

Yes, we can afford to care for each other in Connecticut



Connecticut faces a choice: Whether to continue cutting services to the bone at a time when they're obviously needed more than ever, or to invest in the kind of robust and equitable health care infrastructure that our residents truly deserve by passing progressive taxation. State health care workers and long-term care workers—proud members of 1199 New England—and leading community organizations demand improved and expanded services so the people of Connecticut can thrive with healthy lives.

We must **expand** the health care infrastructure that our communities need — now more than ever. This is an urgent matter of economic and racial justice, even more so after the COVID-19 emergency.

To meet the needs of this moment, Connecticut must:

- Expand mobile crisis intervention services by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in all five regions, and to respond to all 911 calls involving acute mental health emergencies. Mobile crisis intervention services shall be the default response to 911 mental health calls, dispatched directly through 911.
- Expand state medical and mental health re-entry services available to formerly incarcerated people (about 2,000 currently), a population that is disproportionately Black and Brown, as they re-enter our communities. Provide community re-entry services by hiring formerly incarcerated community health workers.
- Make a commitment to Justice Reinvestment to end mass incarceration and eliminate racial disparities in Connecticut's criminal justice system.
- Restore and expand DMHAS addictions services to address Connecticut's mental health crisis and the growing waiting lists in request for services.
- Expand the continuum of housing supports available to all Connecticut residents, with targeted investments for adults and youth with substance abuse and mental health conditions.
- Expand respite services available to families caring for loved ones with developmental disabilities.
- Expand respite and other short-term stabilization services available to individuals with substance abuse and other mental health conditions.
- Fully fund essential services in state health care agencies and fill the 1,200-plus state health care worker vacancies to address the staffing crisis affecting patients and services.
- Fully fund long-term care, including affordable health care for caregivers, to ensure quality services and uplift home care workers, group home workers and nursing home workers out of poverty.

