



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

Senators Call for Overdue Investment in Crisis Response Following Facility Tour in Dutchess County

SUSAN SERINO October 25, 2021

| ISSUE: [ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES](#)



POUGHKEEPSIE, NY - Today, Senate Mental Health Committee Chair Samra G. Brouk (D-55) and Senate Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee Chair Peter Harckham (D-40) toured the Dutchess County Crisis Stabilization Center, highlighting the need for both the expansion of these centers across New York State and greater investment overall in mental health and substance abuse services. They were joined by Senators Sue Serino (R-41) and Michelle Hinchey (D-46).

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many different existing crises. 93,000 Americans lost their lives to an overdose last year, a 29% increase over the year before and a staggering number of families touched by tragedy. The pandemic dramatically expanded the number of people seeking treatment for depression and anxiety disorders, taxing an already burdened system. We must make greater investments in crisis stabilization services in our next State Budget—New York’s families cannot wait any longer.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins: "This past budget, the Senate Majority fought for \$1 million for Crisis Intervention Teams and additional mental health funding. I commend Senate Mental Health Committee Chair Samra Brouk, Senate Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee Chair Peter Harckham, and Senator Michelle Hinchey for visiting the Dutchess County Crisis Stabilization Center to gain further knowledge as part of the Senate Majority's ongoing commitment to improving mental health services. I look forward to learning more from their experience and our continued advocacy for these services."

Senate Mental Health Committee Chair Samra Brouk: "Today’s tour of the crisis stabilization center underscores the need to transform mental health crisis services in New York State so that anyone in need of crisis support has it. As we look ahead to next year’s Budget, I am committed to fighting for the investments necessary to revolutionize our approach to crisis response and ensure access to care in every community across New York State."

Senate Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee Chair Pete Harckham: "The Dutchess County Crisis Stabilization Center begins to offer residents with behavioral health and Substance Use Disorder challenges the help and assistance they need the minute they walk in the door. The State Legislature approved funding for 10 regional crisis centers in last year’s state budget, and I support an even greater state investment in this kind of healthcare infrastructure wherever possible."

Senator Sue Serino: “Having lost my brother, and my nephew to suicide, I understand from experience how important it is to have crisis intervention services available to those who need them 24/7. I am proud to have played a direct role in bringing the Stabilization Center to Dutchess County because it is a resource that truly saves lives. Mental health is not a partisan issue—it is a human issue—and I sincerely thank Senators Brouk and Harkham for recognizing the important work that is done at the Center, and for playing such an active role in working to make the model a reality in other communities across the state. Together, we can ensure that the state makes investing in mental healthcare a real priority.”

Senator Michelle Hinchey: “Every New Yorker has been impacted by the mental health and substance use disorder crisis, but for upstate residents, accessing treatment and recovery services can be extremely difficult due to decades of underinvestment in our health care system. Today, it was great to join my colleagues Senator Samra Brouk, Chair of the Senate Mental Health Committee, and Senator Pete Harckham, Chair of the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, to see an innovative model of crisis care in action. I look forward to working

with them and our legislative colleagues to expand life-saving local services like these so that upstate residents can access the health care they need and deserve.”

Steve Miccio, CEO of People USA, creator and operator of the Dutchess County Stabilization Center: “We have designed and implemented a service that utilizes the most engaging, trauma-informed, compassionate, and recovery-oriented care that results in better outcomes for every guest. We are hopeful that this type of care will grow in all communities in New York State.”

The Senate has worked to improve crisis services in New York State, committing in this year’s State Budget \$1 million for Crisis Intervention Teams, \$1 million to create a suicide

prevention program for high-risk individuals, and \$51 million for historic cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for human services workers. The Budget also directs the Office of Mental Health and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports to explore alternative crisis response approaches like crisis stabilization centers and mobile crisis units. In addition to these accomplishments, Senator Brouk has passed legislation to support the adoption of the 9-8-8 mental health crisis hotline in New York State, and introduced Daniel's Law, a revolutionary bill named for Daniel Prude that would transform crisis response in New York State by establishing statewide and regional councils to oversee mental health and substance abuse crisis response.

Chairs Brouk and Harckham are prepared to advocate for greater investment in crisis stabilization centers, programs that recruit and retain more mental health professionals who are reflective of the diverse communities they serve, and the new mental health crisis hotline coming in 2022, 9-8-8.

The Dutchess County Crisis Stabilization Center is a direct service that assists with de-escalating the severity of a person's level of distress and/or need for urgent care associated with a substance use or mental health disorder. Crisis stabilization Services are designed to prevent or ameliorate a behavioral health crisis and/or reduce acute symptoms of mental illness and/or substance use by providing continuous 24-hour observation and supervision for persons who do not require inpatient services. Short-term crisis residential stabilization services include a range of community-based resources that can meet the needs of an individual with an acute psychiatric crisis and provide a safe environment for care and recovery.

Images from the tour are available for download [here](#).

###