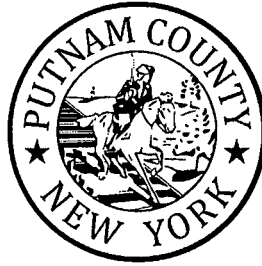


KEVIN BYRNE
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**DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH
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October 12, 2023

Dear Community Member,

Thank you for contacting our office to inquire about the creation of a Stabilization Center in Putnam County. While much of the feedback received by my office to provide for this unmet need has been positive, I recognize the importance of addressing questions from the public concerning the support that the center will offer to our residents.

With this in mind, the Putnam County Departments of Mental Health, Social Services and Youth Bureau, together with the Stabilization Center operators People, USA, will hold a community forum regarding the establishment of the stabilization center located at 2505 Carmel Ave at the Brewster Square Plaza. Brewster Square Plaza is privately owned property and negotiations to secure a lease have been conducted with the owner of the property and People, USA. The goal of this forum is to provide accurate information regarding the scope of services provided by a stabilization center to inquiring and interested residents.

Much thought and effort has been made by the County and People, USA to find a suitable location for the stabilization center that fits the needs of all residents within Putnam County. Additionally, our department has taken significant steps to inform the Putnam County Legislature and Southeast Town Board throughout this process. Included with this letter you'll find correspondence sent to Southeast Town Supervisor Tony Hay on August 7th informing him that the site on 2505 Carmel Ave had been identified. On August 14th we provided further information with a description of the service to the community provided by the Stabilization Center which is attached. Also included is a copy of a response letter to the Supervisor and Southeast Town Board on September 28th addressing his numerous questions concerning the stabilization center.

The creation of a stabilization center was a direct answer to the needs expressed by the residents of Putnam County. For several years, residents, parents, school administrators and stakeholders have consistently identified this gap in service in our county.

I look forward to sharing with you the benefits that a stabilization center will provide to our community and look forward to seeing you at the forum on Tuesday, October 24th at 6:00pm at the Bureau of Emergency Services Auditorium (Donald B. Smith Government Center, 110 Old Route 6, Carmel).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Piazza". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M".

Michael J. Piazza
Commissioner

KEVIN BYRNE
County Executive

MICHAEL J. PIAZZA, Jr.
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DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH
SOCIAL SERVICES AND YOUTH BUREAU

August 7, 2023

ELIZABETH BARCAVAGE
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The Honorable Tony Hay
Supervisor, Town of Southeast
1360 Route 22
Brewster, NY 10509

Dear Supervisor Hay:

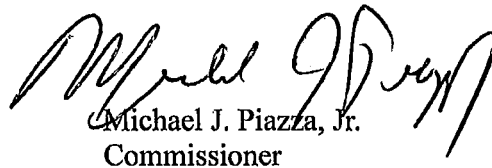
The purpose of this letter is to inform you that after an extensive search, the Crisis Stabilization Center that has been planned for many years has found a site at 2505 Route 6, Brewster, NY.

The Stabilization Center is a New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and an Office of Addiction Support Services (OASAS) dual licensed program designed to provide access to behavioral health treatment and supports to residents of Putnam County. The Stabilization Center is an outpatient program that will be situated on the site of a former OMH licensed outpatient program. The Stabilization Center will provide services to Adults and Children, and their families. As we continue to strive to meet the needs of the residents of Putnam, the establishment of this program is a huge step in meeting the needs of the residents of Southeast and County as a whole.

Sara Servadio and I will be providing an update on the Center at the Health, Social Welfare and Education Committee meeting on August 8th.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Piazza, Jr.
Commissioner

MJP/bl

cc: The Honorable Kevin Byrne, Sara Servadio

Putnam County Crisis Stabilization Center

Full-Service Walk-In & Police-Friendly Community Crisis
Response Hub

People USA, March 2022

peopleUSA

What is a Crisis Stabilization Center?

Full-Service Walk-In Community Crisis Response Hub

- A 24/7 community crisis response hub
 - A place where people of all ages - adults, children & families - can connect immediately with an array of health care professionals & providers
 - Designed to address any mental health, addiction, or social determinant of health needs.
 - 100% voluntary – people can walk in on their own, or be brought by law enforcement / emergency service personnel on crisis intervention calls.
 - Guests can stay up to 24 hrs.
-

Why Do People Use Crisis Stabilization?

Engaging, Safe, Empathetic, and Hopeful

- Adults, children & families use Crisis Stabilization Centers when they are experiencing a “crisis” — overwhelming feelings of emotional distress — for any of the following reasons:
 - Acute Psychiatric Symptoms
 - Suicidal Thoughts
 - Adverse Thoughts or Behaviors
 - Trauma and its Lasting Adverse Effects
 - Addiction & Chemical Dependency
 - Intoxication (sobering space available)
 - Living with Chronic Health Issues
 - Strained Relationships (family, friends, etc.)
 - Social Isolation
 - Poverty & Economic Stress
-

The Need for Services

Background

- The United States is facing a behavioral health crisis.
- COVID has only amplified the massive challenges we face
- Increasing rates of:
 - Mental Health Issues
 - Addiction (e.g. the Opioid Epidemic)
 - Crisis
 - Social Isolation
 - Economic Stress
 - Housing Instability
 - Suicide (also an epidemic)
 - Trauma of lives lost due to COVID.



The Need for Services continued

Background

- Meanwhile, our nation's mental / behavioral health care system is falling behind:
- Hospitals are overutilized
- Jails have become treatment centers
- Healthcare costs keep rising,
- People aren't receiving the type of quality care they need and want.

Putnam County's Projected Need

Projected Demand: 3,723 Clients

- **Geography: Putnam, Northern Westchester, Pawling**
 - Total Population: 206,126
 - **Estimated ER Visits (Behavioral Health) of Population Above:**
 - Mental Health: 3,270 / yr
 - Substance Use: 2,180 / yr
 - Total Behavioral Health: 5,450 / yr
 - **Estimated ER Visits (Behavioral Health) of Population Above:**
 - Mental Health: 2,180 / yr
 - Substance Use: 1,090 / yr
 - Total Behavioral Health: 3,270 / yr
 - **Estimated Annual Utilization: Putnam Crisis Stabilization Center: 3,723 / yr**
-

What Services Will be Provided

A Continuum of Crisis Care and Ongoing Follow-up

- Whole Health Assessments
 - Motivational Interviewing & De-escalation
 - Peer Support & Engagement
 - Crisis Counseling
 - Person-Centered Care Planning
 - Health & Wellness Education
 - Direct Connections to Outside Services (for ongoing care)
 - Advocacy
 - Follow-Up to Ensure Quality Outcomes
 - Mobile Outreach / Transportation (when needed)
 - Care Management / Care Coordination
-

What Staff Does This Require

An Integrated Multidisciplinary Team

- Licensed Clinical Counselors
 - Certified Peer Specialists (staff with personal lived experience)
 - Credentialed Addiction Counselors
 - Registered Nurses
 - Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
 - Care Managers / Care Coordinators
-

Benefits to the Putnam County Community

Improved Population Health & Wellness at Reduced Costs

- Significantly reduce preventable hospital ER visits, inpatient admissions, and readmissions
 - Safely reduce preventable criminal justice involvement due to under-addressed behavioral health issues
 - Improve customer care experiences for adults, children, and families in crisis
 - Achieve better health & wellness / quality of life outcomes (tracking people over time)
 - Reduce overall healthcare spending / public costs (through hospital avoidance, jail diversion, and improved population health)
 - Create a welcoming gateway to Putnam County's broader health and human services system
 - Create a total crisis continuum of care that works better for Putnam County
-

Why is People USA Uniquely Qualified?

Local, Regional, and National Experience

- Created the Dutchess County Stabilization Center; first crisis stabilization center in the Northeastern United States.
 - Created the Rose House model of peer-operated crisis respites / home-like alternatives to hospital psych. ERs & inpatient units; first peer-run hospital diversion houses in New York.
 - Helped open 39 peer-operated crisis respites using the Rose House model across the United States and Europe.
 - Created the Transitional Care Wellness Team model, a unique hybrid of transitional care management and wellness coaching.
 - Created the Westchester Forensic Mobile Crisis & Response Team; first mobile mental health team with a criminal justice focus in the New York State.
 - Developed unique training programs – for hospitals, local government units, and behavioral health organizations across the U.S. – to help them build tomorrow's behavioral health workforce and culture.
 - Organized and provided Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trainings to hundreds of law enforcement throughout New York.
-

Exhibit A

Putnam County proposes to contract with PEOPLE, Inc. to establish and operate a Supportive Crisis Stabilization Center (SCSC).

Supportive Crisis Stabilization Centers means a center that provides support and assistance to individuals with mental health and/or substance use crisis symptoms. Services are for individuals experiencing challenges in daily life that do not pose a likelihood of serious harm. Such challenges may create risk for an escalation of behavioral health symptoms that cannot reasonably be managed in the person's home and/or community environment without on-site supports. SCSCs will provide voluntary services with an emphasis on peer support that is resilience and recovery-oriented, SCSCs will also provide, or contract to provide behavioral health stabilization services twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. Recipients may receive services in a SCSC for up to twenty-four hours.

SCSCs are similar to a living room model, offering walk-in services to all individuals, including adults, children, adolescents, and families, twenty-four hours a day, seven days per week, 365 days per year. All services are voluntary, person-centered, and trauma-informed, with an emphasis on peer support that is resilience and recovery oriented. Centers must ensure services are delivered in a comfortable and welcoming environment by a multidisciplinary team. SCSC staff will act in a manner that is culturally competent, person-centered and trauma-informed to understand and respect personal preferences throughout their interactions with recipients and other staff members at the SCSC.

SCSCs should form partnerships with other agencies within the crisis response system, in addition to local community providers and services that support recipients throughout the lifespan. Partnerships may include but are not limited to Mobile Crisis providers, Crisis Residences, ICSCs, law enforcement (LE), Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and other community treatment and support services.

The County will provide \$2.5 million of American Relief (ARPA) funds. The funds will be used for any and all operating expenses, including but not limited to renovation, rental security deposits, payment of staff, and any and all expenses related to the establishment and operation of a SCSC.

KEVIN BYRNE
County Executive

MICHAEL J. PIAZZA, Jr.
Commissioner

SARA SERVADIO
Deputy Commissioner



**DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH
SOCIAL SERVICES AND YOUTH BUREAU**

September 28, 2023

Supervisor Hay,

Thank you for your correspondence to Legislative Chairman Jonke and Legislator Castellano seeking additional details and clarification regarding the stabilization center in Putnam County. County Executive Byrne has also reviewed your correspondence and has requested I respond directly to address the Southeast Town Board's various questions and concerns.

I understand the importance of having correct and clear information, specifically around a new program or resource forming in a community, which is why I have worked diligently to be forthcoming and transparent throughout this process, speaking and corresponding with you and your office since late July as well as presenting at the Putnam County Legislature numerous times including at the more recent Health Committee meeting in August. In both cases, the Administration made a concerted effort to highlight the purpose of this center as well as its location.

The stabilization center will be run by a not-for-profit agency, People USA, who has successfully operated the Dutchess County Stabilization Center since 2017. The first of its kind in New York State, the Dutchess County site provides an environment that is designed to assist individuals and children away from traumatic environments and experiences, and on a voluntary basis, so that the success of recovery is greater. It is worth noting that the majority of the adult, adolescent and child clients that seek services at the Dutchess site are presenting with symptoms of anxiety, and stabilization centers provide assistance to residents for nonemergency related health matters. Please remember that recovery looks different for every person and the range of support received at the center depends on the individual needs.

We have read the emails from the residents of the Town of Southeast, those sent directly and those forwarded by you, and will be inviting them to participate in an upcoming forum so that their questions and concerns can be both heard and addressed, and so this office may be afforded the opportunity to provide them more timely and accurate information about this important initiative. We also plan to invite them, and any interested members of your town board, to schedule a visit at the Dutchess County Stabilization Center. Additional information about the center and People USA can be accessed at their website at <https://people-usa.org/>.

To clarify, the stabilization center in Putnam County is not a mandated program. However, New York State Mental Hygiene Law requires each county to direct and administer a local comprehensive planning process. As a result, the Putnam County Department of Mental Health, Social Services and Youth

Bureau, together with our provider agencies, develop annually a comprehensive local plan for mental hygiene services that identifies the needs and gaps in the system of care for individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities and those that are dealing with alcohol and other drug abuse. The two highest prioritized unmet needs in Putnam County's system of care have consistently been a mobile crisis team and a stabilization center.

Last year, the Legislature and prior Administration committed \$2,500,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help People USA with start-up costs. While it was appropriated by the previous Administration, County Executive Byrne has made it clear that opening a stabilization center in Putnam County is a priority of his Administration, as well. People USA will be licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health and Office of Addiction Services and will earn revenue through the health insurance system, which will sustain the center. The Department of Mental Health, Social Services and Youth Bureau will work closely with the center and maintain collaboration. All agencies licensed by NYS that either receive state funding passed through Putnam County or that receive funding directly from the county must have a contract. Except for the initial ARPA funding provided by the county, the agency will operate independently from insurance revenue.

The center will occupy office space that was previously occupied by a New York State Office of Mental Health outpatient treatment program. It's noteworthy that more recently Mental Health Association of Putnam County (MHA) also had its office space in the same building where it served clients including those seeking services and support through the Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer to Peer Program back when MHA was the providing agency for Putnam County. The County is not renting the space or operating the center, and People USA has worked its lease agreement directly with the landlord.

The Office of Mental Health continues to encourage the development of stabilization centers. There are currently 24 centers becoming operational throughout the state with 3 centers already open. People USA will be opening the Putnam County and Westchester County center modeled after the successful Dutchess County center that they have operated for six years.

The center requires adequate space to support multiple services to families and children in a professional setting. People USA employed a realtor in the county to identify space that meets this need. 2505 Carmel Avenue provided the agency with the opportunity to develop the space to their specifications, including a private entrance and separate parking lot in the back of the building. The location's proximity to Putnam Hospital and access for individuals in need of services was also an important consideration when viewing locations.

The day care center at 2505 Carmel Avenue is well known to the Department of Mental Health, Social Services and Youth Bureau, as it partners with the day care center through the NYS Child Care Program. The County has also supported the application of the day care center to provide various specialized programs to our youngest children. The day care center is a tenant at 2505 Carmel Avenue. Its lease agreement is a separate contract between the day care center and property owner. It is also well known that the day care center operated in that location when a previous tenant provided an outpatient mental health treatment program in the same location the center will be located. It is also noteworthy that between 40%-50% of the individuals receiving support from the Dutchess County Stabilization

Center are children and adolescents brought there by parents or referred by school districts. This staggering statistic could very well extend into Putnam County in a post-pandemic environment.

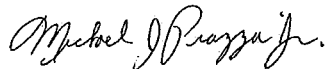
In our efforts to aid People USA in an extensive search for space, we have been unable to secure appropriate space in a centrally located medical building. People USA and the Putnam County local government unit had multiple meetings with Putnam Hospital Center seeking to find appropriate space on the grounds of the hospital. Three locations were discussed over approximately 12 meetings. Ultimately, there was no space that met the required specifications for the center.

Throughout the past 19 months, the Department of Mental Health, Social Services and Youth Bureau have reported at regular intervals to the Legislature on the progress that was being made. They were officially made aware of the location in Southeast when I presented before the Health Committee on August 8th.

A stabilization center will be an enormous benefit to the mental health of our residents, especially children, in crisis. We will be in contact with all those who have communicated their concern about this issue, and when we schedule the forum to discuss the center in the coming weeks, we'll make sure your office is aware.

If there are questions that were not addressed directly in this letter, please feel free to contact me directly and know you are welcome to participate at the upcoming forum.

Thank you,



Michael J. Piazza, Jr.
Commissioner

CC: County Executive Byrne & Leg. Jonke and Castellano

Mental Health Services & Stabilization Center Forum



peopleUSA

Tuesday, October 24
6:00pm to 8:00pm

at Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services
112 Old Rte 6, Carmel NY
(Donald B Smith Campus)

A new 24/7 voluntary mental health walk-in clinic is being opened in the Town of Southeast. Residents are encouraged to attend to see a presentation from representatives of PeopleUSA, the operator of the facility, and from County Mental Health officials.

Following the presentation, will be Q&A with those in attendance.

