

Bridging the Economic Divide through Health

Ellen Richards, Chief Strategy Officer

Community Advancement Network
September 9, 2016



Prevalence & Economic Impacts

- In any given year, **1 in 5 youth** experiences a mental disorder¹
- **26% of adults** experience a diagnosable mental disorder every year²
- **1 in 10** adults lives with a serious mental illness
- Globally, the costs for mental disorders are greater than the costs of diabetes, respiratory disorders, and cancer combined³
- In the U.S., mental health care, lost earnings, and disability payments total **>\$467B** per year⁴

¹NIMH ²CDC ³WEF ⁴SAMHSA

A Vicious Cycle

- Poverty and mental illness are closely linked and form a vicious cycle –
 - Chronic stress, trauma, unsafe and unhealthy living conditions can increase the likelihood of mental illness
 - Mental illness increases the risk of being poor – higher health costs from chronic diseases, difficulty maintaining employment, and stigma/isolation contribute to this
- **Improving people's mental health through treatment improves their economic status** – they are more likely to be able to work and to address other health challenges

In Texas, persons with mental illness **die an average of 29 years earlier** than the general population

Local Demographic Changes

- Travis County has seen a 25% population increase in the past 9 years
- Low-income individuals make up half of this increase
- The community is challenged by a shortage of providers and an insufficient supply of health services
- Coupled with a rapidly rising cost of living and a lack of affordable housing, many of the neediest individuals are being displaced to outlying areas that lack critical resources and infrastructure

How Do We Bridge the Divide?

- Take it to the streets and to the home:
 - Mobile crisis response anywhere someone needs help partnering with APD, Sheriff's Office, EMS and Pflugerville
 - Homelessness outreach through PATH and HOST
 - Provide wraparound and rehabilitation services in people's homes
 - Partner on street medicine teams

How Do We Bridge the Divide?

Create More Access Points

- Partner with schools and primary care providers to make behavioral health care available in more locations
 - Integrated behavioral health and primary care is now available in 3 outlying school districts - Del Valle, Pflugerville, and Manor
 - Behavioral health workers are in 18 CommUnityCare clinics and primary care is embedded in Integral Care clinics
 - Families with Voices Program brings wraparound services to Manor

How Do We Bridge the Divide?

Get Outside the Boundaries of Traditional Models

- Housing is a Health Intervention
 - Housing First creates the foundation for recovery from mental illness, substance use disorder, chronic disease and homelessness - 450 + in housing today
- Provide opportunities for Supported Employment
 - 529 consumers received supported employment services in FY2016 through partnerships with organizations like Goodwill
- Help people apply for benefits
 - Integral Care has the only dedicated SOAR positions in the Austin/Travis County community

Questions?