



March 11, 2016

Dear Dr. Palyo:

We know that mental health challenges touch every family, in every neighborhood, in every borough.

The good news is that mental health problems are treatable. But far too many people are unable to access the services that can help them get well.

That's why I was so proud to announce today that our city is taking a huge leap forward in our quest to embed mental health resources in the places where people live, work, play, and go for help. [Fourteen new partnerships](#) will train staff members at community-based organizations – who already serve our city's most vulnerable populations – to provide mental health support to their clients.

These new partnerships make up our Connections to Care initiative, which is at the very center of our city's *ThriveNYC* mental health action plan.

We made the announcement today at the Red Hook Initiative because they are one of our new community partners, and because the kind of challenges they experience demonstrate how Connections to Care can improve their outcomes. Every day, the Red Hook Initiative serves young men and women, many of whom are clearly suffering from a mental health condition – and RHI has been without the resources to help their clients reach their full potential.

That's all about to change.

For me, the groundbreaking potential of Connections to Care can be summed up with one big number: 40,000. That is how many New Yorkers will receive mental health care over the next five years through this initiative. That's how many won't be forced to search for treatment on their own.

And 40,000 is only a start. Thanks to a stunning \$2 million award from The Ford Foundation and the evaluation they are funding, we will have a wealth of information on what works, and what doesn't. We can then use that information to bring *more* mental health resources to *more* community-based organizations.

That is the future this city deserves.

To learn more about the Connections to Care program and these incredible community-based organizations, please go to www.nyc.gov/connectionstocare. Or you can check out the website for ThriveNYC at nyc.gov/thrivenyc.

Thank you,

Chirlane McCray
First Lady
Chair, Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City