



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

ROBERT GORDON
DIRECTOR

September 29, 2020

Dear behavioral health stakeholders:

We are writing with an update on the behavioral health system transformation efforts and the plan announced earlier this year to establish Specialty Integrated Plans starting in fall 2022. Given the unprecedented challenges around COVID-19 and the economy, we have to pause on comprehensive system change right now. We appreciate the enormous efforts all of you have made over the last several years to help us envision and design the future of behavioral health in Michigan. That time was not wasted. When the current situation has stabilized and we are all able to again devote our attention and resources to system transformation, we are excited to resume work on this effort. In addition, we see many current opportunities to advance and continue working on aspects of system improvement that were identified during our last few years of conversations and planning.

Under Al Jansen's leadership, the Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration is developing a robust agenda that balances crisis response with ongoing improvement. In the coming months, our department will remain focused on addressing immediate challenges: making sure people have the mental health and SUD resources they need in the COVID crisis; continuing to support the outstanding network of behavioral health providers that Michigan has built over decades; investing in prevention, early intervention, and integrated physical and behavioral health care; and increasing accountability and oversight across the system. We will also be ramping up our proactive efforts to improve the system. Even with the pandemic, we are moving forward with creating MiCAL – a centralized crisis and access system that will make it easier for families in crisis to locate the resources they need. We have set up new service delivery structures, like text-based counselling and a crisis warmline. We are developing a comprehensive set of initiatives to better coordinate and deliver mental health services for children.

We are committed to continue strengthening Michigan's behavioral health system, and we look forward to working together with people served, providers, advocates, CMHs and PIHPs, and other stakeholders to achieve our shared goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah Esty", written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Sarah Esty, Senior Deputy Director
Policy and Planning Administration