



Empowering Excellence: Kansas Behavioral Health Center’s Transformative Vision
\$75,000 Commitment from Aetna® Spearheads Kansas Mental Health Advancements

Wichita, K.S., Dec. 14, 2023 – The Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas is proud to announce a pioneering new venture dedicated to reshaping mental health care in Kansas. The collaborative venture is called the Kansas Behavioral Health Center of Excellence (KBHCE) and will be located in Wichita, KS. This center will provide comprehensive treatment to the underserved by providing an extensive range of high-quality services and training opportunities.

Kyle Kessler, Executive Director of the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, underscores the primary objective of the KBHCE. "As the KBHCE takes shape, its primary goal is not only to provide comprehensive treatment in the Wichita area but also to offer a wide array of training possibilities, spanning medical, clinical, care management, and various essential roles within the mental health spectrum," he said.

Recognizing the pivotal role of training in enhancing mental health care, Aetna has made a substantial commitment by pledging \$75,000 to support the KBHCE's initiatives. This financial support underscores the significance of private sector contributions in cultivating a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting the evolving needs of mental health care.

"Addressing the mental health needs of under-resourced communities in Kansas requires new, innovative strategies. The KBHCE's work to bring together health care organizations, local mental health providers like [COMCARE](#) and educational institutions will help increase the availability of trained mental health care providers in our neighborhoods and strengthen our overall behavior health system in the state," said Jane Brown, CEO, Aetna Better Health of Kansas.

The KBHCE's mission extends beyond geographical boundaries, aiming to be inclusive and accessible to diverse populations, with a particular focus on traditionally underserved groups such as veterans, youth in foster care, and those in school-based settings. Moreover, the KBHCE is positioned as an innovator in the field, exploring alternative therapies and conducting Rx studies.

Joan Tammany, Executive Director of COMCARE of Sedgwick County notes, "As the KBHCE moves forward, the need for support, funding, and advocacy for robust training programs becomes paramount."

We invite you to join us in celebrating this significant announcement at a media event on Thursday, December 14th, 10:00 am CST, hosted at the Hughes Metroplex Rm 132 located just one mile north of Wichita State University's main campus. Esteemed representatives from the above mentioned organizations will be in attendance, sharing their perspectives on this groundbreaking initiative, including program lead Kyle Kessler and Joan Tammany from COMCARE.

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