



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

NJ HUMAN SERVICES | September 2022

NJ Human Services Announces Pilot Program to Provide Mental Health Screening & Support to Individuals on Pretrial Release



In an effort to ensure better outcomes for defendants with serious mental health needs who are on pretrial monitoring, Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced a new pilot program in Camden, Essex and Middlesex counties to identify and connect these individuals to mental health treatment and other vital social services.

The mental health diversion program is voluntary, and will provide support and connect individuals on pretrial monitoring to critical mental health, and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder treatment, housing, medical and other essential social service supports.

“This will help identify individuals with mental health needs early in the pretrial release process so they can receive the support needed when they are released to the community,” Commissioner Adelman said. “This is a voluntary program, which means those who participate want the help, which is already a step in the right direction. Individuals who participate will be connected to community resources such as housing and employment, and to mental health and substance use assessments, evaluations and treatment to assist their reintegration.”

This program is part of a larger effort undertaken by the [Mental Health Advisory Committee](#) to address mental illness in the criminal justice system. The committee was founded by [Chief Justice Stuart Rabner](#) in 2019, and is co-chaired by Commissioner Adelman and Morris/Sussex Vicinage Judge Stuart Minkowitz. The pilot program in Camden, Essex and Middlesex counties is an extension of a similar pilot program successfully launched in Morris County back in January. The program in Morris County served 23 individuals on pretrial release, and was highlighted at this year’s Mental Health America’s national conference on criminal justice reform.

“When individuals with mental health issues are released from jail without receiving needed treatment, the reality is they will likely return to jail. By simultaneously focusing on both criminal justice and mental health issues, that cycle can be broken. Through this pilot program, the Department of Human Services is providing critical funding and resources to connect individuals to mental health services and treatment when they first interact with the court system. We applaud DHS for their collaboration on a new and sensible approach in response to a national problem,” Chief Justice Stuart Rabner said. “Working together, this effort can help lead to sustained recovery for individuals in a way that benefits them as well as the community.”

“This is a multidisciplinary, concerted effort to identify individuals with a mental illness quickly, share information efficiently, and coordinate efforts with the appropriate entities to provide these individuals with mental health treatment and valuable resources they can benefit from,” Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Lisa Asare said.

“Releasing individuals without addressing their mental health needs is counterproductive. We know that in these cases, time is of the essence. Identifying mental health needs as early as possible is crucial to intervening and effecting positive outcomes, which not only benefits the individual but the community they are returning to,” [Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#) Assistant Commissioner Valerie Mielke said.

[Read more](#)

Overdose Awareness Day 2022



Governor Murphy Declared August 31 as Overdose Awareness Day

Governor Murphy Announces Creation of Online Portal & Advisory Council to Receive Input from Members of Public, Stakeholders on Use of Opioid Settlement Funds



On Overdose Awareness Day, Governor Murphy announced the creation of a [new online portal](#) and an Advisory Council that will work to receive input from the public and stakeholders on the \$641 million the state is receiving from opioid manufacturer settlements.

New Jersey and various counties and municipalities throughout the state signed onto nationwide settlement agreements in 2021 with several opioid manufacturers and distributors for their involvement in the ongoing opioid epidemic. Settlement funds will be divided amongst the participating state and local governments in New Jersey over the next two decades.

“With the funds our state will receive through these settlement agreements, we have a meaningful opportunity to improve and save the lives of countless New Jerseyans,” Governor Murphy said. “As we determine the best use of these funds to help combat the opioid crisis here in New Jersey, my Administration wants to hear from members of the public. The input we receive from the Advisory Council and online portal will provide valuable insight into how our state can use these funds to further bolster and expand our ongoing support for the many families and communities impacted by this crisis.”

The Opioid Remediation Advisory Council will be chaired by Commissioner Adelman and comprises the attorney general and the commissioners of the departments of Health and Children and Families, along with stakeholders. It will make recommendations for the administration’s consideration regarding the prioritization and effective use of these funds. The council’s membership will reflect New Jersey’s diversity and include people who have lived experience with the opioid epidemic, including those who have experienced a substance use disorder and their families, as well as public health and policy experts.

Human Services is the lead agency for purposes of directing the use of funds received from national opioid litigation resolutions and performing the state’s reporting, public disclosure, and other compliance obligations under the settlements.

“Under the leadership of Governor Murphy, we have made significant progress expanding treatment for substance use, reducing barriers to access and advancing the use and availability of harm reduction interventions like naloxone,” Commissioner Adelman said. “These efforts will save lives and help us end the devastating scourge of overdose and the pain it leaves behind. There is more work to do, and the creation of the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Advisory Council and the Opioid Settlement Portal are critical next steps to inform how the state will use opioid settlement funds. We look forward to hearing this input, and working with our partners to help individuals and families impacted by addiction and overdose.”

The online portal will give any member of the public the opportunity to weigh in on how these funds should be used to help those most impacted by the opioid crisis. Identifying information, such as the person’s name and email address, are optional. Anyone who chooses to enter their email address will receive an automated confirmation email, but respondents will not receive a formal response to their proposals.

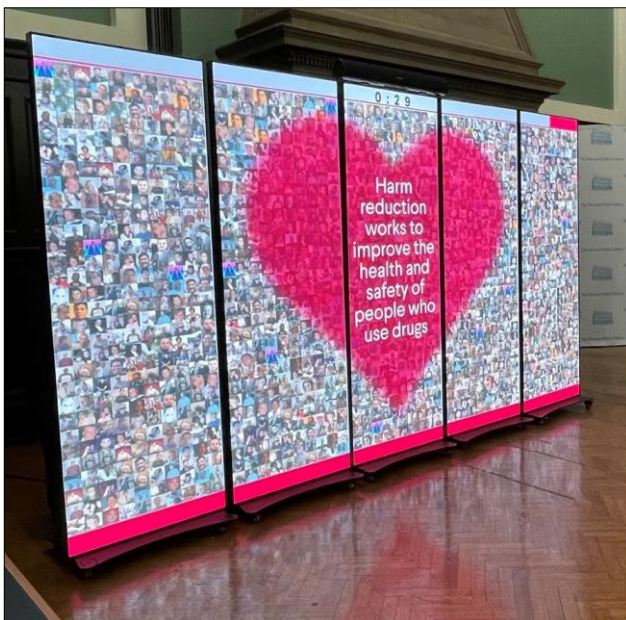
Alternatively, written proposals may be submitted for consideration by mail to:

Opioid Funds Proposal c/o
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

“We remain committed to doing the necessary work to expand access to treatment and life-saving medication, and are excited about these new tools, which will help ensure that opioid settlement funds will go towards programs and policies that save lives,” Assistant Commissioner Mielke said. “As always, we continue to urge residents struggling with substance use disorder needing addiction assistance to call the state’s addiction treatment helpline, 1-844-ReachNJ, a 24-hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week addictions help line where people facing addiction or their friends and family can get immediate assistance and support from live, New Jersey-based, trained addiction counselors, regardless of their insurance status.”

[Learn more](#)

Overdose Memorial Installation at Newark Public Library



On Overdose Awareness Day, Commissioner Adelman was joined by Assistant Commissioner Mielke, Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka. Vital Strategies, the Newark Community Street Team and the New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition at the Newark Public Library to unveil the first installation of a traveling national Overdose Memorial.

[The digital display](#) commemorates lives lost to overdose, and urges support for harm reduction services.

“We gathered to remember the lives of those lost to overdose and reaffirm our commitment to ending the devastating scourge of overdose and the pain it leaves behind,” Commissioner Adelman said. “I was honored to join Vital Strategies, the New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition, the Newark Community Street Team and Newark Public Library to mark the launch of this first memorial installation in honor of Overdose Awareness Day. Bringing attention to these stories helps inspire healing and hope, and raises awareness about the life-saving impact of harm reduction.”

[Read more](#)

Combating Fentanyl & Opioids



Commissioner Adelman spoke at the [New Jersey Reentry Corporation's](#) "Addiction and the Curse of Fentanyl: Strategies and Treatment" conference, highlighting Human Services' work to save lives together by combating the fentanyl and opioid epidemics. "Our goal is to meet people where they're at and offer a no-wrong-door approach to care," Commissioner Adelman said. Watch [here](#).

2022 Opioid Summit



*The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services hosted its annual opioid summit on Sept. 20. The summit, themed **The Evolving Opioid Crisis: A Collaborative Approach**, featured panel discussions on combatting the epidemic and a keynote from Dan Schneider of Netflix's "The Pharmacist." Commissioner Adelman gave opening remarks, while Chief of Staff Jonathan Chebra and Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare were among those discussing collaborations being used to combat the opioid epidemic.*

Human Services Recognizes Professionals Who Support Individuals with Developmental Disabilities



Governor Murphy Declared September 11-17th as Direct Support Professional Recognition Week

Commissioner Adelman marked Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week by amplifying how the recent state budget signed by Governor Murphy includes \$83.4 million for wage increases for those who work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to help them live successfully in communities across New Jersey. This increase goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2023.

This is the fifth consecutive year reimbursement rates to community providers of developmental disability services have been increased to raise wages for direct support professionals. The wage increases were included in the state budget signed by Governor Murphy and approved by the Legislature in June.

“Direct support professionals play a critical role in helping individuals with disabilities live successfully in communities across New Jersey,” Commissioner Adelman said. “Their commitment has improved the quality of life for so many New Jerseyans. Their dedication and resiliency is remarkable, and I thank them for all they do each and every day. Direct support professionals, quite simply, make a tremendous difference in the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

“Direct support professionals are a critical part of our state’s economy, and we are grateful for their dedication to others,” Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire said. “Direct support professionals have improved the quality of life of so many individuals. Their positive impact is immeasurable.”

“Direct support professionals provide a broad range of support, while developing strong, trusting relationships with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” said Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried, who directs the [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#). “They make a tremendous difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We thank them for their work.”

[Read more](#)

**NEW STATE BUDGET:
Critical Wage Enhancements**

 Direct Support Professionals	 Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Staff	 Personal Care Assistants
 Nursing Home Workers	 Child Care Workers	 Homeless Shelter Workers
 Private Duty Nursing	 JACC Home Health Aides	 Personal Assistance Service Program Workers





Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services McGuire and Assistant Commissioner Seifried marked Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week by visiting The Arc of Atlantic County and presenting them with a copy of Governor Murphy's proclamation.

Deaf Awareness Month Flag Raising Ceremony



[Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) Executive Director Elizabeth Hill [joined](#) Mayor Steve Fulop, other Jersey City officials and the Jersey City deaf community to mark September's Deaf Awareness Month with a flag raising at City Hall. Watch a [video](#) of the event:



Honoring Human Services Police



Clockwise from top, Commissioner Adelman speaks at the ceremony, Deputy Commissioner of Operations Andrea Katz speaks at the ceremony, Director Gallagher speaks at the ceremony, Lieutenant Kelli Baker with Police Officer Melissa Jurkiewicz stand next to an HSP vehicle, Commissioner Adelman swears-in officers and a group photo of those who were honored.

Human Services celebrated National Police Week by honoring its police officers for their efforts and service to protect some of New Jersey's most vulnerable residents. Police Week is celebrated annually in May to recognize police officers around the country who lost their lives in the line of duty and to recognize officer achievements, but the ceremony was held belatedly this year due to COVID-19.

As part of a recognition ceremony at the Department of Human Services, Commissioner Adelman highlighted the essential work of the Human Services Police and noted the unique skills required for this critical role.

"The brave men and women of the [Human Services Police](#) handle situations and duties that represent the true essence of community policing," Commissioner Adelman said. "They engage with individuals and families at times of great vulnerability and provide steady, empathetic and supportive leadership. Their unique work requires specialized skills and talents and training. I thank them and Director Tim Gallagher for their dedication and commitment."

[Read more including a list of the honorees](#)

2022 Suicide Prevention Week & Upcoming Suicide Prevention Conference



Governor Murphy Declared September 4-10th as Suicide Prevention Week



Governor Murphy declared September 4th through 10th as Suicide Prevention Week in New Jersey and encouraged residents to learn the warning signs and risk factors, and find help for yourself and loved ones if needed. He urged residents, "Join us in our shared vision and work, knowing that suicide is preventable through education and inclusive community efforts."

Meanwhile, be sure to save the date. Human Services' 7th annual suicide prevention conference is scheduled for October 12. This year's virtual event is themed: ["Connecting Communities to Save Lives."](#)



First Lady, Commissioner Adelman and Others Highlight Significant Investments in Maternal and Infant Health



Joined by Commissioner Adelman and Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare, First Lady Tammy Murphy highlighted budget investments in maternal and infant health at the Clinton Hill Early Head Start and Childcare Center at Newark Beth Israel.

[First Lady Tammy Murphy](#) hosted a roundtable discussion to highlight the investments made in maternal and infant health initiatives in the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY2023) budget. The First Lady's initiative, [Nurture NJ](#), aims to reduce New Jersey's maternal mortality by 50 percent over five years and eliminate racial disparities in birth outcomes. Since its inception in 2019, Nurture NJ has made significant strides in addressing maternal and infant health care in the state of New Jersey. The FY2023 budget includes over \$58 million to support Nurture NJ programs and policies.

"These necessary investments will continue to address and combat the shocking numbers our state holds in maternal and infant mortality rates and racial disparities in health care," Governor Murphy said. "The health of our mothers and babies is of the utmost importance to each of the First Lady and me, as well as this Administration as a whole. Strengthening our maternal and infant health care systems will help us continue to build a stronger, fairer, and more equitable New Jersey for all families who call our great state their home."

"I am so grateful for the funding allocated to Nurture NJ in this year's budget, which will allow us to continue our work transforming our state into the safest and most equitable in the nation to deliver and raise a baby," First Lady Murphy said. "Given New Jersey has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the nation exacerbated by unacceptable racial disparities for our mothers and our babies, we feel it is our moral imperative to continue this fight. I am thrilled to see Nurture NJ build upon the significant progress we have already made, better support mothers and babies during one of the most vulnerable times of their lives, and, through innovative policymaking, become the national gold standard for maternal and infant health."

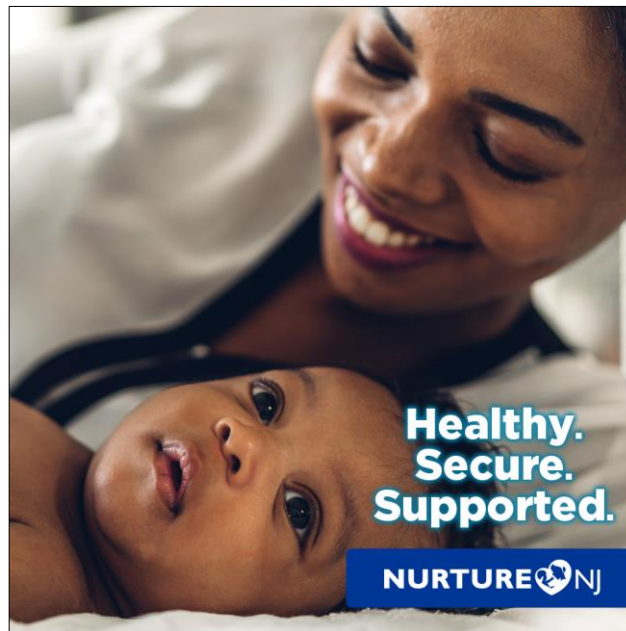
The significant investments in the FY2023 budget will go towards several of the initiative's focus areas. Those investments include:

- \$20 million to support the development of our Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center
- Over \$17 million to continue developing the universal newborn home visitation program
- \$15 million to raise Medicaid rates for maternity care providers
- \$1 million to provide facilities grants to increase opportunities for midwifery education and training
- Over \$2 million to increase case management capacity in our Connecting NJ hubs
- \$2 million for a Nurture NJ public awareness campaign

- \$600,000 to create a database of maternal feedback on quality of care
- \$500,000 to expand the reach of the Colette Lamothe-Galette Community Health Worker Institute
- \$100,000 to develop a stillbirth prevention public health campaign

“Under the First Lady’s leadership and in partnership across government, Human Services continues its commitment to make New Jersey the safest state in the nation to give birth,” Commissioner Adelman said. “We’ve taken steps to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage for a full year, end reimbursement for early elective caesarean-sections, increase reimbursement for midwives, begin covering doula services, and design a first of its kind episode of care model for maternity payments. The next step is to address overall reimbursement rates for maternity care. Under the new state budget, we are investing \$30 million in state and federal funds to raise fee for service Medicaid rates for maternity care providers for the first time in decades. These increases support prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum care, in turn increasing reimbursements for midwives and labor and delivery rates for doulas. This is another step forward in our shared goal - transformational change in a system that has failed too many mothers and babies, particularly those of color.”

[Read more](#) and [watch here](#)



Commissioner Adelman Highlights NurtureNJ Investments at National Health Policy Conference



Commissioner Adelman highlighted New Jersey's [efforts](#) to improve maternal and infant health during the [National Academy for State Health Policy's](#) 2022 "Forecast for State Health Policy" conference.

Breaking Down Barriers to Health Justice



Deputy Commissioner of Health Services Asare joined a panel discussed on 'Breaking Down Barriers to Health Justice' at New Jersey Policy Perspective's Fall Conference.

Newark Family Festival



Human Services was among those meeting with residents at the First Lady's Sept. 17 Family Festival in Newark. Top, left to right: John Cazar, First Lady Murphy, Djuna Coleman and Cheri May Whitney. Bottom: Jaclyn Pallies and the First Lady.

The Power of the Disability Vote



Division of Disability Services Executive Director Peri Nearon joined [REV UP NJ](#) and the [Alliance Center for Independence](#) at the State House Annex on September 19 to highlight the power of voting for individuals with disabilities. For voter registration information visit [here](#). And visit [here](#) for information on voter rights and accessibility.

Covid-19 Vaccination for Residents and Staff of Congregate Residential Settings

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities helps New Jersey adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities live more independently.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities continues its partnership with Walmart for COVID-19 Vaccination. This is open to eligible individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (and/or traumatic brain injury living in congregate residential settings, as well as their staff.

All approved COVID-19 vaccines are available.

Please note that eligible residents and staff are not limited to only using Walmart for vaccination.

Please see [COVID-19 Vaccination for Residents and Staff of Congregate Residential Settings](#) for more information.

Commissioner Adelman and Legislators Highlight Mental Health Care Investments



Commissioner Adelman joined Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, Senator Andrew Zwicker, Assembly members Roy Freiman and Sadaf Jaffer and leaders from Hackensack Meridian Health to highlight the \$5 million state budget investment to support the expansion of the [Carrier Clinic Child and Adolescent](#) inpatient program.

“Governor Murphy’s administration in partnership with Speaker Coughlin and the legislature has made historic investments in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget to support and expand mental health services, particularly for young people who are struggling,” Commissioner Adelman said. “These funds are building the pipeline of mental health professionals, creating more bed capacity, investing in innovation and increasing access to services for individuals across NJ’s communities. This expansion of services by the Carrier Clinic comes at a critically important time and these historic investments have helped make this possible.”

Watch [here](#).

Commissioner Adelman Honored



The New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, or NJAMHAA, honored Commissioner Adelman as the 2022 State Policymaker of the Year. The award was given during NJAMHAA's virtual fall conference on Sept. 21.

Commissioner Adelman & Acting Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin Praise Biden Administration 'Fair and Humane' Public Charge Rule Change



Commissioner Adelman and Acting Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin released the following statement on the recent final public charge rule from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security:

"The recent [announcement](#) from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security regarding the final public charge rule is welcome news for immigrant families here in New Jersey and throughout the country. The Biden administration has officially rolled back changes to this policy from the previous administration, that only succeeded in spreading fear among immigrant families and kept them from seeking important services.

"New Jersey led the states by challenging the Trump administration policy and called it out for what it was--inhumane--and stood up policies like the Immigrant Trust Directive, which was designed to strengthen trust between New Jersey's law enforcement officers and the state's diverse immigrant communities. Immigrant families in New Jersey in need of healthcare and food assistance should not fear applying for these important benefits for themselves and their families, nor should they fear reaching out to law enforcement if they are victims of crime.

"This decision reaffirms our values as a nation, and helps ensure that families most in need can rely on basic services essential to their health and wellbeing."

Hispanic Resource Fair



Joy Melendez and Nelson Troche represented Human Services at Governor Murphy's Hispanic Resource Fair in New Brunswick.

Monkeypox Update in American Sign Language



Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Executive Director Hill provided on update on the global [monkeypox](#) in American Sign Language. Watch [here](#).

Addiction Professionals Day



Governor Murphy Declared Sept. 20 as Addiction Professionals Day.

Human Services Announces State Health Insurance Assistance Program Coordinator for Burlington County



Questions about Medicare?

Get **FREE, UNBIASED HELP** today.
Click or call **1-800-792-8820**.

 **NJ**
Human Services

 **SHIP**
State Health Insurance Assistance Program
Navigating Medicare

 **ACL**
Administration for
Community Living

With the 2023 Medicare Open Enrollment Period set to start on October 15, Commissioner Adelman announced that [Senior Citizens United Community Services, Inc. \(SCUCS\)](#) will coordinate the [State Health Insurance Assistance Program \(SHIP\)](#) in Burlington County.

SHIP is a federally-funded, state-administered program that offers free, one-on-one education and assistance to current and eligible Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers regarding Medicare and other related health insurance programs, through SHIP counselors who are trained and certified by the Department's [Division of Aging Services](#).

With SCUCS serving in Burlington County, all 21 counties now have SHIP coordinators. For a list of local SHIP offices with contact information, click [here](#).

"The annual enrollment period for Medicare runs from October 15 through December 7," Commissioner Adelman said. "This is the time when people can sign up for a plan, switch to a new plan, or leave a plan. We encourage current or eligible Medicare beneficiaries in Burlington County and throughout New Jersey who have questions about their benefits or health coverage options to reach out to their local SHIP office and to take advantage of this free assistance."

"SHIP counselors are available five days a week to answer questions at no cost," Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services McGuire said. "They provide information and assistance so that individuals can make informed decisions about what works best for them. Anyone who needs help this coming Medicare enrollment period should call their local SHIP office."

"SHIP counselors can help older residents navigate the complexities of Medicare and educate them on federal and state programs that help with health and drug costs. We are glad Burlington County residents will now have a local office that they can call for help with their Medicare-related questions. If someone is offering to assist you for a charge, please know free assistance is available near you from an official SHIP counselor," Division of Aging Services Director Louise Rush said.

[Read more](#)

Falls Prevention Week 2022

FALLS ARE PREVENTABLE!

Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of falling:



EXERCISE

Engage in regular physical activity, especially balance and strength-building activities.



MEDICATION

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if medications you take, or alcohol consumption, increase your risk of falling.



HOME SAFETY

Most falls happen in the home! Identify and correct falling, slipping, or tripping hazards.



VISION/HEARING

Have regular vision and hearing checks.



Governor Murphy proclaimed September 18-24 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week in New Jersey. Stay safe. [Learn more](#) from the [Division of Aging Services](#).



Honoring Steve Shultz




The Volunteers of America of Delaware Valley named their Collingswood facility in memory of former Human Services Deputy Chief of Staff Steve Shultz. Commissioner Adelman spoke at the dedication ceremony and recalled how Steve's work at Human Services saved countless lives.

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

**MAKE THE CALL
TODAY**



CALL 844-REACHNJ



**SEE
STOP
PREVENT IT**

If someone you know is 18 years of age or older, living in the community and the subject of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, contact your county Adult Protective Services.




APS APS.NJ.GOV



NJ FAMILY CARE

COVERAGE FOR AUTISM
Coverage for screening and treating children with autism



NJ SNAP - [ENGLISH](#) / [SPANISH](#)

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