



## **CITY, COUNTY, AND STATE NEWS**

**NEW YORK CITY, NY: *ThriveNYC Launches New Website*:** First Lady Chirlane McCray's signature mental health initiative ThriveNYC launched a [new website](#) this week, which displays data and a progress report highlighting how many New Yorkers have received services between 2016 through June 2019, and showcasing how ThriveNYC has achieved its four core goals. The data released shows how much money is being spent on each program under ThriveNYC and the results of that spending. The data will be updated every quarter, with some indicators being updated semi-annually and annually. More information can be found [here](#).

**NEW YORK CITY, NY: *The City seeks tech solutions to boost support for mental health*:** The Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer (MOCTO) has launched a civic tech competition for solutions to help strengthen access to mental health support in upper Manhattan. The NYCx Co-Labs: Accessible Mental Health Challenge is a partnership between MOCTO, NYCEDC and the Mayor's Office of ThriveNYC. This challenge seeks proposals to improve mental health among Latino youth (13-18 years old) through tools and technologies that improve awareness of and access to resources. Statistics cited by the city note that nearly 20 percent of Latino adolescents in NYC report having seriously considered suicide. The city is seeking proposals for tools and resources that make it easier for young Latinos to understand mental health and mental illness and how to access support when needed, while also helping to reduce stigma around mental health issues. NYC expects applications to address the needs of Latino youth, mental health service providers or organizations that provide mental health education and services.

**ARIZONA: *Lawmakers unanimously approve mental health legislation*:** The Arizona Legislature approved a measure Tuesday aimed at preventing teenage suicides and requiring insurance companies to pay for mental health care under the same rules that apply to physical ailments. The House and Senate approved the measure unanimously and Gov. Doug Ducey plans to sign it. The measure directs \$8 million to cover mental health treatments for children and teens who are uninsured or underinsured, whether they're treated at school or by a private provider. It directs insurers to comply with a 2008 federal law requiring parity between mental and physical health care. Insurers will be prohibited from requiring that patients get pre-approval or pay copays for psychiatric treatments unless the same requirements apply to physical conditions such as diabetes or broken bones. It also aims to collect and disseminate better data about insurance coverage for mental health, requiring insurers to report their policies and state regulators to review them. And it creates a team of experts to investigate suicides by minors, with the power to subpoena documents, review medical records and conduct interviews. The team is tasked with developing recommendations for reducing the number of suicides. Schools will be required to develop procedures for referring students to mental health providers, and the state will develop requirements for hospitals to meet before discharging patients who were admitted because they were suicidal.

**FLORIDA: *Gov. Ron DeSantis announces mental health grants for Gadsden County*:** Gov. Ron DeSantis delivered a \$1.2 million criminal justice diversion pilot program targeting mental health treatment in the north Florida county. The grant will go to pioneered programs to divert offenders away from jail and into treatment and job training programs. Compared to 10 years ago, the crime rate and arrests are down in Gadsden County,

and the county is sending 65% fewer people to state prison. The idea is to divert substance abusers and people at risk of mental illness away from the county jail and toward treatment. The money will be spread over three years and use to provide services for up to 150 individuals.

**ILLINOIS: *Senate panel OKs bill to add mental health hotline information to student IDs:*** A panel of state senators Tuesday approved legislation requiring public colleges and universities to add mental health contact information to the back of student identification cards. The legislation would ensure phone numbers for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Crisis Text Line and the school's mental health counseling center are published on each student's identification card. If an institution of higher education does not have such cards, the bill requires that information be published on its website instead. The bill unanimously passed out of the Senate late last week. Those public institutions in Illinois, though, asked that he amend the measure to postpone its effective date from July 1, 2021, due to financial concerns.

**KANSAS: *Proposed Kansas bill seeks to ban mental health evaluations for crime victims:*** Legislators in the Kansas House of Representatives received a bill Wednesday from state senators that would ban any mental health evaluations in a court of law for crime victims, including survivors of sexual assault. "When the criminal justice process enables that there be psychiatric evaluations of them before they can stand trial and participate in the criminal justice system, the message to that survivor is that they not believed," said Kate Heinen, coordinator of community engagement at Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA).

**OKLAHOMA: *Student mental health bill advances:*** House Bill 2799, authored by Rep. Mark Vancuren (R-Owasso), would expand the use of the Oklahoma Prevention and Needs Assessment (OPNA) Survey to grades six, eight, 10 and 12. The OPNA survey is a voluntary survey used by schools to understand student substance use, stress and suicide risks. The survey is administered by schools with parental permission and is anonymous. Less than half of Oklahoma schools administer this survey on a voluntary basis. The new survey would be administered next year and every other year after that. The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services would provide assistance to schools when developing prevention strategies.

**UTAH: *Nine mayors join forces for mental health education:*** Nine Utah County mayors, the Alpine School District and the Utah Valley Interfaith Association are joining together to sponsor free parenting seminars on emotional self-reliance and resilience. Frost, along with mayors from Highland, Alpine, Cedar Hills, Eagle Mountain, Highland, Lehi, Lindow, Pleasant Grove and Saratoga Springs, were approached by Lynn Scoresby, a family psychologist, about providing seminars to the community. The seminars, held in cities during the first half of March throughout the Alpine School District, aim to decrease anxiety and depression. The seminars align with the Alpine School District's mission this year to teach social and emotional learning to students, according to David Stephenson, a spokesman for the district.

**VIRGINIA: *Legislation makes mental health absences excused for students:*** Legislation directing the Virginia Department of Education to establish guidelines to grant students an excused absence from school for a mental or behavioral health issue has passed both chambers of the General Assembly. House Bill 308 asks that the guidelines be distributed to school boards no later than Dec. 31, 2020. The legislation passed the state Senate on a 38-2 vote and the House of Delegates on a 59-37 vote.

**WISCONSIN: *Gov. Evers signs bill for pilot focusing on Outagamie Co. students' mental health:*** A school-based mental health pilot will be coming to Outagamie County. The bill was passed Monday, allowing teachers, school counselors and administrators to address mental health needs in real-time. The Child Psychiatry Consultation Program connects primary care providers with psychiatrists who provide mental health consultations for kids. The pilot program takes it a step further, bringing it into schools. "It will add

resources and tools to this continuum of services that we provide on a daily basis for our kids,” said Kaukauna schools superintendent Mark Duerwaechter. “Our student services staff works everyday with many, many kids in managing and coping through their mental illness.” This will now allow schools to connect students to mental health professionals on the spot. Linking students with child psychiatrists or psychologists could take up to a week, sometimes longer for other school districts. This pilot program does that almost instantaneously.

**WEST VIRGINIA: \$1.25B West Virginia Opioid Settlement Trial Date Set:** West Virginia communities seeking a \$1.25 billion settlement with the opioid industry are set to go on trial against the companies in late August, a federal judge said Thursday. The Aug. 31 trial date will serve as a deadline for the proposed settlement, which would be a first of its kind deal even as opioid businesses consider settling thousands of lawsuits across the country.

## **EXECUTIVE**

### **President Trump Signs Coronavirus Emergency Funding Legislation**

- U.S. House and the Senate approved an \$8.3 billion coronavirus response package, which President Trump signed today. The emergency funding includes \$400 million for states and other local response teams to rev up their preparedness efforts.
- Specifically:
  - **Vaccine Development:** The package would send \$826 million to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to drive the development of coronavirus vaccines, treatments and tests. The FDA would get \$61 million to speed up review of these new therapies and respond to possible drug and device shortages stemming from manufacturing disruptions at the virus’ epicenter in China.
  - **State and Local Resources:** The package would send \$950 million in state and local grants, with half of the money due within 30 days. States will receive a minimum of \$4 million. The legislation would reimburse states and counties for what they spent to prepare for and mitigate the virus between 1/20/20 and when the funding package is enacted. Funds can also be used to build or renovate facilities.
  - **Stockpiles and supplies:** The package includes about \$3.1 billion to purchase medical supplies for state and local health departments to beef up the Strategic National Stockpile, the largest national repository of emergency treatments. It will also provide additional resources for states and assist federal efforts to develop vaccines and therapeutics, as well as hospital preparedness. Another \$300 million would help the government buy vaccines and treatments once they are approved. The legislation specifies that products purchased with these funds must meet federal acquisition guidance “on fair and reasonable pricing.” It also empowers the HHS secretary to ensure that any vaccines, drugs or diagnostic tests developed from funds provided by the bill “will be affordable in the commercial market,” but doesn’t specify how affordability will be determined.
  - **Community Health Centers:** Community health centers on the front lines of the social safety net would get \$100 million just as their funding is set to expire at the end of May. Another \$10

million would go to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to put together trainings for health care workers on the front lines of the outbreak to avoid becoming infected.

- **Telehealth:** The package would also lift constraints on Medicare's payments for telehealth so beneficiaries could freely consult their doctors remotely, avoiding hospital and physician offices where they might risk exposure to the virus. Telehealth groups were hoping for a provision that would waive restrictions during all national emergencies, but this appears more narrowly tailored to the coronavirus.
- **International programs:** The legislation includes \$300 million to continue the CDC's programs to detect and respond to international disease outbreaks, and \$435 million for global health programs at the State Department. State's international disaster assistance fund would get \$300 million to provide humanitarian aid and address health needs in countries where the coronavirus is spreading. Trump's fiscal 2021 budget request proposed cutting several international public health programs.

- **Coronavirus and Mental Health**

- [Psychology Today](#): How Covid19 May Impact Mental Health
- [NBC](#): Coronavirus Lockdowns Lead to Rise in Mental Health Issues
- [Reuters](#): 'Unprecedented' mental health issues seen in Hong Kong amid virus fears
- [Today](#): How to survive coronavirus anxiety: 8 tips from mental health experts

## **Supreme Court Announces It Will Hear Affordable Care Act Challenge**

- The Supreme Court on Monday announced it will take up a case seeking to overturn the Affordable Care Act, returning the health care law's fate to the high court
- The case will be heard during the court's next term, which starts in October, meaning that a decision is not expected until 2021
- The challengers in the case argue that the health law's mandate for everyone to have coverage is now unconstitutional, because Congress repealed the financial penalty associated with it in the 2017 tax law, so the mandate can no longer be upheld under Congress's power to tax

## **SENATE**

### **The Senate passed the following legislation this week:**

- H.R 6074 Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act
- H.R. 4803 A bill to facilitate the automatic acquisition of citizenship for lawful permanent resident children of military and Federal Government personnel residing abroad, and for other purposes
- S.1678 Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative (TAIPEI) Act of 2019
- S.1757 United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act
- S.2321 Negro Leagues Baseball Centennial Commemorative Coin Act
- S.2657 Advanced Geothermal Innovation Leadership Act of 2019
- S.2683 Child Care Protection Improvement Act of 2020
- S.3414 Major Medical Facility Authorization Act of 2020

# HOUSE

## **Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee Hosts Hearing on “Combatting an Epidemic: Legislation to Help Patients with Substance Use Disorders”**

- Members of the House Energy and Commerce's health subcommittee met to discuss proposed legislation to help patients with substance use disorders
- The first panel of witnesses included officials from both the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and focused on the progress the Administration has made in implementing the SUPPORT Act
- The second panel of witnesses included experts and focused on the impact that recent federal funding and policy changes are having on the ground
- The following legislation was discussed in the hearing:
  - H.R. 1329, the "Medicaid Reentry Act"
  - H.R. 2281, the "Easy MAT for Opioid Addiction Act"
  - H.R. 2466, the "State Opioid Response Grant Authorization Act"
  - H.R. 2482, the "Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act of 2019"
  - H.R. 2922, the "Respond to the Needs in the Opioid War Act" or the "Respond NOW Act"
  - H.R. 3414, the "Opioid Workforce Act of 2019"
  - H.R. 3878, the "Block, Report, And Suspend Suspicious Shipments Act of 2019"
  - H.R. 4141, the "Humane Correctional Health Care Act"
  - H.R. 4793, the "Budgeting for Opioid Addiction Treatment Act"
  - H.R. 4812, the "Ensuring Compliance Against Drug Diversion Act of 2019"
  - H.R. 4814, the "Suspicious Order Identifying Act of 2019"
  - H.R. 4974, the "Medication Access and Training Expansion Act of 2019" or the "MATE Act of 2019"
  - H.R. 5572, the "Family Support Services for Addiction Act of 2020"
  - H.R. 5631, the "Solutions Not Stigmas Act of 2019"

## **The House passed the following legislation this week:**

- H.R 4351 Yes In My Backyard Act
- H.R 5003 Fair Debt Collection Practices for Servicemembers Act
- H.R 5931 Improving FHA Support for Small Dollar Mortgages Act of 2020
- H.R 5932 Ensuring Chinese Debt Transparency Act of 2020
- H.R 4508 Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act
- S.1678 Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative (TAIPEI) Act of 2019
- H.R 1140 Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act of 2020
- H.R 6074 Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act

## **IN OTHER NEWS**

### **Reddit Partners with Crisis Text Line to Give Users Mental Health Support**

- Reddit and the mental health support service Crisis Text Line joined forces to help connect users of the message board to live counselors
- The partnership makes it possible for a Reddit user to flag someone they feel is struggling with serious self-harm or suicide, which will trigger an immediate private message from Reddit to the person in distress. The message will include mental health resources and a suggestion to use their phone to text the phrase CHAT to connect with a Crisis Text Line counselor
- Users can flag someone as at risk for suicide by reporting a comment or piece of content, or from a button on the person's user profile. Reddit will employ rate-limiting so that a user can't be flagged multiple times for the same comment or piece of content.
- Redditors have long been able to report abuse of reporting tools, so if someone falsely claims a user is suicidal, that can be reported to the site's moderators

### **Research Shows Female Physicians More Likely to Die By Suicide Than Other Professions**

- A new JAMA study shows female physicians are more likely than their non-physician peers to die by suicide, while the opposite is true for male physicians
- Reviewing data gathered for nine previous studies from 1980 to the present, the authors found that the suicide rate for female doctors was 46% higher than for women in other professions. The data, from nine British and U.S. studies, show the suicide mortality ratio for female physicians to general population at 1.46. For men the ratio was significantly less at 0.67.
- For male physicians, the rate was 33% lower compared to men who held other jobs, though suicide deaths in both groups decreased over time
- Poisoning, suffocation, and firearms were the most common methods of suicide; firearms and poisoning were especially common in the U.S., Brazil, and South Africa.

## **WEEKEND READING**

[NY Times](#): Benefits of Exercise for Children's Mental Health

[Yale Climate Connections](#): How Climate Change Affects Mental Health

[Health Affairs Blog](#): Stress Is A Key To Understanding Many Social Determinants of Health

[Route Fifty](#): As Suicide Rates Climb, Crisis Centers Expand

[Forbes](#): Mental Health Challenges Are 4 Times Higher Among Young Mothers

\*\*The information compiled in this email originated from various news sources including: Politico, Axios, Vox, The Hill, Modern Healthcare, Stat, and Kaiser Health News\*\*