

PRELUDE

Governor Whitmer held a behavioral health roundtable with several leaders representing mental and behavioral health services in Northwest Michigan. An outcome of that roundtable was a request from the Governor for a list of the top behavioral health priorities in our region. Governor Whitmer asked the group to share thoughts about those priorities if our region were to receive two types of funding: 1) a one-time infusion of capital; and 2) sustained behavioral health funding.

With collaboration from numerous organizations and following a region wide (10-county) online survey over a 4-day period January 21-24, 2022 that elicited 1,334 responses, the following have emerged as top behavioral health priorities in Northwest Michigan.

TOP PRIORITIES

- I. **One-time Funding: Expand the crisis response system in Northwest Michigan with the creation of behavioral health crisis centers for youth and adults (Crisis Wellness Center plans are currently in process for a location in Traverse City) and enhance pediatric and emergency room psychiatric services throughout the region.**
 - Build crisis response center(s) with crisis stabilization capacity for both emergent care and longer-term residential treatment; vital services are needed for both youth and adult care.
 - Enhanced crisis pediatric and emergency department response facility(s) and services.
 - Concepts: campus with peer drop-in center; access center, crisis stabilization unit(s); capacity to offer expanded trauma-informed, evidence-based therapeutic treatments; adult and youth residential unit centrally located in Traverse City — a campus environment could help promote efficiencies in shared staffing and care coordination.
 - Data points:
 - Community survey responses:
 - **This was ranked as the top priority by the majority of respondents.**
 - **97.59% of respondents ranked this as “very important” or “important”**
 - There are only 17 residential mental health treatment facilities in Michigan serving 590,000 EACH — this is more than double the national average
 - Munson Healthcare operates the only psychiatric hospital in the region with 17 hospital beds
 - Antrim, Kalkaska and Missaukee Counties have no SUD treatment facilities
 - Between, October, 2020-September, 2021 Munson Hospitals across our 10 county region served 4,775 individuals experiencing behavioral health problems in their Emergency Departments.

II. Sustained Funding: Train, attract and retain qualified behavioral health personnel sufficient to meet the high demand for behavioral health services across the lifespan for residents throughout Northwest Michigan, including increased emphasis on the behavioral health assessment, services and support of infants, children and youth.

- Ensure adequate behavioral health staffing and peer-to-peer/lay person support in schools and other youth programs to improve behavioral health assessment, services and support for all youth in Northwest Michigan. Programs designed for infants and early childhood development, as well all youth in schools, are imperative.
- Improve rate reimbursement for organizations providing behavioral health intervention services in Northwest Michigan (Create more parity in behavioral health payments, including for individual providers and reducing the significant discrepancy in pay rates between Medicaid and private insurance).
- Enhance programs to encourage and incentivize high school, college and graduate students to pursue behavioral health careers (progressive scholarships and student loan forgiveness, expanded behavioral health programs in area colleges and universities, paid internships for both high school and college students).
- Ensure adequate behavioral health supports in the workplace and eliminate the stigma of utilizing Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).
- Data points:
 - Community survey responses:
 - **This was prioritized as the 2nd highest priority for this region by survey respondents**
 - **96.85% of respondents ranked “expand efforts to attract and retain skilled behavioral health professionals” as “very important” or “important”**
 - The ratio of student counselors to students in Michigan is 1:729, which is the third highest in the nation (Schami, 2019)
 - 39% of schools in the CHIR region do not have a school-based health clinic
 - 16-80% of high school students report major depressive symptoms (2018 MIPHY)
 - More than 65% of rural residents receive their mental health care from a primary care physician
 - Pediatricians report spending up to 40% of their time treating mental illness even though they feel ill equipped to do so (Van Buren, 2019)
 - 8 out of the 10 counties served by the Community Health Innovation Region (CHIR) have mental health provider rates below the state average.

LONG TERM

There is also general consensus that efforts need to be made upstream to intervene and prevent adverse experiences, both for children and adults; those adverse experiences often lead to downstream behavioral health issues. Early assessment, identification and intervention treatment of mental health issues is key to ensuring a continued thriving and resilient community.

- **Promote positive, healthy experiences**
 - Promote nurturing, supportive relationships
 - Increase constructive social engagement
 - Promote safe environments
 - Enhance social-emotional competencies
- **Reduce risk of behavioral health challenges**
 - Reduce exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) — this is paramount!
 - Reduce access to substances
 - Increase behavioral health screening — also paramount to early assessment and treatment!
- **Strengthen community**
 - Promote sense of belonging
 - Enhance civic muscle

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

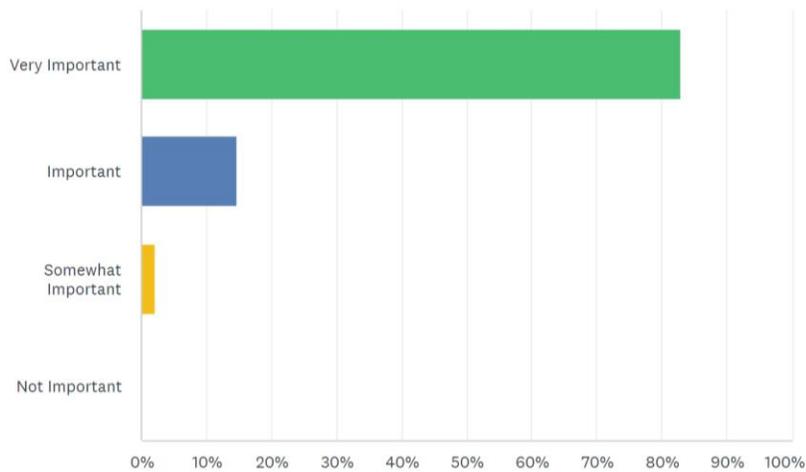
Behavioral Health Top Priorities in Northwest Michigan

“How important are each of the following for meeting the behavioral health needs in our region?”

Q1

Expand behavioral health crisis response system including crisis stabilization services, crisis residential treatment, mobile crisis services, psychiatric urgent care, and expanded psychiatric youth beds.

Answered: 1,332 Skipped: 2

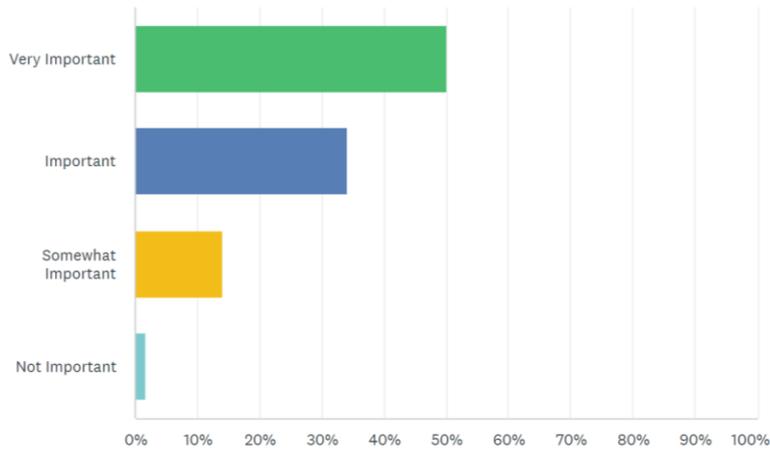


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very Important	82.88% 1,104
Important	14.71% 196
Somewhat Important	2.18% 29
Not Important	0.23% 3
TOTAL	1,332

Q2

Programs to encourage high school, undergraduate and graduate students to pursue behavioral health careers, such as scholarships, student loan forgiveness, paid internships, and expanded programs in regional colleges and universities.

Answered: 1,329 Skipped: 5

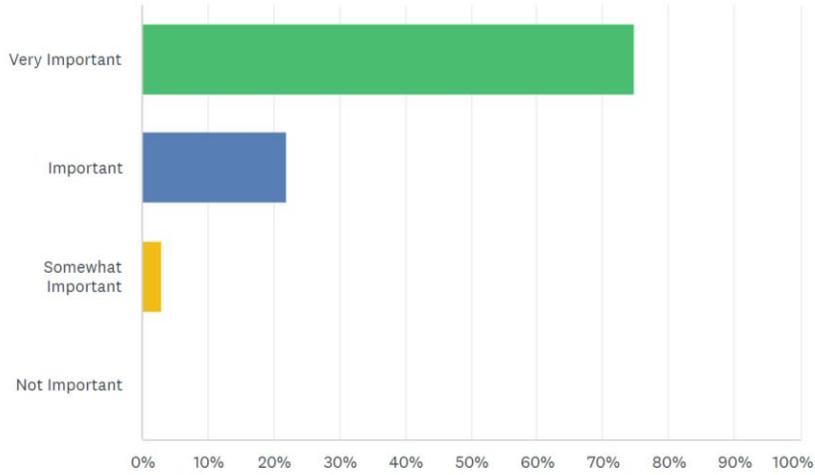


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Very Important	50.11%	666
▼ Important	34.01%	452
▼ Somewhat Important	14.07%	187
▼ Not Important	1.81%	24
TOTAL		1,329

Q3

Expand efforts to attract and retain skilled behavioral health professionals in Northwest Michigan.

Answered: 1,333 Skipped: 1

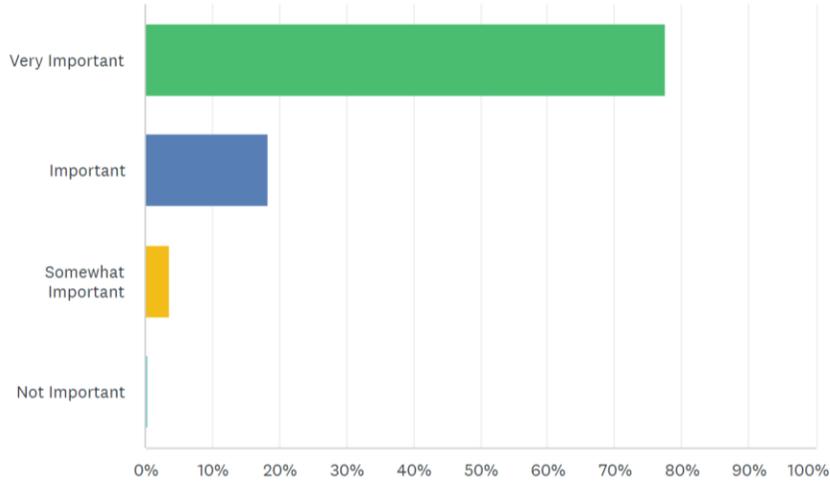


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Very Important	74.87% 998
▼ Important	21.98% 293
▼ Somewhat Important	2.93% 39
▼ Not Important	0.23% 3
TOTAL	1,333

Q4

Improve behavioral health assessments, services and support for all infants, children and youth.

Answered: 1,330 Skipped: 4

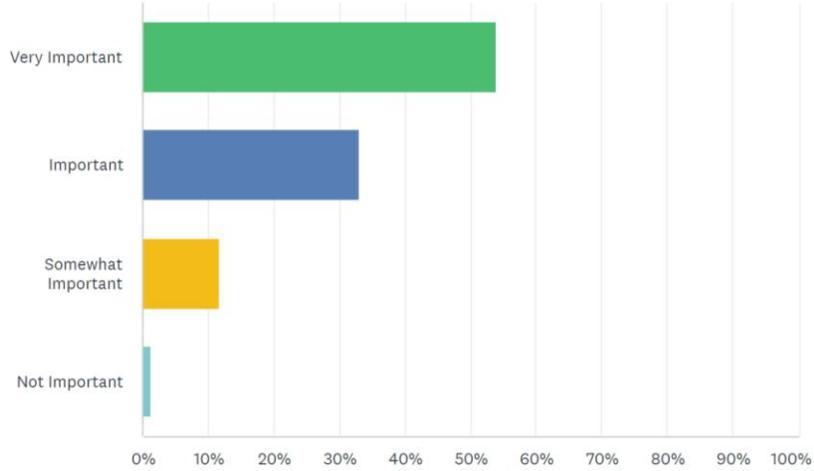


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very Important	77.67% 1,033
Important	18.27% 243
Somewhat Important	3.68% 49
Not Important	0.38% 5
TOTAL	1,330

Q5

Improve behavioral health supports within the workplace.

Answered: 1,333 Skipped: 1

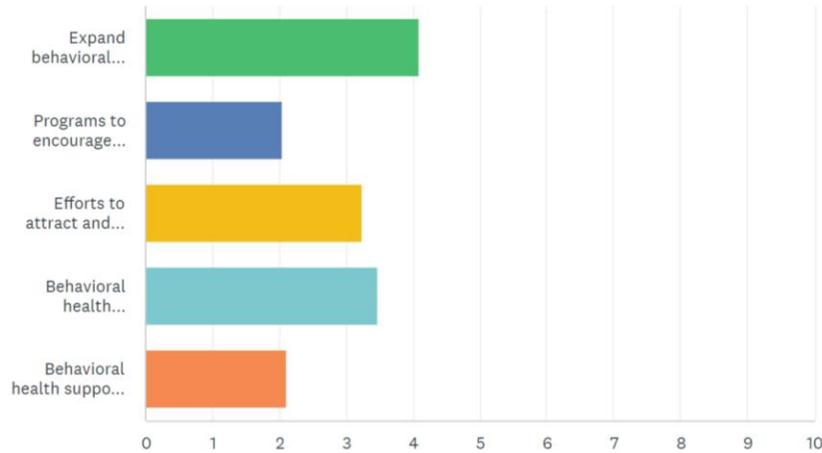


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Very Important	54.01% 720
▼ Important	33.08% 441
▼ Somewhat Important	11.70% 156
▼ Not Important	1.20% 16
TOTAL	1,333

Q6

Please rank the following behavioral health priorities in our region.

Answered: 1,322 Skipped: 12



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Expand behavioral health crisis response system	52.21% 672	22.38% 288	13.44% 173	7.15% 92	4.82% 62	1,287	4.10
Programs to encourage students to pursue behavioral health careers	3.41% 44	8.91% 115	17.12% 221	30.83% 398	39.74% 513	1,291	2.05
Efforts to attract and retain skilled behavioral health professionals in the region	15.57% 201	27.73% 358	29.82% 385	19.52% 252	7.36% 95	1,291	3.25
Behavioral health assessments, services and support for all infants, children and youth	23.86% 309	30.89% 400	22.47% 291	15.37% 199	7.41% 96	1,295	3.48
Behavioral health supports within the workplace	4.97% 65	9.95% 130	17.14% 224	27.31% 357	40.63% 531	1,307	2.11

***Note:** Of the 1,334 respondents who completed this online survey, 975 provided additional comments which can be provided upon request.