

# MIAMI CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY

## AN INNOVATION PROJECT TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**T**he Miami Center for Mental Health and Recovery will create a comprehensive and coordinated system of care for individuals with serious mental illnesses who are frequent and costly recidivists to the criminal justice system, acute care medical and mental health treatment systems, and chronic homelessness.



MIAMI CENTER FOR  
**MENTAL HEALTH  
& RECOVERY**

### FACTS

- The Miami-Dade County jail is the largest psychiatric institution in the State of Florida.
- 11,000 people with mental illnesses are booked into the county jail annually, mostly for low-level non-violent offenses.
- 57% of the jail population is classified as having mental illnesses.
- \$636,000/day (\$232 million/year) in taxpayer revenue to jail people with mental illnesses.
- Over a 5-year period, just 97 individuals accounted for:
  - × 2,200 arrests
  - × 27,000 days in jail
  - × 13,000 in crisis units
  - × \$14 million in taxpayer costs

**TREATMENT WORKS: It's time to start treating mental illnesses as illnesses and not crimes.**

### Contact:

Paul Steven Singerman, Esq.  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Miami Foundation for Mental Health, Inc.

(305) 714-4343

[singerman@bergersingerman.com](mailto:singerman@bergersingerman.com)

### Problem

Access to effective, community-based mental health and substance abuse treatment is extremely limited for many Florida residents. The state ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> nationally in access to mental health care, has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate of adults with mental illnesses who are uninsured, and at \$39.55 per capita, ranks 49<sup>th</sup> among all states and the District of Columbia in spending for community-based treatment.

As a result, police and jails are increasingly the first and only responders to people in crisis due to untreated mental illnesses. In fact, the Miami-Dade County Jail now serves as the largest psychiatric institution in Florida, containing as many beds for people with mental illnesses as all state civil and forensic mental health treatment facilities combined.

The county spends \$636,000 per day – or \$232 million per year – to house an average daily population of 2,400 individuals with mental illnesses. By contrast, the state spends just \$47.3 million annually to provide community-based mental health services to about 34,000 people in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, while another 70,000 people in need receive no treatment at all.

**Put another way, \$100,000 annually in taxpayer dollars are spent for each person with a mental illness in jail, but only \$1,400 for each person who manages to access care in the community. Two-thirds of those in need receive no treatment at all.**

This problem is caused because there is no capacity anywhere in the United States to adequately serve individuals who experience the most severe and persistent forms of mental illnesses. In addition, there remains significant fragmentation and lack of communication across the healthcare system, as well as poor integration of behavioral health and primary care services.



## ABOUT

- *One-stop-shop* to address high cost/high need individuals
- 181,000 square feet, encompassing 7 floors and 208 beds.
- Comprehensive array of services to include:
  - ✓ Intake and assessment
  - ✓ Crisis stabilization
  - ✓ Residential treatment
  - ✓ Outpatient treatment
  - ✓ Primary care, dentistry, and optometry
  - ✓ Transitional housing and housing placement
  - ✓ Day activity program
  - ✓ Respite care and housing
  - ✓ Job skill training
  - ✓ Classrooms
  - ✓ Legal and social services
  - ✓ Courtroom
- *State-of-the-art* programs of research and education leading to innovations in clinical care and workforce development.
- Performance measures to monitor outcomes, ensure accountability, and maximize return on investment.

## MIAMI CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY

- Improving public health and safety
- Saving critical tax dollars
- Returning hope, dignity, and opportunity to people with mental illnesses



## Solution

Miami-Dade County has been working with the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project and stakeholders from across the community to plan and develop a *first-of-its-kind* mental health diversion and treatment facility for individuals with serious mental illnesses involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

The *Miami Center for Mental Health and Recovery* will operate from a fully renovated facility designed to house services that are difficult to access or unavailable elsewhere in the community. The building will include a central receiving center, an integrated crisis stabilization unit and addiction receiving facility, various levels of residential treatment, day treatment and day activity programs, outpatient behavioral health and primary care, dental and optometry services, vocational rehabilitation and employment services, classrooms and educational spaces, transitional housing and housing assistance, a courtroom, and space for legal and social service agencies.

By housing a comprehensive array of services and supports in one location, and providing re-entry assistance upon discharge, many of the barriers to navigating community mental health and social services will be eliminated. The services planned for the facility will address critical treatment needs that have gone unmet in the past and reduce the likelihood of recidivism to the justice system, crisis settings, and homelessness in the future.

