



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mental Health Town Hall Featuring 2020 Presidential Candidates Coming to NH

Concord, NH – Mental Health for US, The National Council for Behavioral Health, and the NH Community Behavioral Health Association are partnering to announce *Mental Health for US* Unite for Mental Health: New Hampshire Town Hall to be held on December 16, 2019 at The Dana Center at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH.

The event will serve as a town hall for 2020 presidential candidates to engage with an audience of New Hampshire families, mental health professionals and local policymakers to discuss the key issues and solutions related to mental health. New Morning Consult data released by the National Council for Behavioral Health shows a majority of voters – regardless of party affiliation – say they are more likely to support a candidate in 2020 who promises to address mental health and addiction. In addition, the survey found that 75 percent of Americans believe the country and the federal government are not doing enough to address mental health. The event will include presentations from presidential candidates, experts and mental health community leaders as well as an open discussion around important issues related to health care, judicial reform and mental health and addiction treatment.

Access to effective high-quality mental health services is at a critical state in New Hampshire, and they are not the only state facing this challenge. Long wait times for care at local and regional hospitals, lack of residential beds, low Medicaid reimbursement rates and major workforce shortages are responsible for this lack of access—these issues and more drive the need for public policy that will create meaningful change. Despite these obstacles, there is a strong and compassionate community of health care professionals, non-profits and citizens that work tirelessly to improve the lives of those living with mental illness. The town hall will elevate the discussion of mental health policies in the 2020 presidential cycle and highlight the voices of the mental health community in New Hampshire as part of the national public policy conversation.

Former U.S. Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy will speak at the event and offer his insights on the unmet needs of the behavioral health community nationwide. An invited audience of approximately 500 people will attend the event. The event will be open to the media and will be livestreamed.

Summary:

What: *Mental Health for US* Unite for Mental Health: New Hampshire Town Hall

Where: Dana Center at Saint Anselm College, 100 Saint Anselm Dr., Manchester, NH

When: Monday, December 16 at 6:30 PM

Who: 2020 presidential candidates, former U.S. Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy, other local experts

About the Event Partners:

Mental Health for US is a nonpartisan educational initiative focused on elevating mental health and addiction to national policy conversations by empowering grassroots advocates and improving candidate and policymaker health literacy. The *Mental Health for US* coalition is comprised of more than 65 stakeholder groups from around the country dedicated to uniting the American people to make systemic, long-term change with civic engagement tools and resources.

The **National Council for Behavioral Health** is the unifying voice of America's health care organizations that deliver mental health and addictions treatment and services. Together with our 3,300 member organizations serving over 10 million adults, children and families living with mental illnesses and addictions, the National Council is committed to all Americans having access to comprehensive, high-quality care that affords every opportunity for recovery. The National Council introduced Mental Health First Aid USA and 2 million Americans have been trained.

The **NH Community Behavioral Health Association** (NH CBHA), Concord, New Hampshire, is a section 501(c)(3) organization, established by the ten community mental health centers in New Hampshire for the purposes of advocating for the priorities of NH CBHA members, eliminate the stigma related to mental health, provide high quality and effective systems of care, and raise awareness of overall health care and prevention and treatment of mental illness.