

## COVID-19 UPDATES

### SAMHSA COVID-19 EMERGENCY AWARD UPDATE

Having received an additional \$2.8M in January from the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA) to further develop and sustain COVID-19 emergency grant programming, CBC & IPA partner [Coordinated Behavioral Health Services](#) (CBHS) have an opportunity to both empower participating providers to continue to deliver important services to individuals impacted by COVID-19 and enhance the program's targeted reach and array of service offerings. Accordingly, CBC is identifying additional hot-spot neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens and corresponding local network provider agencies to integrate into the effort, thereby expanding the scope and reach of the program's impact on hard-hit communities and populations.

The program has served nearly 1,700 underinsured individuals since launch, reaching 93% of its original target for total service recipients. Each unique individual served averages 4.2 encounters with associated behavioral health agency staff.

In addition to funding treatment services, the SAMHSA grant required the development and implementation of a COVID-19 Self-Care Training Series by and for behavioral health staff across NYS. See the "[Training Institute](#)" section of this

CBC Bulletin for more information on the corresponding training series.

### COVID-19 VACCINATION

The NYS COVID-19 Vaccination Program has continued to expand eligibility to allow more New Yorkers to schedule and receive a vaccine against the novel coronavirus. Information on this expanded field and other publicly available resources from various City and State offices have been aggregated on the "[COVID-19 Updates](#)" page of CBC website. These resources range from landing pages through which visitors can schedule a vaccination to various remote learning opportunities specific to these vaccines, to deliverables that can be shared with behavioral health staff and services recipients. Please continue to use this website as a value-add to your agency's efforts to secure vaccinations.

Meanwhile, the CBC network has continued to hold weekly calls to review current guidance with—and pose questions to—[NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene](#) (DOHMH) and [NYS Office of Mental Health](#) (OMH). These calls have been a vital resource cutting through the vast amount of information sources regarding the science of the vaccine and the logistics of securing one for colleagues, clients and ourselves. The group will meet again at 10:30am on Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> and on an intermittent basis henceforth. If you have not been receiving these calendar invites and associated informational emails and wish to, please

contact CBC Project Manager [Alex Wolff](#) to be added to the relevant distribution list.

### FAMILY RESILIENCE FUND

[Montefiore's Family Resilience Fund](#) is offering emergency cash assistance to bereaved families in financial distress due to COVID-19. If you or your colleagues have lost a loved one over this past year, they may be eligible for this program. Eligibility criteria include:

- Death from COVID-19 of a household breadwinner/caretaker.
- At least one child/youth/young adult (age 26 or younger) resides in and is financially dependent on the household.
- Family is experiencing financial distress (e.g. difficulty paying for housing, food, utilities, health copays, significant financial debt).
- Family must reside in the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Manhattan, or Lower Hudson Valley.

Their flyer (with corresponding links to the relevant referral form) is available [here](#).

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## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### SAMHSA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA) has announced several new grant opportunities with application dates due in the next month.

## Medication Assisted Treatment – Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction

The purpose of this program is to expand/enhance access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services for persons with an opioid use disorder (OUD) seeking or receiving MAT. The desired outcomes for this program are:

1. an increase in the number of individuals with OUD receiving MAT; and
2. a decrease in illicit opioid drug use and prescription opioid misuse at six-month follow-up.

SAMHSA plans to issue approximately 100 awards of up to \$1M per year (for states) or \$525K per year (for other domestic public/non-profit entities) for up to five years. Applications are due on April 27<sup>th</sup>. Learn more about this opportunity [here](#).

## Screening, Brief Intervention & Referral for Treatment (SBIRT)

The purpose of this program is to implement screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment services for children, adolescents and/or adults in primary care and community health settings with a focus on screening for underage drinking, opioid use and other substance use. For the purposes of this FOA, pediatric health care providers are a provider of primary health care to individuals under the age of 21 years. This program is designed to expand/enhance the continuum of care for substance use disorder (SUD) services and reduce alcohol and other drug (AOD) consumption and

its negative health impact, increase abstinence, reduce costly health care utilization and promote sustainability and the integration of behavioral health and primary care services through policy changes that increase treatment access in generalist and specialist practice. These grants support clinically appropriate services for persons at risk (asymptomatic) for SUD, as well as those diagnosed with SUD.

SAMHSA plans to issue approximately 10 awards of up to \$995K per year for up to five years. Applications are due on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Learn more about this opportunity [here](#).

## Provider's Clinical Support System (University)

The purpose of this program is to expand/enhance access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services for persons with opioid use disorder (OUD) seeking or receiving MAT through ensuring the education and training of students in the medical, physician assistant and nurse practitioner fields. This program's focus is to ensure students fulfill the training requirements needed to obtain a DATA waiver to prescribe MAT in office-based settings.

The desired outcomes include:

1. an increase in the number of individuals completing the training requirements for the DATA waiver;
2. an increase in the number of individuals with a DATA waiver; and

3. an ultimate increase in those prescribing.

SAMHSA plans to issue approximately 36 awards of up to \$150,000 per year for up to 3 years. Applications are due on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Learn more about this opportunity [here](#).

## AHRQ GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#) (AHRQ) has released a funding opportunity for the development of research projects that test promising digital health care interventions aimed at improving quality of care and health care service delivery at the point of care (e.g., in a clinic setting, at the bedside, in the home, or in ambulances). Not-for-profit organizations, institutions of higher education or governments may apply (possibly alongside for-profit corporations in a consortium). Total funding of up to \$1,025,000 is available per project.

The funding opportunity focuses on three specific research areas of interest:

1. Advanced Analytics
2. Patient-Centered Digital Health Care Technologies
3. Augmenting Clinical Decision-Making Support

Applications are due June 16<sup>th</sup>. The full funding opportunity is available [here](#).

## IN THE NEWS...

### NYS EXTENDS TELEHEALTH PROVISIONS

Last month, NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo announced sweeping measures to enhance telemental health access across the state that are closely aligned with CBC's recommendations as laid out in the Telemental Health Position Paper [The Future of Telemental Health Is Now](#). While that legislation is still pending enactment, the Governor has extended existing flexibilities in the interim.

[Executive Order 202.96](#) extends telehealth regulatory flexibility for OMH-licensed, funded and designated programs, as detailed in [Executive Order 202.1](#) and modifications to the background check process for OMH authorized programs, as detailed in [Executive Order 202.13](#) until March 28, 2021.

For more information regarding OMH telehealth guidance during the COVID-19 emergency period, click [here](#).

### HEALTH POWER 100 & NON-PROFIT POWER 100

In a year in which healthcare provider systems and non-profit organizations were tasked with serving their communities in unprecedented ways, the CBC IPA network providers are remarkably well-represented in [City & State NY's](#) annual [Health Power 100](#) and [Non-Profit Power 100](#) for 2021. This year's list includes:

#### Health Power 100

- Marki Flannery & Dan Savitt (Visiting Nurse Service of New York)
- Matt Kudish (National Alliance of Mental Illness—NYC)
- Donna Colonna (Services for the UnderServed)
- Kimberly Williams (Vibrant Emotional Health)
- Brian McIndoe (Ryan Health)

#### Non-Profit Power 100

- JoAnne Page (The Fortune Society)
- Jess Dannhauser & Kym Hardy Watson (Graham-Windham)
- Alan Van Capelle (Educational Alliance)
- Mitchell Netburn (Samaritan Daytop Village)
- Ronald Richter (JCCA)
- Donna Colonna (Services for the UnderServed)
- Katy Gaul-Stigge (Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey)
- Elizabeth Gaynes (Osborne Association)
- Cal Hedigan (Community Access)
- Melissa Aase (University Settlement)
- John Kastan (The Jewish Board)
- David Garza (Henry Street Settlement)
- Ashwin Vasan (Fountain House)

Congratulations to these champions of behavioral health who have been steadfast stewards for the sector and the communities it serves during this most trying year.

### NYS OMH TO RESTORE WITHHOLD DOLLARS

[NYS OMH](#) has received approval from the Division of the Budget to process payments and reimburse providers for the withholds for the current year 2020-21.

OMH will be reissuing State Aid Letters and processing these payments as quickly as possible. The payments on the withholds will include the 5% residential withholds for July 2020 and the 20% non-residential withholds for the last three quarters beginning in July 2020, October 2020 and January 2021.

The proposed 2021-22 Executive Budget for OMH still has a proposed 5% reduction for non-residential state and local aid funded programs effective April 1<sup>st</sup>. [NY Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services](#) (NYAPRS) held a spirited virtual legislative day and believes it is possible that, due to federal and state action, this cut can be prevented from going forward. Stay tuned!

### NYS SUBMITS MRT WAIVER EXTENSION REQUEST TO CMS

[NYS DOH](#) submitted a Section 1115 Demonstration Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) Waiver extension request to [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#) (CMS) for approval. The request is for a three-year extension (from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024) of all current programs and authorities under the State's current MRT Waiver Demonstration, and the following two programmatic amendments

developed by the Medicaid Redesign Team II (“MRT II”):

- Transition (carve-out) of the non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) benefit from managed long-term care (MLTC) to fee-for-service (FFS); and
- Transition (carve-out) of pharmacy benefits from Medicaid managed care (MMC) to FFS.

The extension proposal, including the two proposed amendments, contains no changes to member eligibility, scope of benefits, or cost-sharing requirements. Once the extension proposal is approved by CMS, the State intends to submit a new demonstration proposal and concept paper to CMS that will address health disparities and systemic health care delivery issues that have been highlighted and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The final extension proposal follows a public comment period during which the State received 762 verbal and written comments. The final request does not contain any significant content changes in response to public comments but does outline public comment “themes” and the associated state response. The State also developed an [FAQ document](#) that summarizes and addresses public comments on the general waiver extension, the MLTC transportation carve-out and the pharmacy transition to FFS.

The final extension request is available [here](#).

## GOODWILL NYNJ & GODDARD-RIVERSIDE CONNECT FOR DONATION

Last month, CBC network provider agency [Goodwill NYNJ](#) approached CBC to communicate to its network a matter that would surely be of interest to other provider agencies—Goodwill was moving headquarters and had valuable medical equipment to donate. CBC alerted the network and within hours the equipment had found a home at [Goddard-Riverside's](#) Baxter Safe Haven—a new shelter serving chronically homeless men and women out of Elmhurst, Queens.

Stories like this showcase a clear and specific value to CBC’s efforts to establish an integrated network of providers as part of the CBC IPA. Accordingly, CBC has researched and developed a communications tool for intra-network matters. Our partners at [Triad](#) provide a platform that can serve as a useful hub for sharing information and opportunities (such as this one!) with fellow providers in real-time. More information regarding rollout of the Triad solution soon.

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## CARE COORDINATION SERVICES

### HH+: SPECIALTY MH CMAs

Starting in March, all individuals referred to a Health Home who meet HH+ serious mental illness (SMI) eligibility criteria must be assigned to and served by a designated

Specialty Mental Health (MH) Care Management Agency (CMA) that is either fully or provisionally designated.

Within CBC’s Health Home, there are five fully designated CMAs, 14 provisionally designated CMAs and four CMAs pending a Specialty MH CMA designation. All five of CBC’s fully designated Specialty MH CMAs have submitted relevant attestations, which were due to [NYS OMH](#), Local Government Unit (LGU) and CBC by March 8<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile, provisionally designated Specialty MH CMAs have begun to submit Action Plans, due to OMH, LGU and CBC by March 15<sup>th</sup>. Please contact CBC’s HH+ Program Manager [Teresa Hill](#) with any questions.

### HHSC HCBS AUDIT

[NYS DOH](#) will implement its Health Home Serving Children (HHSC) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Audit with CBC for Waiver Year 1. This is a yearly case review and program audit to be reported to CMS to assess implementation and delivery of HCBS according to the Children’s Waiver requirements and performance measures. NYS DOH representatives will be granted access to CBC’s HIT platform, [Foothold Care Management](#) and review a total sample of 38 cases for CBC (34 HCBS-eligible and four HCBS-ineligible cases). The review period will cover the first year of waiver implementation (April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019-March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020). Any questions relating to the audit can be directed to CBC HH Director [Melissa Martinez](#).

## BOX

In July 2020, CBC HH began using [Box](#) to share confidential information with CMAs, including CMA Documentation Reports, HH and HHSC Incident Reports, CBC HH and HHSC Policy and Procedures Manual, recent training PowerPoints, NYS DOH guidance, forms, resources regarding special populations and CBC CMA Performance Report. Box is also used by other CBC Innovative Programs, facilitating greater ease for providers that are subcontracted to various CBC programs. If you have any questions regarding Box or would like to add or remove users, please contact CBC HH IT Manager [Christopher Small](#).

## HH RECONSIDERED & APPEALED CLAIMS

CBC's Finance Department has been working with associated managed care organizations to collect on denied claims for FY18-19 and FY19-20 (July 2018 to June 2020) and has been successful ensuring the reconsideration of 2,453 claims—collecting \$793,037 towards claims denied in error and/or due to timely filing.

To date, CBC has received favorable outcomes on appeals involving Empire HP, Healthfirst, MetroPlus and Fidelis. Payment recovery efforts continue with payers Affinity, Emblem Health and United Healthcare.

Year	Claims Count	Collected Amount
2018	415	\$133,547
2019	1866	\$598,924
2020	172	\$ 60,566
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,453</b>	<b>\$793,037</b>

For questions regarding the appeals/reconsiderations, please email [finance@cbc.org](mailto:finance@cbc.org) or CBC Revenue Cycle Management Director [Suzie Jean-Baptiste](#).

## RELEVANT

As [recently announced](#), the Health Home HIT platform Relevant Health Homes has been acquired by [Foothold Technology](#). Foothold was founded in 2000 and provides software to agencies across the spectrum of social services, the majority of which are in New York State. The product will not change but the name of the platform is transitioning to Foothold Care Management.

## NYS DOH TRAINING RESOURCES

NYS DOH presented a series of webinars for the Children's Waiver population in February. These webinars addressed eligibility, conflict-free care management and member's rights. For more information on these Children's Waiver trainings, click [here](#). Questions can be emailed to [BH.Transition@health.ny.gov](mailto:BH.Transition@health.ny.gov).

## QUALITY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (QPM)

### CONSUMER ADVISORY BOARD

CBC completed a full review of the Relevant HHS Comprehensive Assessment during recent Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) meetings. Participant feedback has been essential, and the CAB will continue to provide updates on next steps for the distribution of the committee's recommendations. Future meetings will include new discussion topics and Peer Specialists are invited to provide suggestions.

The CAB meets the second Tuesday of each month, from 10-11:30am and is hoping to broaden its reach by offering each consumer/peer specialist in attendance a \$25 gift card. Feel free to spread the word within your programs and forward interested parties' contact information to CBC's [Ally Oswald](#) and/or [Bob Potter](#).

### IPA QO/CIC MEETING

In February, the CBC IPA Quality Oversight/Clinical Integration Committee (QO/CIC) met and discussed the most recent updates to the DABI (Data Analytics Business Intelligence) platform. DABI went live in December with two connections: individual agency 837i claims data files and *HealthConnections* ADT files. 16 CBC agencies have contributed their 837i data—if your agency has not done so and would like to, please reach out to

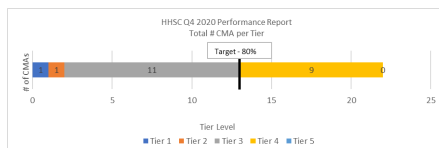
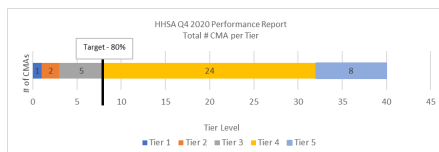
[Innovative Management Solutions NY](#) (IMSNY) Director of Data Solutions [Khushi Shah](#). The committee also provided feedback on back-end developments implementing a categorization schema for data related to the procedure and diagnoses codes received from your agency.

In collaboration with IMSNY, CBC is in the process of developing individual quarterly network provider performance reports that leverage data collected from DABI, PSYCKES and CBC's HIT platforms to highlight key performance outcomes across the network and participating CBC programs, such as Pathway Home and Health Homes. A draft of this report will be showcased at the next QO/CIC, scheduled for Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-11am, for committee review and feedback.

## HH PERFORMANCE REPORT

The QPM department sent out the Q4 2020 HH CMA Performance Reports to all CMAs in mid-February. This quarter, the individual CMA reports were reformatted to provide a streamlined comparison of each CMA's performance to the overall CBC network average.

The graphs below reflect the performance tiers that CMAs reached last quarter. CMAs can locate their Performance Reports in Box and should reach out to the QPM department ([CBCQPM@cbc.org](mailto:CBCQPM@cbc.org)) with any questions.



## NYS DOH UPDATE: BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS FOR HH CASE MANAGERS

In February, [NYS DOH](#) announced an [update](#) to its Background Check Requirements for Health Homes and Care Managers Policy (HH0010). The revised policy establishes procedures for conducting required background checks for Health Home Care Managers and CMA staff working with members under 21 years of age. Please note, Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2018 includes new statutory requirements related to Criminal History Record Checks (CHRC), Mandated Reporter requirements and Statewide Central Register (SCR) database checks. Each of the three clearances is detailed thoroughly in the policy. Health Homes are responsible for ensuring that CMAs with whom they subcontract have complied with all necessary background check requirements for prospective employees.

## TRAINING INSTITUTE



## SAMHSA COVID-19 EMERGENCY GRANT SELF-CARE TRAINING SERIES

The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) COVID-19 Emergency grant provided CBC/CBHS with funding to help address the immense unmet mental health needs in NYS (see the "[COVID-19 Updates](#)" section of this CBC Bulletin for more information on corresponding programming). SAMHSA recognized that frontline staff—especially behavioral healthcare service providers—need support to address their personal and professional experiences with COVID-19.

This training series has found an engaged and expansive audience, having provided twelve supportive workshops and town halls since launch that have reached more than 500 frontline behavioral health staff spanning over 150 behavioral health agencies across New York State in the past month alone. These SAMHSA-sponsored trainings have averaged over 80 attendees per session thus far. February highlights included the launch of the wildly popular RISE program via [The Kripalu Center](#). The six-week series teaches attendees to use

mindfulness and meditation practices to promote their own self-care. This offering reached its 100-person capacity within hours of its announcement, and CBC and CBHS have planned to offer it again in May to would-be registrants that missed out this time around.

Meanwhile, [CBC Training Institute](#) hosted a [second COVID-19 Town Hall](#) with Dr. Kavita Trivedi, in which participants ask pressing questions about COVID-19 to a nationally renowned epidemiologist. A corresponding “COVID-19 Knowledge, Attitudes & Perceptions” survey was distributed to attendees, the results of which are guiding future Town Halls and training opportunities via CBC’s Training Institute. Accordingly, the three remaining COVID-19 Town Halls will focus on children/returning to school, travel/gatherings/dating and COVID-19 myths, respectively. These trainings are recorded and subsequently uploaded to [CBC’s YouTube channel](#) for on-demand viewing.

## FEBRUARY TRAININGS RECAP

In addition to these SAMSHA-funded trainings, CBC’s Training Institute held two further February trainings for its network—an interview with [NYS OMH](#)’s Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Amanda Saake, who discussed her own recovery and “Helping Your Participants Go After Their Dreams,” courtesy of CBC Training Institute Director, Emily Grossman.

Meanwhile, Pathway Home™ teams assembled for their monthly Members at

Risk Committee meeting—conducted via a Project ECHO format—and the Training Institute held its monthly call in its ongoing Project ECHO series for OUD treatment providers. This latter training drew 22 participants from ten agencies, who were treated to a didactic on syringe exchange programs courtesy of [St. Ann’s Corner of Harm Reduction](#) (SACHR), following a complex clinical case presentation and discussion led by attendees.



## MARCH TRAINING INSTITUTE CALENDAR

[This month’s Training Calendar](#) offers further valuable training opportunities to support the CBC network’s workforce. For questions about training content, please contact CBC’s Training Institute Director, [Emily Grossman](#).

## INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

### PATHWAY HOME™ & WELLTH PARTNERSHIP RECOGNIZED IN PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL

For the past few years, Pathway Home™ has partnered with [Wellth](#) to offer their app to a segment of the PH member population. In January, Pathway Home & Wellth reported that those members using

the app maintained an 85% daily medication adherence rate and 100% of attended a follow-up outpatient behavioral health appointment in their “[Better results for better health: A partnership with Coordinated Behavioral Care](#)” case study.

More recently, the remarkable outcomes of Pathway Home’s partnership with Wellth have merited recognition and publication in a peer-reviewed journal. *Health & Technology* has published a piece of collaborative research by CBC & Wellth staff. “[Feasibility of implementing a behavioral economics mobile health platform for individuals with behavioral health conditions](#)” tracks the Wellth app’s impact on a cohort of Pathway Home members taking medication(s), and makes the case for wider adoption of similar behavioral economics tools and technologies in pursuit of better health habits.

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## TECHNOLOGY & DATA ANALYTICS



**IMSNY**

INNOVATIVE  
MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS  
NEW YORK

### IMSNY SOLUTIONS FOR AGENCIES

[Innovative Management Solutions New York](#) (IMSNY) offers high quality solutions to the CBC network at discounted prices. Current opportunities include:

- A discounted [Zoom](#) license program—currently employed by nearly 600 users across sixteen provider agencies for annual network savings of over \$30,000. Agencies already using Zoom can seamlessly switch to take advantage of this discount.
- A Learning Management System (LMS) via [Relias](#) that includes a robust learning library and extensive management and reporting features, built to meet the needs of behavioral health networks. CBC agencies who sign up receive a 15% discount. Schedule a demonstration [here](#).
- **EHR Learning Collaboratives** IMSNY brings together agencies using a common EHR to openly communicate and share experiences and best practices regarding the EHR processes and setup. For information on attending the monthly Foothold Awards or Netsmart MyEvolv learning collaborative, contact [Lucia O'Quinn](#).
- [Triad](#) provides education, community and career resources to behavioral health professionals, employers and organizations as a sector leader in exam prep and continuing education, with over one million behavioral and mental professionals served. Staff members from CBC agencies receive a 15% discount.
- [Ride Health](#) partners with healthcare organizations and transportation providers to manage transportation benefits, strengthen agency transportation programs and drive intelligent transitions of care. CBC agencies receive volume discounts.

## IMSNY ANNUAL REPORT

This past year has been foundational for IMSNY. To learn more about what has been achieved and will be realized, review IMSNY's [annual report](#). We look forward to connecting further on activities and projects that add value to CBC's IPA.

## DABI CONNECTION UPDATE

IMSNY is adding a new live data connection in addition to the current RHIO ADT Alert Feed and 837 Claims Files data connections. The [Foothold Care Management](#) (formerly known as Relevant/RMA) data connection will integrate participating IPA agencies' Health Home data into the DABI platform.

## 837 BILLING FILE REPORTS UPDATE

IMSNY has continued to incorporate agency feedback into the format of the 837 custom data portals that will allow agencies temporary access to their analyzed 837 data while rollout of agency Arcadia logins remain pending the resolution of HIPAA accessibility matters. As a reminder, only the 16 CBC agencies that have consistently contributed 837 data to IMSNY will get custom 837 data portals. If your agency wants to be included, contact [support@IMSNYHealth.com](mailto:support@IMSNYHealth.com) to begin the process of contributing 837 data for the project.

## AGENCY SPOTLIGHT: COMMUNITY ACCESS'S CHANGING MINDS YOUNG FILMMAKER FESTIVAL



[Community Access](#) will present its second **Changing Minds Young Filmmaker Festival** virtually on Friday, April 9 from 6-8 pm. Changing Minds celebrates the work of teen and young adult filmmakers who, through their short films about mental health, challenge the stigma that too often surrounds mental health concerns. Reserve tickets [here](#).

The Festival, which aims to facilitate dialogue and center the lived experiences of young people, will be presented this year at a time of enhanced need. [Teens](#) and [young adults](#) are reporting increased mental health concerns amidst the social isolation of COVID lockdowns, a loss of independence, missed time in school, and an uncertain job market.

The eight films to be showcased were selected from more than 700 submissions and represent a variety of genres from spoken word poetry to stop motion animation. A Q&A with the filmmakers moderated by Shadille Estepan of Lady Gaga's [Born this Way Foundation](#) follows the screenings.