

NAMI-New Hampshire Statement on January 1st Officer-Involved Shooting in Gilford, NH

Concord, NH – NAMI New Hampshire mourns the recent death of a young person, reportedly in a mental health crisis, killed in Gilford this week. Such incidents are tragedies for the victim, their family, the law enforcement officers involved and their families, as well as entire communities.

1 in 5 adults and 1 in 6 children has a mental health condition each year; recent data indicates that over half of all adults surveyed (51%) say they or a family member have experienced a severe mental health crisis. In New Hampshire, 60% of officer-involved shootings involve someone who has a known mental health condition.

Addressing the mental health crisis in our state is the collective responsibility of every New Hampshire resident. Together, we must advocate for policies and support to ensure Granite Staters impacted by mental illness are able to access resources necessary to live full lives in their community – lives that are not cut short through tragedy or untreated co-morbid conditions. Preventing such tragic outcomes requires a multi-faceted approach.

Recent investments by the State of New Hampshire have allowed for the expansion of the gold-standard 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program here in our state. While a federal grant funds 3 classes/year, funding through the NH Police Standards & Training Council has expanded this to 10 classes this fiscal year. To date, 471 NH first responders have completed this intensive training; however, with over 2,900 sworn officers in our state, there is still much work to be done. **NAMI NH strongly urges continued investment in the CIT Program and that all law enforcement agencies prioritize having their officers complete such training.**

The November 1st, 2022 final report of the legislatively-created Committee to Study Establishing a Mental Health Incident Review Board (<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/statstudcomm/reports/1608.pdf>) recommends the creation of a “Mental Health Incident Review Panel” that would review incidents involving use of deadly force by law enforcement, focusing on the mental health aspects of such incidents, examining the situation holistically and reviewing events in the preceding months/days/hours leading to the event. **NAMI NH strongly urges the NH legislature implement the review panel so that such incidents can be examined, learned from, and policies, procedures and services enacted that may prevent future tragedies.**

Increased investment in community mental health services is essential for folks to access life-saving treatment and prevent tragic outcomes. Making upstream mental health services more accessible requires a robust mental health system

with an array of services available in each community. **NAMI NH strongly supports measures such as reauthorizing Medicaid Expansion, increased Medicaid reimbursement rates, streamlining licensure requirements to expand the pool of providers in NH, and expanded utilization of peer support to expand the workforce and improve outcomes.**

Granite Staters experiencing a mental health crisis need a mental health response. The New Hampshire Rapid Response/988 system has responded to over 25,000 calls since its implementation on January 1, 2022, deploying a mobile crisis team response well over 6,000 times. **NAMI NH calls for continued investment in NH's Rapid Response, ensuring long-term sustainability, while expanding the system to include crisis stabilization and more robust crisis response statewide.**

You are not alone.

All of us have a role to play in supporting our community members at risk for mental health crises. NAMI NH urges all Granite Staters to seek help for themselves and their loved ones if they are struggling. Talk to your primary care provider, call NAMI NH's information and resource line (not a crisis line) at 800-242-6264 (press 4) or visit www.NAMINH.org for local mental health resources. NH Rapid Response is available 24/7 for calls/texts at 833-710-6477 or at nh988.com and provides a NH-based crisis response.

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About NAMI New Hampshire

NAMI New Hampshire is a grassroots organization working to improve the lives of all people affected by mental illness and suicide through support, education and advocacy. Learn more at NAMINH.org.