

## **Introduction:**

Michael Quinn, CEO

Chestnut Ridge Counseling Services

- Chestnut Ridge Counseling Services (CRCSI)
  - Large community mental health center in Uniontown, Fayette County.
  - Large Outpatient Mental Health Clinic
  - School Based Mental Health Service in all County School Districts and a few outside of Fayette County
- **Prevalence of Mental Health crisis in children and the impact of the COVID pandemic**
  - Attached infographic illustration that shows mental health related issues as outlined in the 2019 Pennsylvania Youth Study
  - Clearly the isolation, anxiety, stress, fear, and uncertainty of the pandemic has exacerbated this issue
    - CRCSI has seen a 30% increase in our 24/7 Mental Health CRISIS Intervention Service phone calls and interventions.
    - Requests from our clinical staff for the CRISIS Intervention team to follow up or do a wellness check on children has exploded by 500%
    - Increase of 25% for child mental health emergency room visits
- **CRCSI School related Mental Health Services**
  - Outpatient Clinic in a school
    - As a licensed Outpatient Clinic the Department of Human Services can license a school as a satellite office adjunct to our main clinic license
      - Positives
        - No cost to Districts professionals
        - Ability to have on-site therapy services (tele-health as well)
        - Less stigma than a formal outpatient clinic
      - Challenges
        - Financial viability difficult to maintain in that only direct therapy services deemed billable to the child's health insurance are reimbursed
        - Therapists caseload and related schedule must be adequate and consistent to be cost effective
        - Child must be diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder
        - Poor and inconsistent payment by health insurance entities
- **Mental Health Resource Specialist (MHRS) District contract with CRCSI for a Licensed Social Worker full-time**
  - Positives
    - Considerable flexibility in MHRS role as prioritized by District
    - Some direct therapeutic and support services may be billable to health insurance/access

- Opportunity to provide mental health related training and support to District Staff
    - Student does not always need to be formally diagnosed with a mental health disorder
    - Support and consultation from CRCSI clinical professionals, especially, child and adolescent psychiatrist is offered
  - Challenges
    - Financial commitment as part of School District
- **Hybrid Mode**
  - Combines Outpatient Clinic model and MHRS role into the onsite therapists predetermined schedule
- **Considerations moving forward**
  - Parity in mental health/physical health insurance coverage
  - Blended/Braided funding to support mental wellness initiatives and creative support and services
  - Maintain tele-health flexibility as permitted during emergency declaration
  - Mental Health First Aid or similar mental health awareness training for all school personnel



\*1 in 3 high school students in 2019 reported feeling persistently sad and hopeless.

That was an increase of 40% from 2009



38% of our youth have felt depressed or sad MOST days in the past 12 months.



12.9% of our youth have planned suicide



9.7% of our youth have attempted suicide



\*Children presenting in ERs with Mental Health Issues Increased 24% March - October 2019-2020



14.4% of our youth have self-harmed (cutting, scraping, burning)



16.2% of our youth (that is approximately 1 out of every 5) have seriously considered suicide.

2019 Pennsylvania Youth Survey  
Fayette County, CDC  
\*Modern Healthcare May 2021



For more information or to schedule a meeting with Michael Quinn, CEO, Chestnut Ridge Counseling Services, please contact Courtney Walker at (724) 437-0729 ext. 2450

