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Horizon Behavioral Health Launches Summer Community Health Outreach Initiative to Provide Information and Resources to Underserved Communities in Central Virginia

Lynchburg, VA – Mental health and substance use rose significantly during the pandemic. According to the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#), the increase was particularly difficult for children, young adults, families experiencing job loss, communities of color, and essential workers.

In response, Horizon has developed a four to six week summer outreach initiative with Community Health Workers that will go door to door to check on its neighbors and provide home wellness checks and resources. The Community Health Workers are trained to identify those who might be struggling with mental health or substance use conditions and will provide care packages at no cost, such as medication lock boxes, medications disposal bags, and trigger locks to help prevent potential crisis. The Community Health Workers will also provide information, if needed, on how to access food, housing, employment, financial assistance, legal and medical services.

“We felt that an effective public health response to the pandemic should be to increase community-level prevention efforts, including health communication strategies that prioritize children, young adults, and racial/ethnic minorities in an effort to address associated mental health and substance use conditions. We are so grateful for the assistance of community partners, such as local school divisions, law enforcement, and departments of social services to ensure we are reaching those in need,” says Damien Cabezas, CEO of Horizon Behavioral Health.

This initiative will start on the week of July 26, 2021 until September 2021 with the goal of reaching approximately 1,000 households.

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Horizon Behavioral Health has been the primary public behavioral healthcare provider in the Region 2000 area for more than 50 years. In the last year, Horizon provided services to approximately 16,000 adults and children, addressing problems with mental health, substance use and intellectual disabilities. Horizon is accredited by CARF International. This represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to a behavioral health organization.