>• <b>Cultural sensitivity</b> is very important, especially for the LGBTQ+ and youth populations.</li> <li>• OMH should partner with <b>faith-based organizations and barbershops</b> to share mental health messages with people.</li> <li>• There is a need for greater <b>insurance-reimbursed transportation</b>.</li> </ul>

# Staten Island Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Additional training is needed for teachers in schools to help students in crisis.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is a lot of variation in how schools respond to mental health crises.</li> <li>○ Attendees suggested that the NYS Education Department help support these training efforts and school-based services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attendees suggested implementing training about <b>racism and implicit bias</b> and providing teachers with the right resources to support diverse student populations.</li> <li>• Schools are also <b>facing workforce challenges</b>; it is challenging for staff to meet demand for daily activities in addition to mental health support.</li> <li>• Teachers should be <b>supported for their own set of mental health needs</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees felt that the <b>demand for school-based mental health services outweighs current resources</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees emphasized the need to have <b>licensed therapists in schools</b>, and not just counselors.</li> <li>• Some students face <b>unique transportation challenges</b>, as they want to stay in Staten Island but live in Manhattan until their Section 8 vouchers come through.</li> <li>• The Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver incorporated a <b>family and youth advocate model</b> which was successful for kids.</li> <li>• Sometimes, <b>teen groups do not want to speak with doctors</b>, and this is where youth peers could be helpful.</li> </ul>

# Staten Island Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendees suggested that staff should ask individuals if they experience food insecurity or homelessness when they come to an ED or Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP). <b>Upon discharge, individuals can be connected to the right resources.</b></li></ul>

# Staten Island Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
<p><b>Housing Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees reported a need for <b>additional mental health housing units</b> in Staten Island; some attendees felt that the increase in housing prices in the Bronx and Brooklyn has resulted in an influx of people coming to Staten Island.</li> <li>Attendees suggested we identify strategies to get communities to embrace new housing developments in their area for individuals with mental health needs and understand it is a positive thing.</li> <li>An attendee suggested there be <b>housing coordinators embedded within clinics</b>, who function in a navigator-type role.</li> <li><b>Housing for the aging population</b> was mentioned as is a critical need, as well as a need for intellectually stimulating activities and connections to community organizations.</li> </ul>



# Staten Island Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<p><b>Access to / Provision of Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The CPEP in Richmond University Medical Center is well-utilized.</b></li> <li>• Attendees reported that when <b>inpatient units are full</b>, individuals often spend a longer time in CPEPs.</li> <li>○ Parents in attendance suggested that the local CPEP have a specific section for children, separate from adults and have a more welcoming, sensory environment.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<p><b>Billing Challenges</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Co-pays can be a barrier to care</b>; often, clients cannot keep appointments because they cannot afford a \$40 - \$50 copay/month.</li> <li>• <b>Attendees reported that reimbursement rates are low</b> for mental health services across the board.</li> <li>• <b>Commercial insurance plans do not pay for children’s care management</b> (care coordination services are only reimbursed by Medicaid). An attendee reported this is a large parity issue, as they sense it is about 50/50 in terms of children who are on Commercial plans vs. Medicaid.</li> </ul>

# Nassau

March 28-29, 2023



# Nassau Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to <b>recruit more psychiatrists for schools and hospitals</b> specifically.</li> <li>• A physician from Nassau suggested that OMH should <b>offer incentives</b> to go into psychiatry (e.g., financial).</li> <li>• Staffing is impacted by <b>'red tape' about licensure and credentialing</b>.</li> <li>• Attendees emphasized that it is <b>difficult to pay people enough to afford to live on Long Island</b>.</li> <li>• There is a need for a range of mental health providers who can meet the <b>language needs of Nassau County</b>.</li> <li>• There is a need for staff who are <b>trained to successfully work with the forensic population</b>.</li> </ul>
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>utilize telehealth and providers such as Nurse Practitioners</b> to alleviate workforce burdens.</li> <li>• <b>Administrative paperwork can be a burden</b> to the workforce and is a primary reason people resign. A psychiatrist from New York City emphasized the need to decrease this administrative burden from a personal perspective as well.</li> <li>• There needs to be better <b>parity in pay between providers</b>.</li> </ul>

# Nassau Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
<b>Service Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be beneficial to have <b>expert service navigators</b> to help connect individuals to services.</li> <li>• Attendees recommend there should be an <b>OMH comprehensive resource guide or app</b> with phone numbers, websites, availability of providers, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees commented that they would like recipients to be able to access <b>Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) and ACT services at the same time</b>. Nassau and Suffolk County attendees emphasized that "ACT teams are a big deal" due to a lack of hospital beds and housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents in attendance felt like <b>police are taking over mental health services</b> on Long Island.</li> <li>• Care teams should understand that it is not that the family does not want to be involved, but rather that <b>families are burnt out</b>.</li> <li>• Some attendees suggested there should be a <b>streamlined application process</b> for services. Another attendee suggested there should be a <b>central intake process</b>, as the system can be a burden to people in crisis. An individual is often blamed and accused of "program shopping."</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to create a <b>computer program that tracks openings in programs across agencies</b>, instead of having people get stuck on waitlists. Agencies should refer individuals to programs in other agencies if there are waitlists instead of working in silos.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with mental illness are often <b>afraid they will lose their job and benefits</b> if they take time off for mental health services.</li> <li>• <b>Transportation is challenging on Long Island</b>, which inhibits access to services. Clients appreciated telehealth because it met people's preferences and avoided transportation challenges.</li> <li>• The <b>population of individuals experiencing homelessness on Long Island needs mobile teams</b> to go out and work with them in the community. They are often unable to go to clinics and a mental health diagnosis is needed to access housing or other supportive services.</li> <li>• An attendee felt that <b>hospitals in Long Island do not have adequate linkages to social services</b> (e.g., food, shelter, housing).</li> <li>• OMH may have an <b>opportunity to visit employers in the region</b> to emphasize the importance of hiring clients with mental health illnesses.</li> </ul>

# Nassau Themes: School-Aged Children / Discharge

Category	School Aged Children
<b>Prevention and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be beneficial if <b>Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)</b> was updated with a better understanding of mental health needs in schools.</li> <li>• An attendee shared there are 36 school psychologists and social workers in the Nassau school district. Many are certified and would be great working after school hours. <b>Due to school certifications, these individuals cannot work additional hours after the workday ends.</b></li> <li>• Families sometimes believe that <b>services beyond counseling in school</b> are needed.</li> </ul>
Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is often a <b>lack of follow-up care from Emergency Departments</b>; individuals are then not connected to adequate services.</li> <li>• An attendee felt that Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs) and Emergency Departments (EDs) need to <b>respect the input of staff who have a long-term relationship with the client</b>, as well as allow program staff to assist the client in advocating for their needs.</li> <li>• CPEPs and EDs <b>must listen to and respect</b> what they are told by families.</li> <li>• An attendee wondered if the <b>Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) program model might be helpful for children.</b></li> <li>• There is a <b>lack of communication between EDs and mental health programs.</b></li> <li>• An attendee reflected that due to the <b>least restrictive setting model</b>, individuals often must “fail out” of multiple lower levels of care before they can get the services from the level of care that they need.</li> </ul>

# Nassau Themes: Housing / Inpatient

Category	New Housing Units
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An attendee shared that individuals experiencing homelessness often decline mental health housing because they <b>do not want to share space</b>.</li> <li>Housing first is a good approach, but one attendee considered that it can be in <b>contradiction with landlord-tenant law</b>.</li> <li>There needs to be more <b>education for the greater community on the need for mental health housing</b>, as residents fought against a new community residence opening in the region (and so the residence ultimately did not open).</li> <li>Is there an opportunity to <b>convert foreclosed homes into mental health housing</b> (e.g., repurpose abandoned factories into housing units)?</li> </ul>
Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees requested <b>reopening some State hospital beds</b>.</li> <li>There should be a <b>uniform intake paperwork process</b>, so providers can share it and save time on the front end, while individuals begin receiving services immediately.</li> </ul>

# Nassau Themes: RFP Process / Funding

Category	RFP Process and Funding
RFP Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RFP process should be used to <b>encourage providers to use peers</b> in the workforce.</li> <li>• The RFP <b>process can be cumbersome and labor-intensive</b>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee emphasized they needed to pull an entire team together for the Intensive Crisis Stabilization Centers RFP.</li> <li>○ The RFP process can be frustrating especially when teams are struggling with workforce demands. Some teams use all their workforce and work weekends to respond to RFPs.</li> <li>○ RFPs are often re-issued and are too restrictive.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An attendee suggested OMH take the competitive process away and <b>make funding easier to access</b>.</li> <li>• There should be increased funding for <b>disseminating information about mental health services</b>.</li> <li>• Would OMH consider putting out <b>unrestricted funds and person-centered funds</b>?</li> </ul>

# Suffolk

March 29-30, 2023





# Suffolk Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees reflected that the proposed <b>2.5% cost of living adjustment is not sufficient</b> to retain the workforce on Long Island.</li> <li>Retention is just as important as recruitment because employees often do not stay in positions due to <b>overwork and staffing shortages</b>. Workforce shortages compel current workers to work more hours, which leads to burnout.</li> <li>There is a need to <b>hire more youth peer advocates</b>.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need for a <b>more diverse workforce</b> to reflect clients and their cultures. There is an opportunity to offer incentives to recruit a more diverse workforce.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to partner with local universities and colleges to offer <b>tuition forgiveness or reduction</b> for students entering the mental health field.</li> <li>It would be helpful to <b>offer internships with colleges and sign-on bonuses</b> to recruit the workforce.</li> <li>There are many foreign, aspiring mental health professionals who are unable to obtain citizenship. There is an opportunity to <b>offer citizenship sponsorships</b> to those seeking to pursue mental health degrees.</li> <li>Agencies need funding to <b>hire Clinical Intake Coordinators</b>. Consumers disengage with services and this role may help address that.</li> </ul>

# Suffolk Themes: Outpatient

Category	Outpatient Services
Service Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>OMH website should be updated</b> to be more user-friendly.</li> </ul>
Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACT Teams <b>do not have enough staff</b> and are not as effective as they could be as a result.</li> <li>There is an opportunity to <b>lower the age requirements for youth ACT teams</b> as earlier intervention is better.</li> <li>An attendee reflected that ACT teams <b>do not come during a crisis or after hours</b>, unlike residential staff who provide services 24/7.</li> </ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need for a <b>holistic approach with individualized plans</b>, so the system can treat clients (especially those with multiple diagnoses).</li> <li>Individuals would benefit from <b>same-day appointments</b> for services when possible.</li> <li>There is a need for <b>expanded services and walk-in hours</b> for mental health urgent care services.</li> <li><b>Licensing changes</b> are not always communicated to providers.</li> </ul>
Social Determinants of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation is a barrier, as there is limited public transportation and Medicaid taxis in the region.</li> </ul>

# Suffolk Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is an opportunity to <b>better educate parents and families about the early warning signs of mental health illnesses</b> to receive preventative services in pediatric settings proactively.</li></ul>
Prevention and Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall, there is a need for more <b>school-based mental health clinics</b>. There is an opportunity for <b>more schools to partner with mental health services</b>, especially for services that are not based on Medicaid eligibility.</li><li>• Several school districts do not qualify for grants due to low scores on several metrics. There is a need to <b>re-examine how funding is determined</b>.</li><li>• There is a need for more flexibility in the frequency and duration of services offered to children, specifically regarding <b>Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)</b>.</li></ul>

# Suffolk Themes: Discharge Planning

Category	Discharge Planning
<b>Opportunity Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An attendee shared that there are <b>not enough ACT teams</b> to support discharges.</li><li>• There is a need for <b>warm transfers and follow-ups after discharge</b> to make sure individuals make it to their next appointment. Sometimes appointments are missed but cannot be rescheduled because the individual has been discharged.</li><li>• An attendee felt that individuals are sometimes <b>discharged prematurely from a hospital</b> when they still have a risk of harm to themselves or others.</li><li>• Primary care physicians should be able to link patients to a mental health professional and have <b>visibility into the mental health services provided</b> prior to and after discharge.</li></ul>

# Suffolk Themes: Housing

Category	New Housing Units
Housing Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>cost of housing</b> is a barrier for both providers and residents.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>more studio and one-bedroom apartments</b> so individuals can learn to live on their own. This may lead to spending less money in the court systems trying to evict people who have challenges.</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>more respite and crisis beds</b> with mental health support for children where they can still attend school in their home community.</li> <li>• There is a need to educate <b>communities on why housing is needed</b>.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Often, communities do not want housing units built in their neighborhood and do not understand their importance.</li> <li>○ There is an opportunity to form an alliance with the local community government and zoning boards.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Housing providers are not well equipped to deal with the <b>medical issues of the aging population</b>.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is a need for community residence or other types services for seniors to age in place without going to a nursing home.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Nursing staff</b> should be embedded within housing programs.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to have a <b>transition period or safety net</b> for people who are concerned about losing their housing when they start working. More housing options would be beneficial to families as the head of the household may experience difficulties in keeping their job and housing when a child is having a mental health issue.</li> <li>• <b>Personalized Recovery-Oriented Services (PROS) need more connections with housing</b> to provide better services to OPWDD, OMH, and OASAS clients.</li> <li>• There needs to be <b>more training on how to help aspiring citizens</b> who do not qualify for housing.</li> <li>• An attendee suggested that some of the money dedicated to funding capital and Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI) grants should be directed toward <b>purchasing buildings and upgrading existing buildings</b>.</li> </ul>

# Suffolk Themes: Inpatient / Insurance

Category	Inpatient Psychiatry Treatment
<b>Access to / Provision of Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for <b>more adolescent inpatient beds</b> and inpatient beds overall for individuals with mental illness.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is a concern that new beds coming back online are not dedicated to children.</li> <li>○ Youth ACT teams are a successful intervention, but there is still a need for more inpatient pediatric beds.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• One attendee noted there is a need to improve the <b>responsiveness and accountability</b> of the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP).</li> <li>• There is a <b>need for more CPEPs and walk-in behavioral health services</b>, as it is unsafe when CPEPs become overwhelmed.</li> <li>• There is a need for more <b>communication among CPEPs, emergency departments, and referring providers</b> when an individual is sent for evaluation.</li> <li>• Attendees seek <b>more children's partial hospitalization services in the Riverhead area</b>. There is a disparity in the region about the number of resources and demand in the region, and this would help mitigate that.</li> </ul>
Category	Insurance Coverage
<b>Billing Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An attendee has experienced that most <b>private insurance</b> does not adequately cover mental health services.</li> <li>• Some insurance does not allow individuals to <b>cross county lines to obtain services</b>.</li> </ul>

# Batavia

July 20, 2023

# Batavia Themes: Workforce

Category	Workforce
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees emphasized need for the <b>peer workforce</b> to be prioritized</li> <li>There is a need to retain <b>qualified and experienced staff</b>, as many staff are brand and still building practical experience</li> <li><b>Additional incentives are needed</b> to retain and recruit mental health workers, attendees recommended: scholarships, internship opportunities, remote work, and increases in salary, especially for staff who travel from rural to metropolitan areas</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples of challenges recruiting clinicians include <b>low salaries, paperwork burden, and low reimbursement rates</b></li> <li>Suggested <b>recruitment strategies</b> include participation in job fairs and collaborative efforts with colleges, high schools, and unemployment offices</li> <li><b>Finding representation</b> among psychiatrists is an issue some attendees face</li> <li>Some attendees suggested funding be allocated towards <b>specialized training for nurses</b></li> </ul>



# Batavia Themes: Inpatient / Crisis Services

Category	Crisis Services
<p><b>Access to / Provision of Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a <b>need for increased collaboration</b> between hospitals and the service providers that know the clients</li> <li>• Attendees shared concern over <b>stigma held by some hospital staff</b>, treating individuals with mental health needs differently than others</li> <li>• Attendees reflected that <b>many individuals seeking emergency mental health services at a hospital are turned away</b> and some attendees believe individuals are not sufficiently assessed</li> <li>• Perceptions of the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) services in the area were not positive; attendees experience poor conditions and lack of adequate linkages to care at discharge</li> <li>• Crisis stabilization centers are a good idea but there is a <b>need for locations in rural areas</b></li> <li>• It was recommended that <b>Home Based Crisis Intervention (HBCI) should be expanded</b> and combined with children’s mental health programs</li> </ul>

# Batavia Themes: Housing

Category	Housing
<b>Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for <b>stable housing services in the area</b>, such as supportive housing, as well as a need for respite services</li> <li>• There is a need for <b>transitional housing</b>; there are not sufficient places for individuals transitioning from homelessness</li> <li>• Hotel placements for individuals who are homeless has not been effective, as there are no staff there for support and a need for more structure</li> <li>• There is a need for more <b>safe and affordable housing</b>, especially for children, victims of domestic violence, and individuals with co-occurring disorders; existing housing for families lack the linkage to staff and transportation</li> <li>• Attendees recommended a centralized procurement of a CR/SRO for all 4 counties, with transportation available</li> <li>• Housing is critical and individuals need to have support to access other mental health and addiction services</li> </ul>
<b>Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for <b>more flexible housing rules</b>, especially those centered on addiction; attendees recommend “no strings attached” housing</li> <li>• Attendees recommended housing opportunities be expanded by <b>changing licensing requirements</b></li> <li>• <b>Information and clarification is needed</b> regarding allowable expenses and programming, such as purchasing housing and repurposing an old hotel or senior assisted living facility</li> </ul>

# Batavia Themes: School-Aged Children

Category	School Aged Children
<p><b>Prevention and Access to Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More programs and supports are needed for <b>early childhood mental health treatment</b> and parents need help accessing the services</li> <li>• There is a need for more <b>education and awareness</b> for families on what services are available</li> <li>• Families in Wyoming County and other large rural areas experience <b>transportation barriers</b> when accessing mental health care for children</li> <li>• Child <b>inpatient mental health services need to expand</b> throughout the GLOW counties</li> <li>• Attendees requested funding for mobile crisis and suggested that the current MIT teams be able to serve youth in the GLOW counties</li> <li>• Attendees recommend that <b>insurance companies be held accountable</b> for paying for services             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impression that individuals must choose between mental health or addiction services when insurance companies will only pay for one</li> <li>• Families have experienced that youth who are dually diagnosed must choose between mental health or intellectual/developmental disability services/housing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Batavia Themes: Funding

Category	Funding
<b>Funding Opportunities &amp; Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More <b>guidance and training on the Request for Proposals (RFP) process would be helpful</b></li> <li>• Many providers do not have specific grant writers and they have trouble finding time to read and apply for an RFP</li> <li>• There was concern about county catchment areas and targeted RFPs leaving out certain rural communities, with specific concern about funding for building new housing</li> <li>• Attendees discussed how providers in the GLOW counties can work together to strategize on an impactful RFP and recognized the importance of each county Director of Community Services</li> <li>• Programs need <b>more time to develop</b> and succeed before funding ends</li> <li>• Attendees recommended funding be allocated to small non-profit agencies that provide <b>specialized mental health care</b></li> <li>• Funding was requested for <b>drop-in centers and for transportation</b></li> </ul>