



# **STRENGTHENING THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN NEW YORK STATE**

A CONVERSATION WITH

Kimberly A. Williams, President and CEO of Vibrant Emotional Health  
Pamela Mattel, President & CEO of Coordinated Behavioral Care

# ONGOING IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON NEW YORKERS' MENTAL HEALTH

- During the COVID-19 pandemic there was an estimated 25% increase in poor mental health outcomes worldwide
- A new data brief by the New York Health Foundation found:
  - **More than three in ten New Yorkers** reported poor mental health in March 2023, showing no improvement from May 2021, when 32% of New Yorkers reported poor mental health.
  - Rates of poor mental health among New Yorkers have fluctuated throughout the pandemic. They peaked in February 2021, when two in five New Yorkers said they experienced anxiety and/or depression. The most recent spike occurred in September 2022.

View Data Brief and Sources:

<https://nyhealthfoundation.org/resource/treading-water-the-ongoing-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-new-yorkers-mental-health>



# ONGOING IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON NEW YORKERS' MENTAL HEALTH

Some groups of New Yorkers were more likely to experience depression and/or anxiety in the first quarter of 2023:

- **One in two (50.0%) New Yorkers with very low incomes** (less than \$25,000 per year) reported anxiety and/or depression.
- Younger adults had poorer mental health rates than other age groups; **two in five (40.0%) New Yorkers between the ages of 18 and 34** reported poor mental health.
- Poor mental health increased most for Asian New Yorkers and Hispanic New Yorkers; **two out of five (41.0%) Hispanic New Yorkers** reported anxiety and/or depression.
- **One in two (50.7%) New Yorkers who lost employment income** since the onset of the pandemic reported anxiety and/or depression.
- **More than half (57.4%) of food-insufficient New Yorkers** had poor mental health—nearly twice the rate of food-sufficient New Yorkers (29.2%).

View Data Brief and Sources:

<https://nyhealthfoundation.org/resource/treading-water-the-ongoing-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-new-yorkers-mental-health>



# IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Despite stagnation in mental health data trends, there are bright spots for mental health policy and practice, including:

- New York State’s FY 2024 budget provides \$1 billion to expand mental health throughout the State, focusing on New Yorkers with serious mental health needs.
- New York City Mayor Adams and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene unveiled a \$20 million plan called “Care, Community, Action: A Mental Health Plan for NYC.”
- The New York City Council released a “Mental Health Roadmap” that proposes to expand preventive and supportive services.

Focused government attention and funding will be critical to improving mental health in New York State, but other sectors also have important roles to play.

