

**TOMPKINS COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD (CSB)**

Subcommittees: Developmental Disabilities | Mental Health | Substance Use

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## Local Services Plan 2024-2028

**Introduction:** The Tompkins Mental Hygiene Local Services Plan for 2024-2028 was developed by a workgroup composed of the Chair of the Community Services Board, Chair and Co-Chairs of the Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittees and the Director of Community Services. The workgroup solicited feedback from community members, local provider agencies, and Community Service Board and subcommittee members through a Local Services Plan Priority Needs Survey conducted in May and June 2023. A total of 106 service providers, 163 community members and 10 board and subcommittee members participated in the survey. Survey data related to mental hygiene services identified in the Community Survey completed by Public Health Services of Whole Health in July 2022 was also reviewed by the workgroup. There were 1,569 community members who participated in this survey. Additional resources used by the committee include the 2023 Tompkins County Local Services Plan and the following New York State guidance documents. A summary of the guidance documents listed below has been included with this plan. Links are provided for documents that are available online.

- 2023 Local Services Planning Results – Themes Across LGUs in NY State
- 2024 State Agency Planning Priority Guidelines – OASAS
- 2024 State Agency Planning Priority Guidelines – OMH
- 2023-2027 Strategic Plan OPWDD [opwdd.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/11/opwdd-2023-2027-strategic-plan-final-with-links.pdf](http://opwdd.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/11/opwdd-2023-2027-strategic-plan-final-with-links.pdf)
- OMH Strategic Framework
- [omh.ny.gov/omhweb/planning/strategic-framework/index.html](http://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/planning/strategic-framework/index.html).
- June 14, 2023, Community Engagement Feedback Review Western New York – OMH
- June 2023, Youth Mental Health Listening Tour – OMH and OCFS
- [omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf](http://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf)

A total of seven goal areas were identified based on community need. A description of the current need, objectives to address the need, due dates to complete objectives and the responsible group to complete each objective is provided under each goal area.

Goal Areas:

1. Workforce
2. Housing
3. Crisis Services
4. Cross System Services

5. Non-Clinical Supports
6. Adverse Childhood Experiences
7. Transition Age Services

**Goal # 1: Workforce** - Support the implementation of recruitment/retention strategies by mental hygiene providers in Tompkins County as measured by a reduction in staff vacancies.

**Priority Area for OASAS, OMH and OPWDD**

**Description of Need:** Workforce recruitment was the second most cited need by LGUs in Local Services Plans submitted in 2023 across New York State. The workforce shortage has been identified as a planning priority in 2023 by OASAS and included in the OPWDD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan as an area of need. The OMH Strategic Framework has set a goal to, “develop the public mental health and healthcare workforce (because) approximately 3.1 million New Yorkers live in federal and/or state designated mental health shortage areas.” Tompkins County continues to experience workforce shortages across the mental hygiene system that have resulted in reduced access to needed services. In a survey of 162 providers working in agencies offering mental hygiene services, 62% identified the workforce shortage as a priority need, with those working in OPWDD programs the most likely to identify workforce as a priority area.

Improving workforce diversity also continues to be a priority in Tompkins County, beginning with a better understanding of the demographic makeup of the current workforce.

#### **Objective #1: Highlight Severity of the Workforce Crisis in Advocacy Efforts**

Due Date: December 31, 2025

Description: Participate in ongoing advocacy efforts to highlight the severity of the workforce crisis at the local and state level.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

#### **Objective #2: Understand the Scope of the Workforce Shortage**

Due Date: December 31, 2024

Description: Solicit staff vacancy information from provider agencies to better understand the scope of the workforce shortage, requiring LGU contract agencies to provide data annually.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

#### **Objective #3: Quantify the Impact of the Workforce Shortage on Service Delivery**

Due Date: December 31, 2024

Description: Solicit data (program closures, wait lists) on the reduction in services related to the workforce shortage from provider agencies, requiring LGU contract agencies to provide the data annually.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittees, Director of Community Services.

#### **Objective #4: Support Workforce Diversity**

Due Date: December 31, 2025

Objective Description: Gather Point in Time data on staff in local mental hygiene system annually, analyze trends, explore strategies to improve staff diversity with providers.

Responsible Group: Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee and Director of Community Services

**Goal #2 Housing** - Promote a housing first approach that increases the availability of affordable, emergency, and supportive housing that best meets the needs of individuals who require intensive, specialized community based interventions for stabilization and recovery across the mental hygiene system.

**Priority Area for OASAS, OMH and OPWDD**

**Description of Need:** The need for housing was identified as a priority by 56 LGUs with 49 LGUs identifying this as a need across mental hygiene services. Both OMH and OASAS identified housing as a state agency planning priority for 2024 and listening sessions conducted by OPWDD in the development of their 2023-2027 Strategic Plan identified improved housing services as a priority. Concerns about current housing available in the Southern Tier were identified in the 2023 Community Engagement Sessions held from February to April 2023. Community members talked about how hotels known for violence were being used for unhoused individuals with addiction disorders and described the need for additional community based residential programs for those individuals needing more support. In the Local Services Plan Priority Needs Survey, 95% of community members, 89% of agency providers and 100% of board members out of the 279 respondents identified housing as a top priority need.

The housing crisis does not just impact adults. The Ithaca/Tompkins Coordinated Community Plan developed with the Ithaca Youth Action Board in 2022 states that, "Based on 2020 statistics, Tompkins County has an overall poverty rate of 16.9% with a much higher prevalence in the City of Ithaca (39.2%) where most homeless youth are found. Along with this poverty rate, is one of the highest rental rates in Upstate New York, which is a major factor in homelessness in general and particularly in youth homelessness." See *The Ithaca/Tompkins Coordinated Community Plan 2022* at [hsctc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/The-Ithaca-Tompkins-CCP-2022.pdf](https://hsctc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/The-Ithaca-Tompkins-CCP-2022.pdf) for more information).

#### **Objective #1: Better Understand the Interaction Between Homelessness and Disability**

Due Date: 12/31/2024

Description: work with the HSC/Continuum of Care to disaggregate disability related item(s) from homeless data collection efforts in the county, to better understand the interaction between homelessness and disability.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

### **Objective #2: Gather Information about Housing Solutions**

Due Date: 12/31/2026

Learn about current, new, and proposed housing solutions including community based residential programming, their challenges, and successes that will better address need.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

### **Objective #3: Gather Information about Housing Reductions**

Due Date 12/31/2024

Description: Prioritize information gathering to learn more about reductions in residential beds due to COVID, the workplace shortage, and other factors.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

### **Objective #4 Advocacy for Housing Solutions**

Due Date 12/31/25

Description: Advocate for additional emergency and supportive housing solutions across the mental hygiene system for adults and children.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

**Goal #3: Crisis Services** - Support the development of comprehensive crisis services that address the mental hygiene needs of Tompkins County residents.

**Priority Area for OASAS, OMH and OPWDD**

**Description of Need:** The need for a comprehensive crisis response for individuals with mental hygiene service needs was the third most common priority area identified in Local Services Plans by LGUs in 2023. There have been improvements in crisis services this past year. The national 988 number for mental health crisis calls was successfully launched and new Crisis Services for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (CSIDD) was made available in our region for the first time. Continued public awareness of these new service offerings is still needed to ensure broad access to the support they provide. More work is also needed to ensure all crisis services have the capacity to address the needs of OPWDD clients. The Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors has initiated a pilot project between OPWDD and OMH licensed Mobile Crisis Teams to identify best practices in this area that will inform future crisis response in our community. Additionally, the 2023-27 OPWDD Strategic Plan highlights the need for crisis services as an area for continued work as needs outstrip current resources available.

OASAS also partnered with OMH to develop dually licensed intensive and supportive crisis stabilization centers. Both models offer behavioral health stabilization and referral services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Funding for capital and operational costs was made available in each region through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Cayuga Health Partners applied but was not selected. Ongoing efforts are being made to identify a way to meet this need in Tompkins County.

Locally, Family and Children's Service of Ithaca received onetime OMH funding to expand the Outreach Worker Program from the City of Ithaca to the rest of the county last year. Additional funding is now being sought to ensure this highly beneficial program is maintained in the year ahead. Tompkins County also funded a newly created co-response model initiated between the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office and Mental Health Services through the Department of Whole Health to respond quickly to mental health emergencies. The program is expected to be operational in 2023 during weekday business hours.

#### **Objective #1: Identify Best Practice Crisis Response Across Mental Hygiene System**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Share findings from CLMHD piloted OMH/OPWDD Mobile Crisis Units and other novel approaches to align local practices across substance use, mental health, and developmental disabilities. Identify lessons learned, implementation, and outcomes.

Responsible Group: Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittees, Director of Community Services

#### **Objective # 2: Expand Access to Crisis Supports**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Explore solutions to expand access to crisis supports across the mental hygiene system including improved community awareness of service offerings.

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee, Director of Community Services.

#### **Objective #3: Improve Communication between Law Enforcement and Crisis Mental Health Recipients**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Implement at least two activities designed to improve relationships between law enforcement departments and mental health recipients.

Responsible Group: Mental Health Subcommittee

#### **Objective #4: Support efforts to establish Crisis Stabilization Center or similar program.**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Continue to explore potential funding and collaborations to implement a crisis stabilization unit or similar program.

Responsible Group: Director of Community Services

### Objective # 5: Support Suicide Prevention Efforts

Due Date 12/31/28

Support Suicide Prevention Coalition efforts including the implementation of Zero Suicide across healthcare settings to prevent suicide.

Responsible Group: Director of Community Services

**Goal #4 Cross System Services** - Improve access to care across the mental hygiene system.  
**Priority Area for OMH, OASAS, OPWDD**

**Description of Need:** This was a new category established in 2023 reflecting the growing importance of integrated and coordinated work across the mental hygiene system. 33 LGUs identified Cross System Services as a priority need in their 2023 Local Services Plan. Almost 82% of agencies that participated in the Local Services Plan Priority Needs Survey identified cross systems improvement as a priority need. It is imperative that we understand how to leverage the resources available in each of the three mental hygiene systems to meet the complex needs of individuals who require support across systems and continue to advocate for improved integration of services in the future. Areas of Focus in 2024 are described below.

- The 2024 OASAS Planning Priority Guidelines outline several financial awards, initiatives and piloted projects focused on improving cross system service delivery including Mobile Medication Units (MMUs) designed to help people who may face barriers to accessing traditional treatment such as geographic proximity to an Opioid Treatment Facility or lack of reliable transportation. Cayuga Addiction Recovery Services (CARS) received funding to offer this service in our region.
- Loss of OMH services when becoming OPWDD eligible remains a concern. Ongoing advocacy for greater waiver flexibility in OPWDD programs to ensure clients have access to all the support they need continues to be a priority.
- There are several piloted projects in NY State between mental hygiene agencies that we can learn from for potential local implementation such as the Mobile Crisis Team Pilot Project being conducted between OMH and OPWDD to ensure all people receive quality crisis intervention and ongoing efforts to improve integration between substance use and mental health treatment needs.

### Objective # 1: Improve Public Awareness of Available Services Across Systems

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittees

Ensure that families, recipients, and service providers have information about what services are available to individuals with cross systems' needs by collaborating with 211 to ensure mental hygiene programs/ services information is updated, accurate and offers linkages across mental hygiene services to improve access to care.

**Objective # 2: Remove Barriers to Access Services Across Systems**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee

Advocate for removal of eligibility barriers to better serve people who have needs across systems and continue to educate Care Managers in the DD system about options in Tompkins County.

**Objective #3: Improve Coordination of Services Across Mental Hygiene System**

Due Date: 12.31.25

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees and Director of Community Services

Support strategies that improve coordination of services and treatment integration across mental hygiene system with other community supports.

**Objective #4: Use opioid overdose data to guide interventions across the mental hygiene system.**

Due Date 12.31.25

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Subcommittees and Director of Community Services

Improve data integrity/collection related to opioid overdose to guide prevention efforts across the mental hygiene system.

**Goal #5 Non-Clinical Supports** - Recognize the importance of addressing social determinants of health to promote wellness and recovery and improved health equity.

**Priority Area for OMH, OASAS, OPWDD**

**Description of Need:** Treatment alone is not sufficient for change. Social determinants of health like access to housing, employment and educational opportunities, medical, dental, and optical care, and a sense of connection and belonging to community are integral to wellness and recovery. According to the CDC, "...a growing body of research shows that centuries of racism ...has had a profound and negative impact on communities of color... (and) social determinants of health are key drivers of health inequities in communities of color" (See *Putting Youth Mental Health First: June 2023 Youth Mental Health Listening Tour Report* at [omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf](https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf) for more information).

According to the 2023 Local Services Plan Priority Needs Survey, Community members identified housing (62%), Employment (60%) and Criminal Justice (58%) as areas of most concern related to racial equity issues impacting adults. One survey respondent said, " There should be more help for people of color to attain home ownership (as a way to better address disparities). Community members identified Schools (62%), Access to Mental Hygiene Services (60%) and Access to Healthcare (53%) as the areas of most concern impacting youth. Agency providers identified housing and access to mental hygiene services as areas of concern related to racial equity for both adults and children.

Most agencies surveyed (70%) are in the process of identifying strategies to better address racial equity. 23% of agencies have already implemented practices to improve health equity and 7% have not started yet. 57%

of providers said training and tool kits along with improved local data collection would be most beneficial to supporting their efforts in addressing health equity issues.

### **Objective # 1: Identify Healthcare Access Barriers for Medicaid Recipients Receiving Mental Hygiene Services**

Due Date: 12/31/26

Responsible Group: Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittees

Become familiar with the barriers to healthcare access including dental and optical care for Medicaid recipients.

### **Objective 2: Improve access to quality mental hygiene services for minoritized populations.**

Due Date: 12/31/24

Responsible Group: Community Services Board and Director of Community Services

Collect benchmark data from contract agencies on health equity to improve access to quality mental hygiene services for minoritized communities. Work collaboratively with the County DEI lead on data collection and analysis.

### **Objective #3: Improve Health Equity in the Mental Hygiene System**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Mental Health Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

Identify strategies to improve health equity across Tompkins County Mental Hygiene Service Providers.

### **Objective # 4: Support greater awareness and utilization of peer support services.**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Community Services Board, Mental Health Subcommittees, and Director of Community Services

Support greater awareness and utilization of peer support services in the community to strengthen engagement and recovery services across the mental hygiene system.

**Goal # 6 Adverse Childhood Experiences** – Build resilience in youth and adults impacted by childhood trauma.

**Description of Need:** Adverse Childhood Experiences are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years). Examples include experiencing violence, abuse or neglect, witnessing violence in the home, or having a family member attempt or die by suicide. Experiences may also include "... aspects of the child's environment that can undermine their sense of safety, stability and bonding such as growing up in a



household with substance use problems, mental health problems, or instability due to parental separation or household members being in jail or prison.” Adverse Childhood Experiences are common and related to numerous health conditions in adulthood like heart disease and are linked to greater risk of mental health and substance use disorders (See *Fast Facts: Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences* at [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html) for more information).

Over 80% of agency providers and almost 79% of community members who completed the 2023 Local Services Plan Priority Needs Survey identified ACES as a priority need for both children and adults.

**Objective #1: Promote Greater Awareness of the Impact of ACES in the lives of adults and children.**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Mental Health Subcommittee, Director of Community Services

Promote greater understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), the importance of early intervention strategies and encourage evidence-based trauma informed services and support across the lifespan.

**Goal # 7 Transition Age Youth Services** – Ensuring adequate supports are available for youth especially as they transition to adulthood across the mental hygiene system.

**Description of Need:** According to the CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, in the last decade from 2011 to 2021, the rates of youth who persistently felt sad or hopeless increased from 21% to 29% for teen boys, and from 36% to 57% for teen girls. Those that reported that they seriously considered attempting suicide increased from 16% to 22% over the same period (See *Putting Youth Mental Health First: June 2023 Youth Mental Health Listening Tour Report* at [omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf](http://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf) for more information).

The National Center for Health Statistics recently released data indicating that, “Kids and young adults were nearly as likely to die by suicide as they were from homicide in 2020 and 2021, according to the CDC.” Homicide rates that fell for 10 - 24 year olds from 2006-2014 increased 60% through 2021. The largest annual increase in homicides in the 20-year period happened between 2019 and 2020 with a 37% jump. Homicide rates nearly doubled for 15-19 year olds from 2014-2021 and surpassed suicide rates in 2020. General factors identified for the increased homicide and suicide rates among adolescents and young adults include limited access to mental health services and increased access to firearms. (See *Suicides and Homicides Among Youth Reach a 20 Year High* at [www.axios.com/2023/06/15/suicides-homicides-among-youths-high](http://www.axios.com/2023/06/15/suicides-homicides-among-youths-high) for more information).

Locally, unhoused youth in a recent survey conducted by the Ithaca Youth Action Board and Coordinated Entry identified the need for “... no or low cost mental health care that is confidential, respectful, and culturally competent including increased diversity in mental health providers”. These findings are consistent with the need for more mental health services for youth and young adults identified nationally. See *The Ithaca/Tompkins Coordinated Community Plan 2022* at [hsctc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/The-Ithaca-Tompkins-CCP-2022.pdf](http://hsctc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/The-Ithaca-Tompkins-CCP-2022.pdf) for more information).

In June 2023, OMH in partnership with the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) held listening tours of youth across New York State in response to concerns about youth mental health. OMH and OASAS focused on the increased risk of suicide, the negative impact of social media on youth mental health and the crisis of

racism that has a “profound and negative impact on communities of color.” A total of 196 youth participated in the listening tours held in Rochester, Binghamton, Long Island, White Plains, and Plattsburgh. Youth provided recommendations including the importance of involving youth voice in decision making, investing in community based resources for recreation and mental wellness promotion, recognizing the critical role schools play in mental health promotion, prevention, and intervention, increasing access to low and no cost mental health services, and supporting students with information about resources available for evaluating a learning disability and other challenges as well as 504 and IEP plans. (See *Putting Youth Mental Health First: June 2023 Youth Mental Health Listening Tour Report* at [omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf](https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/youth-mh-listening-tour-report.pdf) for more information).

**Developmental Disabilities:** The Tompkins County Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee has been working both on improving access to recreational opportunities for youth receiving OPWDD services and strengthening communication between caregivers and schools about the steps needed to ensure transitional supports are in place for youth at the time of high school completion.

**Mental Health:** The Collaborative Solutions Network, Tompkins County’s System of Care for children, youth, and their families, implemented an action plan based on identified gaps in the local service delivery system with the support of OMH that includes the need for 1) improved communication for caregivers to know what services are available, 2) additional prevention and early intervention services, and 3) the creation of intensive in home services to support high needs youth. The Children’s Home of Wyoming Conference located in Binghamton, New York, was recently awarded Children’s Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) for Tompkins and Tioga Counties. This new service will better support the intensive treatment needs of families in our community.

**Substance Use:** In 2023, at least one in eight teenagers abused illicit substances. The rate of drug use has increased 61% nationally for 8<sup>th</sup> graders between 2016 and 2020, and 62% of teenagers have abused alcohol with half of teenagers misusing a drug at least once. Young adults ages 18-25 in New York State are almost nine percent more likely to use drugs than the average American their age, and the rate of overdose deaths due to opioids has increased 500% among 15-24 year olds since 1999 in the United States. (See *Drug Use Among Youth: Facts and Statistics* at [drugabusestatistics.org/teen-drug-use/](https://drugabusestatistics.org/teen-drug-use/) for more information).

Increased substance use by middle school students across the United States and the higher than average substance use by young adults in New York State require continued focus on substance use prevention and early intervention to better support youth and young adults including college students who live in Tompkins County. In the Local Community Services Priority Needs Survey, almost 57% of community members identified substance use prevention services as a priority need.

### **Objective #1: Provide Seamless Transition to Adult Services for Youth Receiving OPWDD Services**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee, Director of Community Services

Identify ways to reduce potential barriers to post-secondary transition support services for transition age youth.

### **Objective # 2 Improve Access to Mental Health Services for Youth Including Transition Age Youth**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Mental Health Subcommittee, Director of Community Services

Support implementation efforts of the Action Plan approved by the Collaborative Solutions Network, the System of Care (SOC) for children's services in Tompkins County, to improve access to care through program expansion and improved communication/coordination of service offerings.

**Objective # 3: Ensure Availability of Effective Substance Use Prevention Services for Youth and Young Adults**

Due Date: 12/31/25

Responsible Group: Substance Use Subcommittee, Director of Community Services

Support prevention efforts to ensure the availability of effective substance use prevention services programming in schools, colleges and universities, and the community.