



## A Crisis in Brazoria County: Mental Health and Substance Use

### THE PROBLEM

In Brazoria County, Texas, mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) needs have grown rapidly in recent years, impacting all aspects of community health and safety.

### THE NUMBERS

#### MENTAL HEALTH DECLINE:

Poor mental health days jumped **80%** since 2016

#### FINANCIAL BURDEN:

Medical care costs in Texas are **216%** higher for patients with mental health conditions

#### OPIOID OVERDOSES:

The county's overdose rate rose **90%** since 2019

#### LACK OF INPATIENT PSYCHIATRIC BEDS:

**0** beds available for patients in acute psychiatric crisis

### IMPACT ON SYSTEMS

- **Overburdened first responders** dealing with mental health and substance use cases, taking time from other emergencies.
- **Schools struggling** with an unprecedented number of self-harm cases, averaging 1,200 visits to school counselors per year.

# Actionable Solutions for Brazoria County



## BUILD AN INPATIENT CRISIS CENTER

A **mental health crisis center** with inpatient beds is essential to handle growing demand locally and reduce strain on police and hospitals.

## EXPAND TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Increase access to **opioid and alcohol treatment services**, including more **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)** and **Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs)**.



## CREATE A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS UNIT

Establish a specialized **mental health response team** to handle emergencies, freeing up police and EMS for other critical situations.

## STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Expand **school and community mental health programs** to catch problems early, keeping residents out of hospitals and reducing long-term costs.



## SECURE FUNDING AND IMPROVE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Expanded **funding and improved reimbursement rates** can reduce the economic and social burden.

## CONCLUSION

With mental health and substance use challenges affecting individuals and families across Brazoria County, these actionable solutions can help **save lives, reduce taxpayer costs, and ensure a safer future for the community.**