



June 18th, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act (HR 1767/S. 824)

Dear Leader McConnell and Congressman Guthrie,

Centerstone Kentucky and the Shepherdsville Police Department are reaching out to your offices to highlight our support for the Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act (HR 1767/S. 824). We thank you for your leadership on key legislative measures, such as the CAREER Act¹ and the Comprehensive Opioid Recovery Center Act², that take notable strides in leveraging critical resources toward combating the opioid crisis in Kentucky. We also want to thank your talented staff for their expertise and willingness to work with providers, law enforcement, and Kentucky stakeholders in navigating critical policy questions.

As one of the nation's leading providers of behavioral health services and a regionally recognized police department, we know the critical role that quality, outcomes-based services play in keeping individuals out of prisons, inpatient psychiatric facilities, and hospitals – all of which are not only costlier for taxpayers, but also less beneficial for the patient. As your offices are acutely aware, the opioid crisis continues to have immense impacts for our communities; the numbers of children in need of foster care services have increased dramatically, employers are struggling to fill jobs, and law enforcement officers are spending much of their days responding to drug and mental health related crisis calls. Our organizations have teamed up to achieve better results through strategic cooperation and deployment of resources, as this issue proliferates through our communities and state and our resources continue to feel the strain of these impacts. However, we also recognize that 24-7 crisis services, access to medication assisted

¹ Section 7183 of H.R. 6 - SUPPORT for Communities and Patients Act; Public Law No: 115-271

² Section 7121 of H.R. 6 - SUPPORT for Communities and Patients Act; Public Law No: 115-271

treatment, and the ability to retain a behavioral health workforce are critical to stemming the tide.

The Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act (HR 1767/S. 824) sponsored by Congressman Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) and Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-CA) in the House and Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) in the Senate would do just that.

Early results have demonstrated that, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics have³:

- Created more jobs for behavioral healthcare providers;
- Increased access to services for clients in need;
- Shortened wait times for services;
- Expanded opioid treatment; and
- Created additional partnerships within the criminal justice system.

This past year, Centerstone Kentucky's clinic, located in Bullitt County, became a recipient of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) grant funding. As part of this grant, Centerstone has started expanding access to addiction treatment and recovery services, creating linkages to primary care specialists for patients with co-occurring conditions, and launching a 24/7 mobile crisis unit to ensure that Kentuckians struggling with addiction or a mental health crisis get the resources they need when it is most critical. For law enforcement in the area, who previously spent between 5-12 hours managing behavioral health emergencies, this is a game changer.

This grant funding is preparing Centerstone to become a part of the CCBHC demonstration program; however, this will only transpire if the current eight-state demonstration program is expanded to include two additional states. Currently, the eight-state program is set to expire on June 30, 2019. Thus, in order for Kentucky to participate in the program, the program would need to be extended as well as expanded to include Kentucky.

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics are beginning to change the way care is delivered⁴, and we believe Kentucky would benefit considerably by joining this game-changing demonstration. As such, we request your offices consider adding Kentucky to this CCBHC demonstration.

We look forward to ongoing conversations on these critical issues and thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to an improved healthcare system. Please reach out if we can be of further assistance.

³ <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CCBHC-Addiction-Treatment-Impact-survey-report-FINAL-5-24-18.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/National-CCBHC-survey-write-up-FINAL-11-28-17.pdf>

Sincerely,

Rick McCubbin

Abby Drane

Rick McCubbin
Chief of Police
Shepherdsville, Kentucky Police Department

Abby Drane
President/CEO
Centerstone Kentucky