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We are in a mental health crisis in Steuben County. We have lost psychiatrists, cannot get patients into mental health without an intake and three sessions, and we are seeing a rampant rise in meth addiction. Please help us get psychiatrists and psychologists into Steuben County. We also need mobile outreach units to take care of homeless patients now sheltered in our hotels. Primary care providers are bearing the brunt of caring for patients with complex diagnoses including bipolar disorder, PTSD, schizoaffective disorders, and addiction.

I am a physician (Internal Medicine) practicing in Corning for 24 years. I have been treating drug addiction for the past several years (had the suboxone waiver) and have been dismayed at the lack of mental health services. We have nothing. I recently had a patient commit suicide after discharge from the BSU. On his discharge it said that his psychiatry appointment could not be made because he had to complete an intake and three sessions before he could be seen by the county. My addicts can't get help and often are better served by local faith based services such as the Salvation Army and Two Rivers Church. I gave a presentation recently to the Corning Rotary along with Sheriff Allard and Brandon Beuter (AIM outreach advocate). They saw mental health and addiction as an area that needs resources but there is no way even for Rotary to help.

We in primary care are bearing the responsibility of providing mental health care for the community. We are drowning. I am also on our local Fire Department. We had a recent presentation on mental health in the Fire Service. I went on the website for Share the Load and contacted the nearest professional listed on the site. They were in Binghamton and not taking new patients. We have lost Dr. Pavillard within the past few years. We are going to be losing Dr. Neeurokonda in the coming year. There are no psychiatrists.

I would like to be able to contribute my experience to the public hearing if possible.