

BREAKING NEWS



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MENTAL HEALTH

Chirlane McCray announces citywide mental health hotline

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Chirlane McCray

Getty Images



A new citywide mental health program will allow New Yorkers to call counselors 24 hours a day without shelling out a cent themselves — with the government picking up the bill.

The program, dubbed NYC Well, was announced Monday by Chirlane McCray, wife of mayor de Blasio, and a mental health advocate, at a press conference in Queens.

As part of the program, New Yorkers in need of an immediate mental health pick-me-up will be able to call, text or chat with a counselor.

The counselors will be able to arrange long-term care with trained specialists who've dealt with issues like depression, anxiety and substance abuse.

Calls will be recorded and maintained by the city for "quality assurance purposes" and will be deleted after 90 days.

People who hint at hurting themselves or others will trigger a call to 911.

The program will cost the city \$5.5 million in its first year and \$4.5 million each following year. The state will contribute about \$2 million each year as well. An additional \$3 million in city money will go towards marketing the new initiative.

The non-profit Mental Health Association of New York City, which has received money to hire new counselors, will manage the program.

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