

Murphy Administration Announces First-in-the-Nation Partnership to Bolster Mental Health Support for College Students throughout New Jersey

Partnership to Provide Free Access to Tele-Mental Health Platform 24/7/365 and Diverse Team of Providers for Students at 44 Institutions of Higher Education

TRENTON, NJ – MAY 23, 2023 – As part of the Murphy Administration’s ongoing efforts to address the growing youth mental health crisis, Governor Phil Murphy and Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Brian Bridges today announced a partnership with Uwill – a mental health and wellness platform that will support students at 44 institutions of higher education throughout New Jersey. Beginning this month, this first-in-the-nation partnership will provide 24/7 access to free mental health support throughout the entire year for students enrolled in one of the eligible institutions that have opted into this program.

While most institutions of higher education previously offered some level of mental health support to students, a rapidly growing need for these services has strained the capacity of many campuses to continue providing care to every student in need of mental health support in recent years. By partnering directly with Uwill, New Jersey is the first state in the nation to offer comprehensive mental health and wellness support to college students through a statewide approach that spans both public and private institutions of higher education.

“With the challenges these past few years have presented, young people around New Jersey and the nation are facing a mental health crisis like never before. It is incumbent upon us to do everything in our power to provide young people with access to the support they need, which is something my Administration will continue to prioritize,” said Governor Murphy. “Making teletherapy services available to countless college students on campuses throughout our state is a key component of our ongoing efforts to address the mental health needs of our young people and promote safe and inclusive learning environments in New Jersey.”

A core focus of the partnership with Uwill is to provide students with access to a diverse network of licensed and qualified mental health providers to ensure the needs of underrepresented students will be met. Mental health and wellness support will be available from Uwill’s team of providers all hours of the day, 365 days a year, at no cost to students or the institution of higher education itself.

“Our higher education institutions have been doing their very best to assess, prioritize, and expand the services necessary to address the mental health and wellness needs of their diverse student populations following the pandemic, but the reality of this mental health crisis leaves current initiatives and on-site services stretched beyond their capacities,” said Secretary Bridges. “This partnership will provide highly accessible, free, and equitable support to all students, regardless of their circumstances, where they need it most. We appreciate the Governor’s fervent efforts on behalf of young people across New Jersey.”

In a Fall 2021 questionnaire conducted by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE), over 70 percent of New Jersey students rated their stress and anxiety levels as higher or much higher than the previous year, with 40 percent of students indicating they were concerned about their mental health in light of the pandemic.



These numbers reflect a national trend of rising mental health challenges among young people that were only exacerbated by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why Governor Murphy has made youth mental health the focus of his Chair's Initiative as head of the National Governors Association and has instructed his Administration to work to address the mental health needs of New Jersey residents.

"Our mission is to expand mental health care so that every student has access to quality mental health support. We're committed to removing obstacles to therapy while also complementing existing campus offerings so every student has the resources and support they need to thrive," said Michael London, Uwill Founder and CEO. "I commend Governor Murphy and Secretary Bridges for making such a commitment to the mental health of New Jersey college students."

The services offered through this partnership are made possible by \$10 million in American Rescue Plan funds that were allocated to OSHE in the State's Fiscal Year 2023 budget for tele-mental health support. The funding complements the State's \$16 million investment for institutions of higher education to develop community provider partnerships and build multicultural competency among faculty and staff through professional development opportunities.

All public and independent institutions with a public mission that receive State operating aid are eligible. Of these, 96 percent have chosen to participate in the partnership, including: Atlantic Cape Community College, Bergen County Community College, Bloomfield College, Brookdale Community College, Caldwell University, Camden County College, Centenary University, County College of Morris, Drew University, Essex County College, Farleigh Dickinson University, Felician University, Georgian Court University, Hudson County Community College, Kean University, Mercer County Community College, Middlesex College, Monmouth University, Montclair State University, New Jersey City University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Ocean County College, Passaic County Community College, Princeton University, Ramapo College, Raritan Valley Community College, Rider University, Rowan College at Burlington County, Rowan College of South Jersey, Rowan University, Rutgers University (Camden, Newark, New Brunswick), Saint Elizabeth University, Saint Peter's University, Salem County Community College, Seton Hall University, Stevens Institute of Technology, Stockton University, Sussex County Community College, The College of New Jersey, Union College of Union County, New Jersey, Warren County Community College, and William Paterson University of New Jersey.

About Uwill

Uwill has become the leading mental health and wellness solution for colleges and students. The most cost-effective way to complement a college's mental health offering, Uwill partners with more than 150 institutions including Babson College, University of Michigan, Dartmouth College, and Columbus State Community College. Uwill is also the teletherapy education partner for NASPA. For more information, visit uwill.com