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DEPUTY MAYOR RICHARD BUERY TO WORK WITH FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY ON MENTAL HEALTH OVERHAUL

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced that Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery will spearhead the implementation of the City’s work to create a more effective mental health system. First Lady Chirlane McCray will continue to lead the city’s efforts on mental health and the Deputy Mayor will work closely with her to finalize and oversee the implementation of the City’s upcoming Mental Health Roadmap and related programs, including the addition of mental health clinics in community schools and mental health professionals in family and runaway youth homeless shelters.

“The First Lady has done an extraordinary job laying down the vision and groundwork for a new approach to mental health. As we get closer to the implementation phase, I am very excited to announce her partnership with Rich Buery,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “From the expansion of free, high-quality pre-K and afterschool programming for middle school students to the creation of the NYC Children’s Cabinet and our *Talk to Your Baby* campaign, Rich has proven to be a fierce advocate, architect and unifier. I can’t think of a better person to spearhead this effort – Chirlane and Rich make a dream team, and together with Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett and Executive Deputy Commissioner Dr. Gary Belkin, we will improve mental health for all New Yorkers.”

“Access to mental health care and effective treatment is a challenge for too many New Yorkers,” said **Deputy Mayor Richard Buery**. “Shifting our approach to public health requires ambitious vision and above all a commitment to engage across City government to find meaningful solutions to those challenges. The Mental Health Roadmap envisions a city where every agency, from housing to schools and senior centers come together to build on the work the DOHMH already does in advancing mental health policy. I’m excited to come on board and look forward to working with the First Lady in rolling out an innovative roadmap that prevents mental illness and tackles the inequality of mental health care access head on.”

“Mental illness touches the lives of most New Yorkers, but for far too long, we’ve had a tale of two health systems – one for physical health and one for mental health,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “I look forward to working closely with Deputy Mayor Buery to fix our broken mental health system. We can – and will – improve access to mental health care in New York City and bring mental health care services where New Yorkers live, work and study.”

“Increasing access to mental health services in New York City will have a very positive impact on communities and families across the city. I’m delighted to see my colleague Rich Buery joining the First Lady on this important work,” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Lilliam Barrios Paoli**. “Working with the First Lady, Rich will ensure the sound implementation of the Roadmap.”

“The First Lady’s honesty and openness about her family’s struggle with mental illness have created an important dialogue about mental health in this city,” said **Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett**. “Her efforts, in concert with Deputy Mayor Richard Buery and Health

Department Executive Deputy Commissioner Dr. Gary Belkin, will make the Mental Health Roadmap the paradigm that other cities will follow. I look forward to this important change in the relationship between city government and mental health. All New Yorkers will benefit.”

As part of the City’s mental health overhaul, the Mayor and First Lady recently announced the launch of NYC Safe, a public safety and public health program that establishes a centralized oversight body to support New Yorkers with untreated serious mental illness as a means to prevent violent behavior. The \$22 million annual investment, a partnership between law enforcement and health care agencies, will provide timely intervention, treatment and follow up to law enforcement response, when necessary.

In March, the City announced nearly \$80 million of additional funding for mental health services, and late last year announced \$130 million to improve mental health in the criminal justice system. The City has committed more than \$380 to mental health over three years.

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