



### **Board of Directors**

#### **Chair**

Nicki Colosi Trilling

#### **Vice Chair**

Madeline Turano

#### **Treasurer**

A. Lavaz Watson

#### **Secretary**

Hillary Davidson

#### **Clerk**

Dayna Gladstein

#### **Members**

Joseph Arver

Barbara J. Audino

Patrick Barry-Nolan

Tyler Bernadyn

Karen Cadwalader

Dr. Janice DeFrances

Brian Geer

Mark Horan

Sue Metzger

Osasemwinhia Ogboghodo

Kendra Toppa

John Toracinta

#### **Honorary Member**

Hon. J. Clement Cicilline

#### **Emeritus Members**

Hon. Stephen Erickson

Joyce Kirby, Esq.

#### **Community Member**

Judy Jones

Member, National  
Council for Behavioral  
Health

Member, Substance Use  
& Mental Health  
Leadership Council of RI



Accredited by  
The Joint Commission



Dear Chairman Abney and members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Dayna Gladstein, and I am the President and CEO of Newport Mental Health, one of Rhode Islands Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics. I am here tonight in support of House Bill 8-1-7-7, the 988 Call Center Funding and Operations Act.

In the past few years, Rhode Island has made significant progress in building a true behavioral health safety net. Today, three aligned services form the cornerstone of that system of care for children, adults, and families:

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**, serving as the front door for immediate behavioral health support and crisis de-escalation.
- **Mobile Response & Stabilization Services (MRSS)**, a rapid, community-based intervention for children, youth, adults, and families in crisis.
- **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)**, the 24/7/365 backbone providing crisis response, stabilization, treatment, care coordination, and ongoing recovery support regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

Together, these services create a continuum that keeps Rhode Islanders safe, connected to care, and out of more costly systems whenever possible.

The safety net established here is already producing measurable outcomes in Rhode Island according to the state's own data released back in February:

- More than **two-thirds of CCBHC crisis calls were resolved without requiring hospitalization or an Emergency Department visit.**
- Rhode Island's CCBHC crisis teams responded successfully to **79% of urgent crisis situations without arrest or law enforcement escalation.**
- Rhode Island now has **91% statewide adult mobile crisis coverage and 100% MRSS coverage for youth**, ensuring behavioral health response is available in communities across the state.

The impact of supporting this continuum extends far beyond crisis stabilization.

When children and families receive timely behavioral health support, they are more likely to remain safely connected to their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Perhaps most importantly, these services reduce unnecessary reliance on Emergency Departments, inpatient hospitalization, and law enforcement response, improving outcomes while reducing strain on already overburdened systems.

But this system only works if every aspect of it is sustained and supported.



## Newport Mental Health

The 988 crisis line cannot remain vulnerable to annual budget uncertainty if it's to serve as the entry point to Rhode Island's behavioral health system.

Thank you to both the members of this committee and the General Assembly at large for supporting this program through the budget. Tonight, I ask for your continued support for the line, through the sustainable funding put forward by this bill. Ensuring Rhode Islanders can continue to access immediate support whenever and wherever they need it.

I urge you to support House Bill 8177 and its companion legislation, Senate Bill 3058. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna Gladstein

LICSW President & CEO



**Newport Mental Health**