



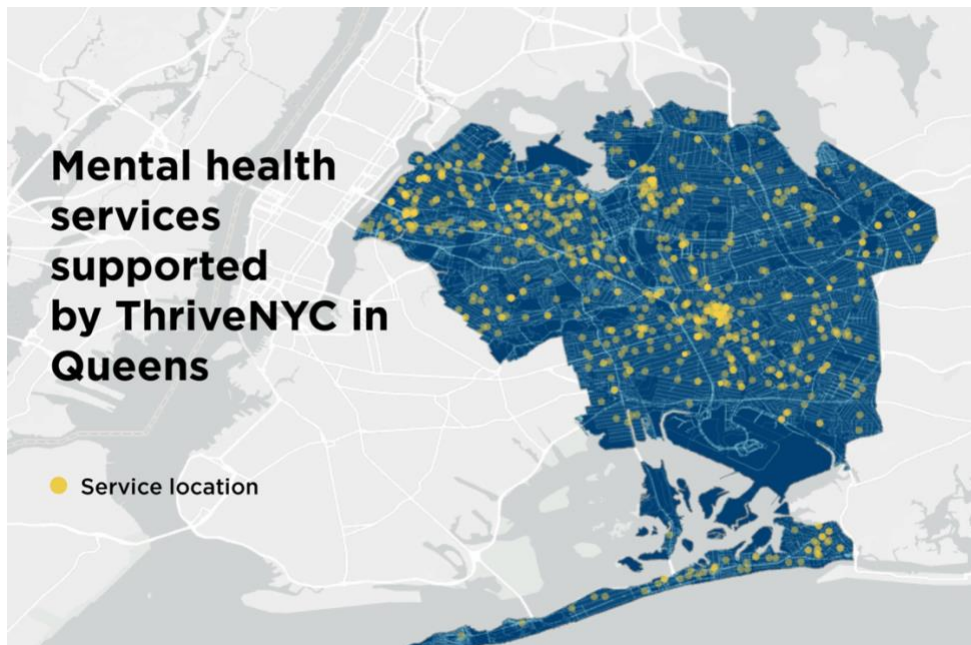
Opinion

## Op-Ed: In Queens, mental health support is all around you



By Op-Ed

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By Susan Herman

When you hear people talking about whether ThriveNYC should be cut – and with political campaigns already heating up, you might – know what that would mean for Queens residents: cutting the mental health support that’s all around you.

Today, ThriveNYC programs are on the ground providing innovative mental health services in Queens, from Astoria to the Rockaways and from Ridgewood to Queens Village.

In fact, because of ThriveNYC, there are more mental health services available in Queens today than there have ever been. The support comes in many different forms, and citywide, is provided by nearly 200 community-based organizations that New Yorkers know and trust. When you think of ThriveNYC, think of them.

Think of Queens Community House, which helps arrange visits and calls between volunteers and isolated older adults through a program managed by the Department for the Aging. Or think of any of the ten Older Adult Centers throughout Queens, including Sunnyside Community Center and the Theodora G. Jackson Center Adult Center, where social workers are now on staff to serve the mental health needs of aging New Yorkers through the Community Advisory Program for the Elderly (CAPE).

In partnership with ThriveNYC and the NYPD, Safe Horizon – the nation’s leading victim services agency – supports victim of crime in every precinct in the city, including all 16 precincts and Police Service Areas in Queens. The advocates offer counseling, safety planning, advocacy, and practical assistance to anyone harmed by crime, violence, or abuse. More than half are bilingual, so victims of crime in Jackson Heights can receive support in Spanish while Flushing residents get help in Chinese. And because of Thrive’s partnership, trusted community organizations in Queens – like Voces Latinas, Sheltering Arms, and CAMBA – are better equipped to address the mental health needs of the people they serve.

For Queens residents experiencing homelessness, ThriveNYC has added mental health counselors on site at the 12 City-run family shelters throughout the borough. The same is true for the residences and drop-in centers for runaway and homeless youth. And the Visiting Nurse Service of New York and the Federation of Organizations operate mobile mental health treatment teams to provide ongoing care for New Yorkers who live with serious mental illness and have a history of justice involvement and homelessness.

When you think of ThriveNYC, you can also think of the services now available for children and young people. Through the Early Childhood Mental Health Network, the Child Center of NY offers therapy and other services for the youngest New Yorkers and their families. And in 33 high-needs public schools in Queens, social workers from organizations like Queens Geniuses, Commonpoint Queens and the Southern Queens Parks Association have been able to support students through the most tumultuous school year in memory.

You can find out more about all of these programs through the [ThriveNYC website](#), which is updated regularly with data on our reach and impact.

With so many new services available, it’s helpful to have a starting point. Queens residents looking to find mental health support for themselves or their loved ones can explore ThriveNYC’s [online guide](#), which includes tips on coping with stress and grief and links to services for aging New Yorkers, young people, veterans, and more.

Additionally, any New Yorker in need can call, text or chat online with a trained counselor or peer support specialist through [NYC Well](#). The service offers crisis counseling and immediate mental health support, referrals to ongoing care, and, when needed, mobile crisis teams of clinicians and peers travel to provide assessments and short-term care for people experiencing a behavioral health crisis. NYC Well is culturally and linguistically responsive, with translation services available in more than 200 languages.

When you think of ThriveNYC, think of the critical services that Queens residents and all New Yorkers rely on. Think of the mental health support that’s all around you.