

(Washington, DC) – U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) today announced that Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton, is receiving \$496,862 to provide health care to people with serious mental illnesses. The funding comes from the Department of Health and Human Services Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service Grant Program. Catholic Charities expects to enroll approximately 1,000 Mercer residents with serious mental illnesses in treatment programs. Catholic Charities will work with the Henry J Austin Health Center, Greater Trenton Behavioral Healthcare AAMH - All Access Mental Health, and Family Guidance Corporation to provide care.

“Mental illness can intensify without treatment, yet according to Catholic Charities nearly three-quarters of individuals with serious mental illnesses do not regularly receive the care they need. This is unacceptable,” Holt said. “Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton does outstanding work in Mercer County, and I know they will use this funding to help our neighbors.”

According to Harry Postel, Director of Catholic Charities’ Behavioral Health Services: “This grant will allow the hiring of a full time advanced practice primary care nurse under Henry J Austin management to rotate among Catholic Charities and three other behavioral healthcare agencies each week to deliver primary healthcare services to their clients. These three agencies serve Mercer county residents with serious mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This service is expected to significantly improve access to primary care for these individuals. This will reduce their use of hospital emergency rooms and the frequency of need for hospitalization. The delivery of preventive primary healthcare is also expected to reduce the significant life expectancy gap for these participants. National studies show that individuals with serious mental illness have a life expectancy that is 25 years shorter than that for the general population.”

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton is a faith-inspired social services organization, founded in 1913 with a mission to alleviate human suffering. Annually, the staff provides more than 100,000 people in Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean counties with support related to housing, food, mental health, specialized children’s’ services, addiction treatment and domestic violence services. More information can be found at [www.catholiccharitiestrenton.org](http://www.catholiccharitiestrenton.org).

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