

Addressing America's Mental Health Crises

*by Supporting Community-Driven Solutions,
Expanding Access to Care, and Modernizing our
Behavioral Health System*

"America is the midst of a mental health crisis, a crisis which has been brewing for decades but one that was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. As your Congressman, I promise to address this problem head on utilizing my experience as Dutchess County executive in expanding mental and behavioral health services and implementing community-driven solutions." - Marc Molinaro

The Challenges We Face

Nearly 20% of Americans experienced mental illness in 2019

Suicide is the 8th leading cause of Death for All Ages and the second leading cause of death for those ages 10-34

Over half of adults with a mental illness do not receive treatment

31% of parents said their child's mental or emotional health was worse than before the pandemic

Rates of substance use are increasing for youth and adults, and preliminary data shows overdose deaths increased nearly 30 percent in New York from March 2020 to March 20

My Experience

Opened a One-of-a-Kind Crisis Stabilization Center - a 24/7 walk-in facility providing a single point of service with access to crisis counseling, mental health assessments, supervised outpatient withdrawal services, counseling, and peer advocacy and support. The Center became a model for a statewide program.

Voted to Extend NY's Successful Kendra's Law - that creates a legal framework for court ordered Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) to ensure individuals experiencing mental illness with a history of hospitalization or violence participate in appropriate community-based services.

Implemented Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training for Law Enforcement - to provide officer the de-escalate and effectively communicate while responding to persons with mental illness or a substance use disorder. Over 75 percent of law enforcement officers in Dutchess County have received CIT training.

Prioritizing Mental Health as Dutchess County Executive - upgraded the County's HELPLINE Mental Health and Suicide Prevention App, continues to fight for mental health beds, expanded Mobile Crisis Intervention Team, increased mental health services offered in the County jail, and expanded access to peer support.

The Path Forward

Supporting Bi-Partisan Efforts to Redesign and Re-Imagine Mental and Behavioral Health Care in America - the plan includes a call for a "unified national strategy that is based on smart resource planning and funding, and addresses the country's mental and behavioral health crisis through local community needs."

Placing a greater focus on those experiencing severe mental illness, eliminate the Medicaid IMD Exclusion that prohibits paying for mental health treatment delivered in inpatient settings with more than 16 beds, and expanding the availability of adolescent and adult psychiatric beds.

Expand access to mental health care by integrating such care into primary care settings through education/training, funding/reimbursement structures, broadening the healthcare workforce, and fully utilizing technological solutions.

Addressing mental health care provider shortage by supporting the bipartisan Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act, expanding roles for other types of providers (nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians assistants), and addressing bottleneck in the workforce pipeline such as the lifting per-hospital residency cap and consolidating the numerous funding streams that support such slots.