

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 30, 2021

Mayor Warren Announces Expansion of Persons in Crisis Team Services in Rochester

Four Certified Peer Specialists will allow for PIC to enhance the services, number and types of calls it provides for non-law enforcement responses

Mayor Lovely A. Warren announced today that the City of Rochester Department of Recreation and Human Services, along with Finger Lakes Performing Provider System (FLPPS) has selected Recover Options Made Easy (ROME) to help expand the City's Person in Crisis (PIC) program that responds to individuals experiencing a mental health or other crisis requiring intervention and support.

ROME will provide NYS Certified Peer Specialists to be integrated into the City of Rochester Crisis Intervention Services (CIS) teams, particularly its Person in Crisis (PIC) teams. The peers have lived experience which helps them relate to, and assist, people in crisis.

"By expanding our Person In Crisis teams to include certified peer specialists, we will be able to assist even more of our residents in need in a humane and compassionate manner," said Mayor Warren. "In addition, by assisting residents in this new way, we are expecting that there will be a reduced number of people calling the PIC team because they are getting connected to the services they need."

The PIC teams were first piloted in January 2021 to provide a non-law enforcement response to crises, with a particular focus on mental health crises. The PIC pilot was successful and is now looking at expanding its call response types, including responses to substance abuse, wellness checks, and domestic violence incidences. On July 1, 2021, the City's CIS started the Community Support Counselor team, who provide follow up and case management to people involved in PIC calls and crime victims.

The peer specialists hired and supervised by ROME will join the PIC team in the field to provide person-centered support to City of Rochester residents experiencing crises such as, but not limited to, suicidal behavior, domestic violence and substance abuse. Additionally, peer specialists will provide follow up support, including referrals to needed resources with the City's Community Support Counselors. The goal of this intervention is to provide the CIS with team members that have the lived experience and training to provide compassionate, responsive care to individuals undergoing crises and divert them from preventable emergency room visits.

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ROME will support the hiring, onboarding, training, and ongoing supervision of four peer specialists that will be working with the CIS for a period of one-year. FLPPS will also support an evaluation of Peer Integration into the CIS team in collaboration with the City of Rochester Department of Recreation and Human Services. The arrangement is being made at no cost to the City to demonstrate the effectiveness of this innovative approach.

This collaboration with the City is part of a portfolio of projects supported by the System Transformation and Community Investment (STACI) program at FLPPS to support the expansion of community-based Crisis Response and Stabilization services in the FLPPS region.

“We at Recovery Options Made Easy are pleased to bring our experience in peer-based crisis response services to the City of Rochester in partnership with FLPPS. We believe that the integration of peer services into the PIC program will enrich these services in a meaningful way, and we are excited to be a part of providing greater access to peer support services to Rochester residents,” said Shannon Higbee, Interim CEO & COO at Recovery Options Made Easy.

“I’m thrilled that FLPPS is partnering with such an innovative program that provides vital and needed support to our most vulnerable community members,” said Carol Tegas, Executive Director of FLPPS.

“So many people in our community are affected by mental health and substance use disorders and a variety of domestic issues,” Dr. Lyman-Torres, Commissioner of the City’s Department of Recreation and Human Services said. “Seeking help while navigating through a crisis can be challenging. Through the implementation of people with shared experiences I am confident that we will be able to reinforce our efforts to better serve citizens in a manner that will get them the appropriate care they need in the safest, most effective way possible.”

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News Media: For more information, contact City Communications Director Justin Roj at Justin.Roj@cityofrochester.gov or David Mancuso at (585) 698-8177 or David_Mancuso@flpps.org.

FLPPS works to improve the design and delivery of healthcare with its collaborative network of healthcare and community-based partners in the 13-county Finger Lakes region. FLPPS focuses on integrated healthcare delivery system optimization, care management, network and program management, population health and data analytics, and learning and development. FLPPS also operates the **Greater Rochester Health Home Network (GRHHN)** which serves eligible high-risk Medicaid members with care management. FLPPS is located at 2100 Brighton Henrietta Town Line Rd., Unit #200, Rochester, NY 14623, www.flpps.org, 585.239.9300.