



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

## \$1.5 Million in New State Funding Will Enhance Mental Health Services in Dutchess County

STEPHEN M. SALAND January 17, 2012

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*Senator Saland credited with facilitating the new funding from Albany*

Poughkeepsie...Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro has announced the Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene will work with the New York State Office of Mental Health and various community partners to improve and expand mental health services in Dutchess County, utilizing an additional \$1.5 million in continuous funding from New York State secured through the advocacy of New York State Senator Steve Saland.

In a letter sent earlier this week, County Executive Molinaro notified the New York State Office of Mental Health (NYS OMH) Dutchess County Government would accept the new annual funds to support programs focused on decreasing and diverting inpatient admissions, facilitating discharges and strengthening the continuum of services for people impacted by the closure of Hudson River Psychiatric Center (HRPC).

“These services will have far reaching impacts across multiple health, human services and public safety systems in our County to help improve the quality of life for our residents and reduce the future fiscal burden on Dutchess County taxpayers,” wrote County Executive Molinaro.

New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner Michael Hogan said, "I appreciate County Executive Molinaro's proactive leadership to utilize resources to develop a well crafted plan to improve mental health programs in Dutchess County." In a response to the County Executive's letter, Commissioner Hogan confirmed the state's commitment to provide the financial resources on an ongoing basis.

The \$1.5 million state funding will be used as part of an integrated plan of services that will be developed to divert people from in-patient hospitalization and prevent other forms of institutionalization. The cornerstone of the diversion plan will be the development of a Mobile Crisis Intervention Team that will interface with Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene programs, other county departments and local community service providers to aid adults, families and children in crisis and help prevent the need for costly and disruptive institution placements.

Commissioner of Mental Hygiene Dr. Kenneth Glatt is developing the County's diversion plan, in collaboration with various community service providers, that addresses current community mental health needs and reduces the need for institutionalization in the future. "I am very pleased County Executive Molinaro acted on this funding opportunity to increase access to mental health treatment. It is clear the County Executive recognizes the need for these services in our county and is responding to that need at a time when the demand for mental health services has never been greater."

New York State Senator Steve Saland was instrumental in securing the funding for Dutchess County. "These dollars ensure quality services will continue to be available to the residents of the Hudson River Psychiatric Center's catchment area, with a strategic coordination of services offered by not-for-profit providers and Dutchess County Government," said Senator Saland.

County Executive Molinaro will forward a resolution authorizing acceptance of the NYS OMH diversion funding for consideration and approval by the Dutchess County Legislature at the February Board Meeting.

Chairman of the Dutchess County Legislature Robert Rolison said, "I appreciate County Executive Molinaro's leadership on this issue and we are grateful to Senator Saland for his continued advocacy and support. These funding dollars will help us address critical mental health issues in our community without adding more burden on our county property taxpayers."

"Our community is feeling the impact of the recent cuts and changes in the delivery of mental health services including the pending closure of Hudson River Psych Center," said Dutchess County Legislator Michael Kelsey, who represents District 25 - Amenia, Stanford, Washington, Pleasant Valley. "I welcome the infusion of new ways and ideas to improve the quality of life of our county residents affected by mental illness or emotional distress. I am hopeful and encouraged by the diversionary approach that is both person-centered and recovery-focused."

Dutchess County Legislator Michael Kelsey, who represents District 25 - Amenia/Stanford/Washington/Pleasant Valley said, "The need for enhanced and expanded services in mental health is great. I am hopeful this new state funding will be able to assist the mental health community deal with the stressful impacts of the closure of HRPC."

Dutchess County Legislator and Assistant Minority Leader Alison MacAvery, who represents District 16-Fishkill/East Fishkill/Beacon, said, "The mental health and well-being of our community is a critical priority. I am pleased County Executive Molinaro has seized this opportunity for new funding to help improve mental health services for those who need them."

County Executive Molinaro concluded, "We are grateful to Governor Cuomo and specifically State Senator Steve Saland for his advocacy and support in securing this funding for Dutchess County. We have a unique opportunity to use this funding to bring together new ideas and perspectives from both within and outside of county government to enhance services for our residents and develop a continuum of mental health care that could serve as a model throughout the State."