



[A Message from the
Acting Commissioner
June 28, 2017](#)

Dear DBHIDS Team,

On Thursday, June 15, Mayor James Kenney, City of Philadelphia officials, and DBHIDS participated in a press conference at City Hall to announce that, after many months of negotiations, Conrail and the city had reached an agreement to clean up, secure and provide necessary safety net services for those who frequent the area along the Gurney street railroad tracks. DBHIDS has deployed assertive outreach teams and peer supports to engage the Kensington/Fairhill area, offering various levels of drug treatment services. In collaboration with the Office of Homeless Services, DBHIDS' Homeless Outreach teams are working in the community to offer shelter placements and other supportive housing resources. We are an active member of the Gurney Street Work Group coordinated by the Managing Director's Office (MDO) which meets every other week. Cleanup efforts are projected to begin July 10, and will continue throughout the summer. The agreement between Conrail and the city is one among many steps taken to improve the Kensington/Fairhill neighborhood,



and assist a community invested in utilizing resources to improve their neighborhood.

Over the past few months, I have provided updates on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) repeal and replace legislation. Senate Republicans are aggressively continuing efforts to force through this disastrous health care repeal bill that would make deep cuts to Medicaid, eliminating life-saving healthcare services for millions of low-income Americans and more than 200,000 Philadelphians who have gained access to vital behavioral health and intellectual disability services. Amidst many other cuts, the repeal bill would severely weaken national and local initiatives addressing substance use disorder. During a public health crisis, such as the current surge in drug overdose deaths, states would be forced to turn people away or make deep cuts to the services covered. The repeal bill would also remove essential health benefits such as maternity care, emergency room access in addition to mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The consequences will have a negative impact for generations to come. According to organizations watching this legislation closely, the U.S. Senate could take up their version of ACA repeal (The American Health Care Act) for a vote soon after the July 4th congressional recess. Now, should you feel compelled, this is an opportunity to contact your senators to express your thoughts and feelings.

On Thursday, June 29, Matthew Wintersteen, Ph.D. will present a special session for the DBHIDS community, "Working with Suicidal Youth: What We Know and What We Can Do." The goals of the session are to discuss suicide and current trends in Philadelphia and in popular culture, explore myths and facts around suicide prevention, and learn how to talk with friends and families about what they hear at school or on the news. Due to high demand, there is a webinar viewing option for this session. If you are interested in

participating you can [register](#) today. Over the last two weeks of May 2017, approximately four youth completed suicide in Philadelphia. DBHIDS has worked closely with the School District of Philadelphia and communities impacted by these unfortunate tragedies, of which as Philadelphians and employees of DBHIDS, we are deeply impacted. We hope to provide you with tools and resources designed to enable you to support your communities, families and most importantly yourselves. During difficult times, practicing self-care is critical. Please do not hesitate to contact your respective human resource departments should you feel the need to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and other supportive services. The benefit is confidential and available to employees and their families. As you work tirelessly to improve the quality of life for Philadelphians, remember that your health and wellness are also a priority. Be well, DBHIDS family.

David T. Jones, Acting Commissioner
Department of Behavioral Health
and Intellectual disAbility Services



Need help planning and promoting an event/awareness day? [Start Here](#).

Take a behavioral health screening, register for Mental Health First Aid

training or invite DBHIDS to a community event at HealthyMindsPhilly.org
For DBHIDS resources visit bit.ly/DBHIDSResources

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