



# CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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Hon. Marquis A. Harrison  
Chairperson  
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March 14, 2025

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand,

I write today to express support for the FY 2026 Congressionally Directed Spending Request (CDSR) submitted by CUNY SPH Center for Innovation in Mental Health (CUNY CIMH). With this funding, CUNY CIMH will develop and implement a Community Care Model for Mental Health Wellness.

There is an urgent need to expand access to mental health services, especially in historically underserved communities where the traditional healthcare infrastructure has often been insufficient. This proposal is a timely and necessary response to the growing mental health crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic inequities. It has the potential to transform mental health access and strengthen community resilience in New York City and beyond.

CUNY CIMH has consistently demonstrated expertise in mental health task-sharing, an evidence-based approach that empowers non-clinical professionals—such as community leaders, educators, and peer support specialists—to deliver essential services. Their successful programs, including *Harlem Strong*, *Building Resilience in Youth*, and *Jobs Plus*, highlight their ability to expand access to mental healthcare, improve service quality, and strengthen community resilience.

The Community Care Model for Mental Health Wellness will build on these successes by refining task-sharing to meet the unique needs of diverse communities. This initiative will address critical gaps in mental health care, especially in underserved communities, by leveraging community networks to integrate mental health and wellness support into neighborhoods. It will include scalable training materials to help communities identify mental health concerns, provide timely interventions, and connect individuals to resources. This initiative will increase access to care, reduce stigma, and foster a culture of trust and support while building resilience in vulnerable populations.

During the March General Board Meeting on March 5, 2025, Manhattan Community Board 10 voted unanimously in support of the CUNY School of Public Health's efforts to develop a Community Care Model for Mental Health Wellness. I am confident that our communities, and many others, will benefit from this expansion of the mental health task-sharing approach, bringing critical services to underserved areas while increasing the size and availability of the mental health workforce. I encourage you to move this proposal forward to the Appropriations Committee and vigorously support it throughout the process.

Sincerely,

Marquis Harrison, Board Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 10