

# **Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2018-2019 Executive Budget Proposal for Mental Hygiene**

**Testimony of Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D.  
Commissioner of the Office of Mental Health  
February 13, 2018**



**Office of  
Mental Health**

Budget Testimony for Commissioner Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D.  
New York State Office of Mental Health  
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Senator Young, Assemblywoman Weinstein and members of the Senate and Assembly Fiscal and Mental Health Committees, I want to thank you for the invitation to present this year's Office of Mental Health Budget.

The Office of Mental Health (OMH) is responsible for ensuring that the citizens of this State receive mental health services. The most effective care, and the care that provides our citizens the best opportunity for full and enriching lives, is care that is provided in people's homes, neighborhoods, and communities.

To that end, OMH has, and in this Budget, continues to expand community services to provide better care to more New Yorkers. However, in recognition that for some individuals, a hospital stay remains a necessary part of their care, New York State retains the largest number of psychiatric inpatient beds available in the nation and we will continue to preserve access to this vital safety net as we work to transform the system.

Through your continuing support of Community Mental Health Reinvestment, our efforts to provide individuals with mental illness the right service, at the right time, and in the right setting have started to bear fruit. Since 2014, with a commitment of more than \$90 million thus far, we have been able to provide services to approximately 35,000 new individuals through December 2017, including:

- New supported housing for more than 1,300 individuals.
- State-operated community services including crisis residences and mobile integration teams that have served an additional 10,000 individuals.
- A wide range of locally operated community-based programs including peer crisis respite services, first episode psychosis programs, community support teams, and home and community-based waiver services for more than 20,000 individuals and families.

Because these community services are now in place, we can provide inpatient services when needed, and ensure the necessary outpatient care and supports are available when an individual is discharged. Our ability to serve more citizens of the State has increased through the combination of these improvements and these new and existing services.

For the next fiscal year, OMH will continue this path towards greater access to community-based services, targeted towards an individual's needs. Importantly, the 2018-19 Executive Budget proposes to:

- Continue the investment in community services. The Budget adds another \$11 million, annually, to expand capacity in the less-restrictive and integrated community-based settings. This will increase the amount of annualized investment to \$103 million since reinvestment began in Fiscal Year 2015. This includes 200 additional supported housing opportunities in the community and other community-based services

- The Budget supports additional residential capacity, including additional homeless housing which will open in FY 2019 via the longstanding New York/New York program. The Budget also authorizes \$50 million in new local capital spending to enable the expansion of crisis respite capacity in the community to avoid unnecessary emergency room visits and inpatient hospitalizations.
- Twenty new ACT Teams were recently established and will be fully operationalized in FY 2019 to serve an estimated 1,280 new clients. Ten teams in New York City will work specifically with homeless individuals and the remainder throughout the State will work with high-need individuals.
- The Budget provides an additional \$10 million for existing supported housing and single room occupancy (SRO) programs helping to preserve access and maintain current housing capacity.
- To address the workforce shortage, OMH has approved a total of 62 providers to utilize telepsychiatry, with an additional 24 providers under review. OMH has plans to expand regulations further, allowing licensed psychologists, licensed social workers and licensed mental health counselors, in addition to psychiatrists, to utilize video technology to deliver treatment.
- To improve access to treatment for maternal depression, OMH will expand Project TEACH to connect ob/gyn and primary care providers with mental health specialists to treat mothers with maternal depression. Also, OMH and DOH will launch a strategic awareness campaign to provide critical information about symptoms and treatment options. OMH will also support advancing cutting-edge specialty programs including a mother-baby inpatient unit and outpatient programs that focus on maternal depression.
- Finally, OMH is committed to a significant prevention agenda to promote mental wellness, prevent disorders, and intervene earlier in the trajectory of mental illness. This includes such initiatives as New York State's Suicide Prevention Plan, expansion of school-based mental health clinics and the OnTrackNY early psychosis intervention program.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to address you on the 2018-19 OMH Budget which supports and continues the work we have begun to transform New York's mental health system.