

Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Questionnaire:

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Please describe your experiences with the behavioral health system?

Standing up for people who are not well-connected and who have no voice is one of my trademarks. Before serving in the State Legislature, I served as the Executive Director for the Michigan Association for Children with Emotional Disorders (MACED). This organization fought and advocated for vital treatment and special education services for thousands of children throughout Michigan.

Growing up in a family directly affected by mental illness, I gained an early understanding of how closely mental health is tied to overall health. My brother suffers from schizophrenia. As a result, I have a unique appreciation of the many problems associated with mental health and the overall lack of available mental health care. I am deeply concerned for the welfare of mental health patients, and as Governor, will continue to provide help for this often-overlooked community.

As a State Legislator, I reached across the aisle, embracing bipartisanship, to introduce and pass landmark legislation for those coping with mental health issues. This bill, known as Kevin's Law allows courts to order treatment for individuals with serious mental illness who did not meet the criteria for involuntary hospitalization but who do need outpatient mental health treatment to protect themselves and others.

As Governor, I will continue to work to ensure a voice for all of Michigan's citizens and to improve and support our behavioral health system.

What role do you think community mental health (mental illness and developmental disabilities), and substance use disorder services fit into overall health care?

I believe that CMH and substance use disorder services are a critical part of overall health care services for Michigan residents. I believe we must take a holistic approach to health

care – caring for a whole person both physically and mentally. CMH is overburdened and underfunded. CMH plays a vital role in caring for a population that the state government has left behind, especially since the Engler years. Investing money on the front end, I believe, will ultimately save the state money in the long term.

I have long been a champion of ensuring access to care. Well before talking about health care was in vogue, I was on the front lines fighting to offer help to those that need it. Some of my accomplishments include:

- Creating the groundbreaking Ingham Health Plan, a countywide health insurance program that provides basic health care coverage for people without health insurance
- Creating the Otto Community Health Clinic, which serves many low-income parents, children, and residents in the community.
- President Obama's Health Care Reform

What do you believe the state of Michigan can do to expand access to CMH (mental illness and developmental disabilities) and substance use disorder services for Michigan's citizens?

The state can make it a priority again. While my opponent has advocated for an all cuts budget, I believe not only in making state government leaner and more efficient, but also in funding our priorities, like education and health care. Quality mental health care and quality substance abuse treatment is compassionate, morally responsible, and it keeps people out of the criminal justice system.

I have been an outspoken proponent of the President's Health Care bill that was recently written into law. To people in Michigan, this means more than **141,000** people with pre-existing conditions will no longer be denied insurance coverage. It also provides tax credits to nearly **800,000** people and tax cuts for more than **100,000** small businesses in Michigan.

I never wavered on my support for this historic health care legislation. As Governor, I will continue to fight for universal access to quality, affordable health care. This includes access to community health services and substance use disorder services. They are one in the same.

How would you balance the state budget?

Over the long term we cannot hope to bring structural balance to Michigan's budget without realizing significant growth in tax revenues derived from new economic activity and new jobs. My growth strategy includes breaking the credit crunch so small businesses can access the capital they need to expand and hire new employees, as well as the aggressive use of economic incentives to attract new job-creating investments to Michigan, just as we have done so successfully in Lansing.

We cannot cut our way out of every problem. While we can, and will, make government more efficient in certain areas, we must also strategically invest in some areas to make our state more competitive. Education is one of those areas that requires strategic investment. Not only is strong public education the right thing to do for our children, it is also a necessary tool for economic development. Businesses and families want to settle in cities and states that have good schools. I am committed to strengthening education in Michigan, beginning with pre-K and extending through high school and higher education.

We must also reduce the cost of government by creating real incentives for local units to collaborate and consolidate. Michigan currently has too many layers of government and too much duplication of services between units of government, especially at the local level. While the savings from these efforts will not accrue directly to state government, we must also address the structural budgetary issues that undermine the ability of local governments to stand on their own feet. This will reduce their reliance on state resources and strengthen their ability to make the strategic investments necessary to grow their local economy, which strengthens both state and local tax revenues.

We must also work to ensure that Michigan gets its fair share of federal revenues. For example, we currently leave more than \$1 billion on the table each year that should be flowing into our state to help our most vulnerable citizens. My administration will launch an aggressive effort to ensure that every eligible family in the state applies for the Earned Income Tax Credit and other federal support programs. Every dollar we can put in the hands of our residents makes it less likely they will need to rely on other state resources, including Medicaid, WIC and EBT.

My administration will engage in a thorough review of the performance of all state units to identify savings that can result from more efficient operations. We will implement a state-level version of Lansing's successful performance data tracking and analysis system (LansingStat) to better understand how a wide range of state functions perform in real time and to determine how they can be re-engineered to produce better results at a lower cost.

My administration will not seek to unilaterally impose budget solutions on our state employees. Instead, we will work together as partners to identify strategies for resolving Michigan's budget crisis in a way that acknowledges the vital front-line knowledge and perspective that state employees bring to the discussion. My administration will not seek ways to undermine collective bargaining to achieve savings; rather we will work in good faith at the bargaining table to negotiate contracts that are fair to workers and that help us bring state expenses in line with state revenues. There is no question that some sacrifices will be required, but I will never ask state employees to make any sacrifice that I am not willing to make myself, just as I have done as Mayor of Lansing.

Please list your top three priorities you hope to accomplish in office?

My vision for Michigan's future growth and economic development is a diversified economy that provides good jobs with good wages and benefits for our citizens. This cannot be accomplished by simply claiming we are now a service economy and we have to adapt to the "new normal" that proclaims the end of manufacturing in Michigan. I reject that view. I believe advanced manufacturing is key to our future job growth. We have to put the "P" back in GDP. We have to make the products of tomorrow and export them to the world in areas like green energy, electric vehicles, medical technologies, homeland security, aerospace and defense. My success in Lansing in this regard is a template for how we can make it happen statewide. My "Main Street Michigan Agenda" is a roadmap for how we can accomplish this goal. My plan includes reforming the MBT to reward job creation and export-oriented production, establishing a state bank to break the credit crunch for small businesses that create most new jobs in our economy, creating Green Manufacturing Zones at former automotive sites, and establishing EB5 Regional Centers in cities across the state to attract new, job-creating foreign investment.

My top 3 priorities for action are to rebuild the economic foundation of our state to create jobs, tackle the challenges of balancing the state budget while maintaining the vital state services our citizens expect, and strengthening our education system from pre-K through higher education. Education IS economic development, and we must build on our skilled workforce to ensure that young people have the tools they need to compete and win in the global economy.