



CITY, COUNTY, AND STATE NEWS

AUSTIN, TX: [New 911 call option offers direct mental health help that one attorney says may have saved one family's son](#): Integral Care said more calls for mental health are flooding into Austin's 911 call center. The local mental health authority for Travis County handles mental health-related calls to Austin's 911 call center. The city launched a new option for people to connect right away with an on-site mental health professional when they dial 911.

BRAZOS COUNTY, TX: ['In some cases, over 2 hours away': Brazos Valley dealing with lack of mental health care options](#) After the closure of Rock Prairie Behavioral Health, the Brazos Valley has been without an acute residential psychiatric hospital since the summer of 2020, placing a huge strain on mental health resources locally. As a result of this lack of facilities, individuals are now having to be transported to the surrounding metropolitan areas to receive their proper care.

CA: [As Need for Mental Health Care Surges, A Funding Program Remains Underused](#): The need for mental health services has surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing pressure on California's already beset mental health care system. Yet one source of funding that could potentially help counties meet the demand for mental health care remains underused more than a year after the California Health Report first drew attention to the issue. Counties can be reimbursed for providing mental health services to low-income residents through several state and federal programs. One is called Mental Health Medi-Cal Administrative Activities, or MH MAA, which provides funds for people enrolled in Medi-Cal, the state's low-income health insurance program.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, IL: [Locally, demand up for mental health professionals](#): Area police departments are all making efforts to beef up their staffs with mental-health professionals to assist officers on patrol, but it's a process. The Champaign County Sheriff's office, Urbana Police Department, Champaign Police Department, and Rantoul Police Department have all made moves towards increasing Mental Health Professional presence but have run into delays.

MONROE COUNTY, NY: [Monroe County passes 'Maisie's Law' to combat opioid overdoses](#): Pharmacies in Monroe County would be required to inform prescription opioid patients that the opioid overdose antidote drug naloxone is available to them, under a measure adopted Tuesday by the county Legislature. Naloxone, which is commonly sold under the brand name Narcan, is already available to prescription opioid patients at a heavily discounted rate through the state Naloxone Co-payment Assistance Program, which covers up to \$40 of the cost of a co-payment, making the drug free for most insured people.

NATIONAL

Lawmakers urge Biden to back opioid-treatment measure:

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is calling on President Biden to let more physicians prescribe an opioid-treatment drug, in what has emerged as an early test of his administration's opioid strategy.

- The effort centers on the “X-waiver,” a two-decade-old requirement, first mandated by Congress, that physicians undergo a day's training before being allowed to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid-use disorder.
- Biden had criticized the prescribing rules as unnecessary last year and vowed to lift them if elected. But his administration instead preserved the rules last month by halting a last-minute Trump administration plan intended as a workaround, frustrating doctors and public health groups that say the rules are slowing the response to the nation's worsening opioid crisis.
- Lawmakers — led by Sens. Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.) and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), who are joined by four members in the House — are reintroducing legislation that would eliminate the rules.

Senate Democrats request more resources for Capitol workers after Jan. 6 attack

Thirty Senate Democrats are requesting that top U.S. Capitol officials expand mental health resources in the wake of the deadly attack on Jan. 6, when a violent mob breached the building. Democrats in a Tuesday letter spearheaded by Sens. Michael Bennet (Colo.), Ben Ray Lujan (N.M.) and Amy Klobuchar (Minn.) asked Architect of the Capitol James Brett Blanton, acting Senate Sergeant at Arms Jennifer Hemingway, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden and acting U.S. Capitol Police Chief Yogananda Pittman to expand emotional and behavioral services to everyone who works inside the complex.

WEEKEND READING

Stat News: Youths of color are our future. We must invest in their mental health

New York Times: How to Help When Adolescents Have Suicidal Thoughts

New York Times: The Hardship of Social Distancing When Touch Is a Lifeline

New Yorker: Inside the Worst-Hit County in the Worst-Hit State in the Worst-Hit Country

USA Today: Address the mental health crisis by implementing curriculum in schools

****The information compiled in this email originated from the following news sources:
KXAN, KXXV, Cal Health Report, The News-Gazette, Rochester City Newspaper****