

CITY OF BALTIMORE

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Dear Colleagues,

As Baltimore City deals with the tragic events surrounding the untimely death of Freddie Gray, we recognize that as physicians, you understand the physical and psychological trauma that has deeply impacted our community. We are grateful to many of you who have expressed your concern and desire to help as Baltimore City begins to heal.

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is committed to ensuring that communities have access to needed trauma counseling and mental health services. Traumatic events affect not only the individual directly impacted by the event, but also those around the individual – family members, neighbors, friends and caregivers. The need to address trauma is an integral part of public health and has become a fundamental obligation for the delivery of mental health services.

As part of the city's response to the recent tragic events, BCHD is working with schools, churches and community organizations to provide these services and support communities in the healing process.

Our activities and resources include:

1. A 24/7 mental health crisis response hotline is available through the Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc (BCRI). Baltimore City residents can call [\(410\) 433-5175](tel:4104335175) and be immediately connected to appropriate services.
2. Individuals and families who need assistance scheduling an appointment for mental health services should call Behavioral Health System Baltimore at 410-637-1900, option #1, between 9am-5pm.
3. The American Red Cross is working with BCHD to coordinate mental health volunteers. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering please contact Joe Miletti at joe.miletti@redcross.org or sign up online at <http://www.redcross.org/gcr/volunteer>.
4. BCHD has implemented a mental health Command Center in collaboration with Behavioral Health System Baltimore. People requesting mental health counseling for a group (school, community, religious, etc) should email bchd2@baltimorecity.gov or call 311 to be connected with available mental health providers. Please contact us as well if you are able to provide group counseling services.

5. Information is available through our BCHD website at health.baltimorecity.gov and social media pages (Twitter: https://twitter.com/Bmore_Healthy and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BaltimoreHealth>) including information on how to seek services and FAQs on dealing with trauma.

Please share this information with your colleagues and patients, and we encourage anyone who is able to volunteer to contact us.

Thank you for all that you do to care for our patients and our communities. We are so lucky to have such a strong, committed group of physicians in the State of Maryland. We look forward to working with you as Baltimore City begins the healing process.

Sincerely,



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