House Committee on General Investigating & Ethics: Mental Health in the Wake of Hurricane Harvey

Andy Keller, PhD | January 18, 2018
Vision
We envision Texas to be the national leader in treating people with mental health needs.

Mission Statement
To provide independent, non-partisan, and trusted policy and program guidance that creates systemic changes so all Texans can obtain effective, efficient behavioral health care when and where they need it.
Hurricane Harvey Task Force

Hurricane Harvey Task Force on School Mental Health Supports

- **Agencies:** Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Health & Human Services Commission

- **Key Tasks to Date:**
  - Organizing and accessing federal aid.
  - $12 million in FEMA assistance to Education Service Centers (ESCs).
  - Assessing needs across 200 independent school districts and 1.6 million students.
  - Coordinating linkages between schools and health systems.

*This infrastructure was not in place, pre-Harvey.*
Mental Health Needs, Post-Harvey

What do we expect the needs to be?

- We expected rates to begin to increase **60 - 90 days out** (and they have).
- For **children**: We expect needs to **peak at 18 months**, then slowly reduce after 24 months.
- For **adults**: We expect needs to continue to **trend higher even after 24 months**.

*This is primarily driven by the *worsening of baseline mental health needs* (80%), not new cases (only 20%).*
What Should We Do?

The Ideal Mental Health System

Health Care

Specialty Care (Other)
Rehabilitative Care
Inpatient Care
Best Practice Anchor
e.g., UTSW Simmons Cancer Center, MD Anderson

MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Specialty Care (Psychiatry)
Rehabilitative Care
Inpatient Care
Best Practice Anchor
e.g., UTSW O'Donnell Brain Institute, New York Presbyterian Hospital

Life in Community

Integrated Primary Care
VitalSign6 ↔ Collaborative Care for Depression

The best Mental Health Care is like the best Health Care
What Should We Do?

• Focus on:
  -- Early identification and supports in primary care;
  -- Increased access to trauma-informed care; and
  -- Additional supports (e.g., housing) for those with more severe needs.

• Ramp up capacity as soon as possible using federal funds, existing resources, and philanthropy.

• Develop sustainability plans to better leverage primary care and pay for out-of-box solutions, such as pediatric consultation models.
Anchoring Local Planning

- $2 million in resources for planning, coordination, and evaluation.
- Coordinate plans among leading health systems to partner across systems and leverage local philanthropy.
The truth is: mental illness affects more people than you may think, and we need to talk about it. It’s Okay to say...” okaytosay.org