Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention

Update for the Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Commission

October 1, 2026

DRAFT & CONFIDENTIAL; FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES ONLY

OBHPP Office of Behavioral Health Promotion & Prevention

MASS DMH HOPE • EQUITY • SERVICE Department of Mental Health

Agenda

1. OBHPP New Staff Introductions
2. Grant Implementation
3. Active Workforce Campaign
4. Other OBHPP Activities
5. Looking Ahead
6. Advancing Prevention & Promotion Across the Commonwealth

OBHPP New Staff Introductions

OBHPP Staff

Project and Administrative Coordinator

Kidest Assefa-McNeil, MPH



Intern

Amana Khatib



Grant Implementation

Tier A and B Grantees

Tier A and B grantees have completed contracting and are wrapping up the first quarter of program implementation

TIER A

City of Woburn

Olga's List Inc

Aurora Springs Inc

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

TCFWC - The Child and Family Wellness Center

Enlace de Familias de Holyoke

Immigrant Family Services Institute

TIER B

Perspectives Health Services, LLC

Treehouse Foundation

Fathers' Uplift

Healing Abuse, Working for Change, Inc.

Lowell Community Health Center

Southeast Asian Coalition of Central MA

Martin Luther King Jr. Family Services, Inc.

Resilience Center of Franklin County

Riverside Community Care Inc

ReUnited Inc

Tier A and B Program Highlights

Reducing Psychological Distress in Immigrant Communities

The Southeast Asian Coalition's Healthy Aging program provides culturally and linguistically responsive support among immigrant and refugee older adults in Central Massachusetts. The program combines wellness education, social and cultural activities, outreach to homebound individuals, transportation assistance, and multilingual support to strengthen social connections and promote healthy aging. Through trained staff, volunteers, and community partnerships, the initiative will expand access to behavioral health resources and build sustainable, culturally responsive supports for older adults.

Anticipated Impact:
~700 community members via ~400 activities

Olga's List will provide culturally tailored, trauma-informed family support to Ukrainian refugees in Massachusetts, with a focus on new arrivals. The program will adapt and translate a family strengthening curriculum and train Ukrainian community interventionists to provide home visiting and support focused on family communication, coping skills, caregiver mental health, child well-being, and resilience. Three cohorts serving approximately 30 families will inform an evaluated, sustainable model that can be integrated into Olga's List services and potentially adapted for other refugee communities.

Anticipated Impact:
~1000 community members via ~50 activities

Supporting Caregivers and Reducing Family Stress

Fathers' UpLift will provide culturally responsive, trauma-informed behavioral health support to strengthen fathers' mental well-being, emotional regulation, parenting confidence, and family relationships across Greater Boston. The program will support fathers at different stages of the fatherhood journey through preparation for fatherhood, stress and emotion management, reentry support, peer support, and connections to community resources. Community wellness events and ongoing evaluation will reduce isolation, strengthen protective factors, and improve access to behavioral health and family supports.

Anticipated Impact:
~500-600 community members via ~40 activities

Tier A and B Program Highlights cont.

Promoting Infant, Early Childhood, and Maternal Mental Health

Perspectives Health Services will provide culturally responsive behavioral health promotion and prevention focused on perinatal and infant and early childhood mental health in Boston and Brockton. The program will offer universal mental health screening, education, early identification, and referrals for pregnant and postpartum individuals, while helping caregivers build confidence and strengthen relationships with young children. Through community partnerships and culturally responsive outreach, the initiative will reduce family stress, strengthen caregiver well-being, and promote healthier outcomes for parents, infants, and young children.

Anticipated Impact:
~700 community members via ~36 activities

Lowell Community Health Center will implement the evidence-based ROSE Postpartum Depression Prevention Program to promote maternal mental health among pregnant and postpartum individuals throughout Greater Lowell. The program will combine prenatal and postpartum group sessions with community outreach, education, resource navigation, and referrals to strengthen social support, coping skills, and other protective factors. By expanding access to prevention services and supporting early identification of behavioral health needs, the initiative aims to reduce the risk of postpartum depression and improve maternal well-being.

Anticipated Impact:
~1000 community members via ~180 activities

The City of Woburn will implement the Nurturing Early Support & Thriving Families (NEST) Project to support new parents and caregivers with resources, education, and tools to build confidence, manage stress, and strengthen family well-being. The program will offer Youth Mental Health First Aid, a free six-week training and speaker series, and “Back Pack” kits with essential baby supplies and mental health resources. Childcare support will reduce barriers to participation and help families access NEST’s services and resources.

Anticipated Impact:
~400 community members via ~32 activities

What We are Hearing From Grantees: Q1 Implementation

In Q1 of FY27, grantees have focused on laying the foundation for programming by:

- **Building their team:** Hiring and onboarding staff for roles that will support program implementation and service delivery.
- **Preparing and training staff:** Providing staff with the training, tools, and resources needed to launch programming effectively.
- **Strengthening partnerships:** Establishing and formalizing partnerships (MOUs) with other community organizations and ensuring referral and collaboration pathways are in place.
- **Building community connections:** Connecting with local organizations, residents, and other community partners to expand awareness and engagement.

Some grantees have already begun offering activities and groups, including **dance teams, gardening clubs, group trips, after school enrichment, and exercise classes**.

Next Steps for the Grant Program

1. **Tier C Contracting:** Begin contract negotiations with Tier C organizations where we finalize budgets, scope of work, program impacts, and other agreements.

2. **Tier C Onboarding:** Planning for Tier C onboarding and first welcome calls in November. We have prepared a welcome package and training materials re: mandatory reporting and document submissions.

3. **Grantee Activities:** Tier A/B grantees are submitting quarterly deliverables which OBHPP will use to monitor progress and collect data on impact. In Q2 of FY27, Tier A/B grantees will continue program implementation. OBHPP also plans to visit grantees in the near future to gain a deeper understanding of their programs and community impact.

Active Workforce Campaign

Workforce Campaign Overview
"Turn your compassion into your career"

Campaign Summary

Live from June through September 2026, the cross-channel workforce campaign promoted behavioral health education and career pathways to strengthen and grow the workforce in the Commonwealth, reaching statewide audiences in 8 different languages and driving them to mass.gov/YourBHCareer.



1. **College and high school students**
2. **Professionals**
3. **People with relevant life experience**

Campaign Activity Snapshot
June-Sept. 2026

Channel	Languages	Timeline
Video streaming ads	English, Spanish	June – Mid Sept.
Audio streaming ads	English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole	Mid June – August
Digital & social ads	English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic, Chinese, English (Indian community)	Mid June – Sept.
Digital billboard ads	English, Spanish	July – Mid August
Community engagement	English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Hindi	End of July – Sept.
Earned media	English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese	End of August –October.

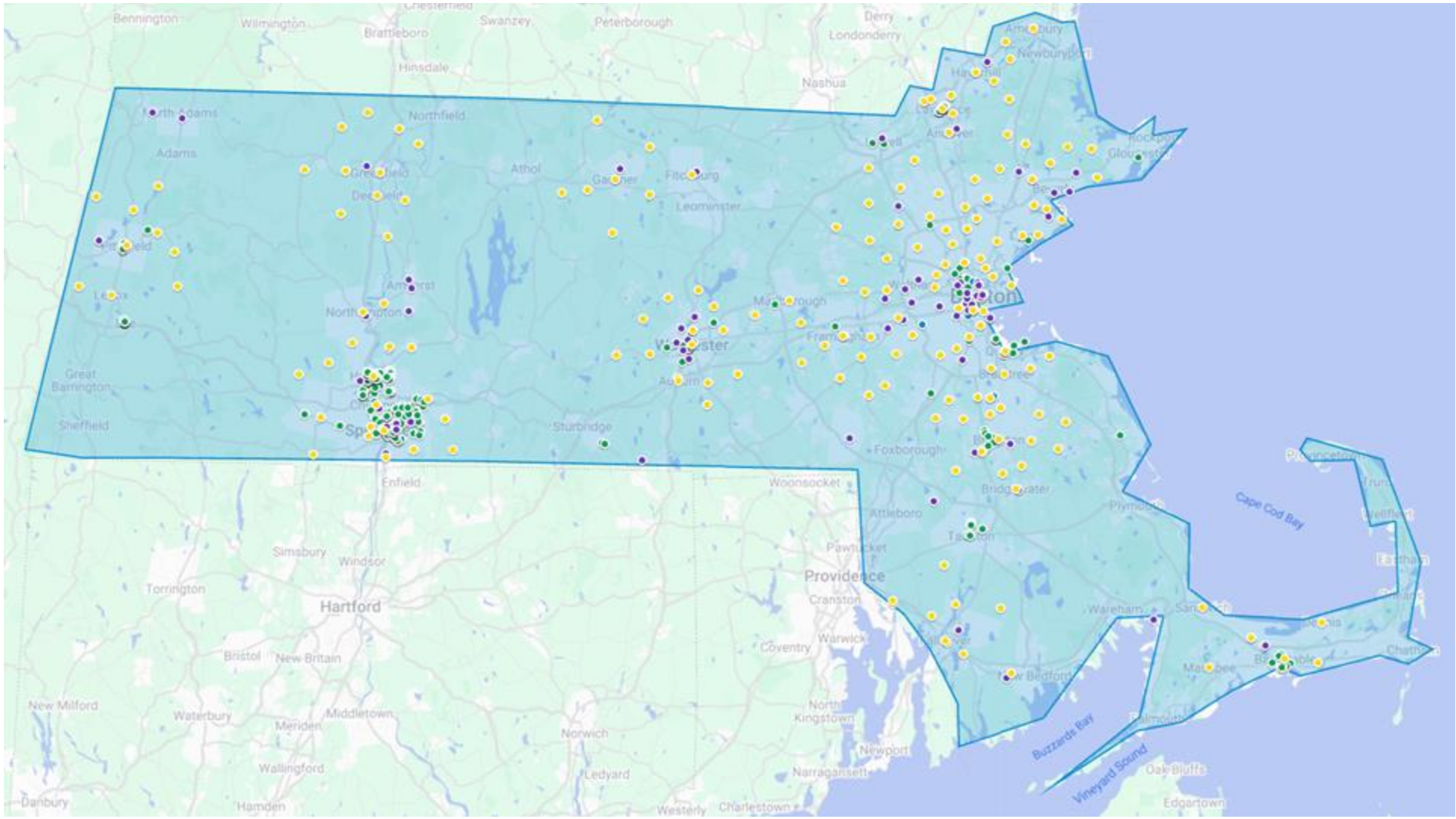
Campaign Reach

See Google map link to explore the campaign's geographical reach across community engagement, earned media, and paid media.

[Workforce Campaign Map]

Note: Currently excludes digital and Entravision video streaming advertising data, which will be added once received from vendors per recent flight end dates.

- community engagement
- colleges & unis for paid targeting
- earned media outlets
- paid media



Campaign Results

3.2 M digital billboard impressions

3.7 M Google display impressions

1.4 M Spotify impressions

670 K YouTube impressions

107 K video streaming impressions on Entravision, including FIFA

and more across ethnic media

9.1K materials distributed statewide

178 community organizations contacted and sent campaign digital toolkit

22 formal partners each received up to **500 pieces** of print material to distribute with their audiences

13 community events completed across all regions

11 press hits, including interviews

Note: this report reflects available data to date. It does not include all final campaign results, which will be updated once available.

Activity and Results by Channel

Community Engagement Overview

4 strategic methods of community engagement, with an estimated total of **9,062** materials distributed statewide in **8** languages

Languages include:

English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Hindi



170+ schools, CBOs, and health organizations received digital toolkit

570+ in-person site visits completed in **10** gateway cities to distribute materials at local businesses, CBOs, schools, & health centers

22 confirmed partners spread the message and distributed materials

13 community events completed with over **1.7K** materials distributed (see reports)

What the Community is Saying …

> ***I didn't even think going to school would be an option for me.*** *I'm gonna look into this and see what y'all got going on. Thanks!*





> *Wow! Yes! Thank you for being here.*
> ***The work you all are doing is so important.***
>
> ***I can't tell you how great it is to see your stuff in Hindi.***
> *You don't see that often! Really great stuff guys.*

Paid Media Overview

~50 advertising assets

Across **11** outlets

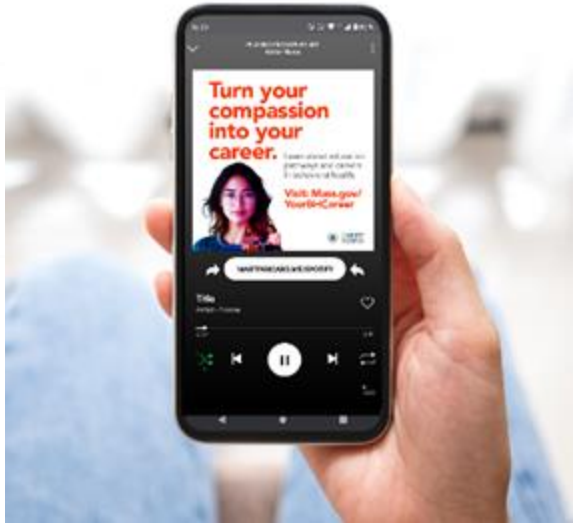
in **5** marketing channels

and **7** different languages

Languages include:

English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese







Earned Media Overview

11 high-impact earned media placements across mainstream, local, and ethnic media outlets across the state.

Media interviews engaged loyal audiences, including through trusted ethnic media outlets and community platforms.

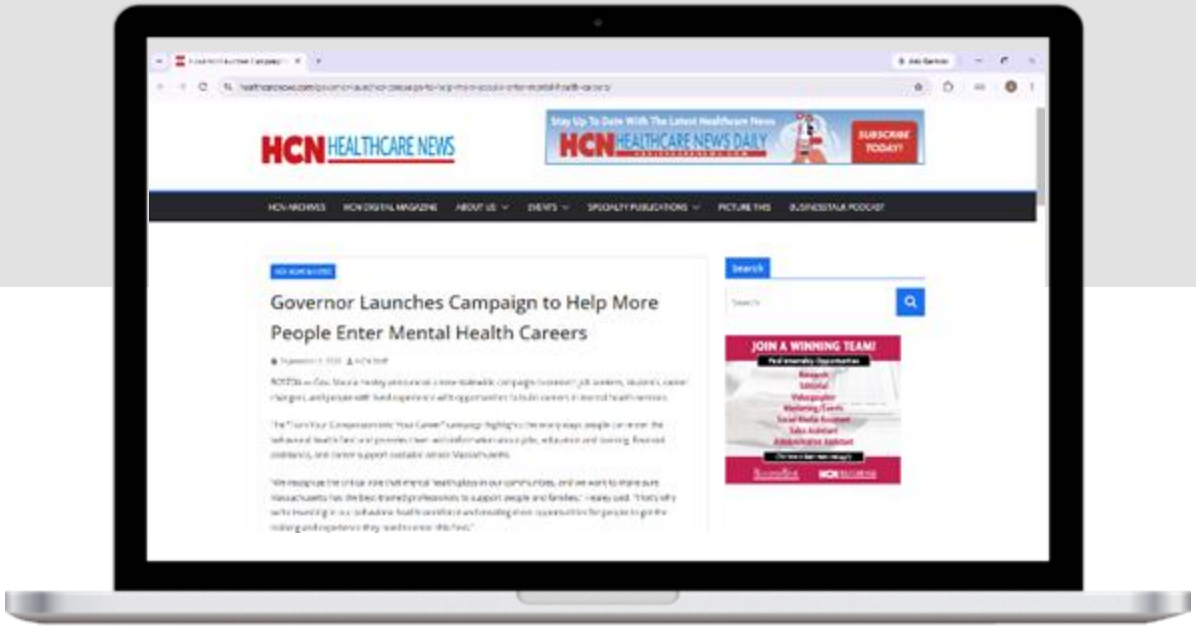
A press release and **social videos** amplified the message statewide with mainstream, local, and ethnic audience reach.

Languages include:

English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, Brazilian Portuguese







Other OBHPP Activities

Secretary Mahaniah's Statewide Community Mental Health Tour

Over the next few months, Secretary Mahaniah will visit mental health care access points across the spectrum of prevention, treatment, and recovery to raise public awareness about programs and services available in Massachusetts



- **Elevate community-based behavioral health work** and highlight programs making an impact locally
- **Raise public awareness** of available mental health resources and supports before a crisis occurs
- **Strengthen connections** among state agencies, community partners, and residents across the Commonwealth
- **OBHPP partnership:** The tour includes visits with OBHPP grantees
  - September: Visited Fathers' Uplift in Boston
  - October: Will visit Sharing Kindness in the Cape

Designing for Belonging: A Massachusetts Summit on Connection & Community

OBHPP and the Massachusetts Coalition to Build Community & End Loneliness partnered to host a summit on September 25th at UMass Boston



- This summit brought together leaders from across Massachusetts **to examine how loneliness and social disconnection affects health, community well-being, and economic vitality—**and how these challenges are shaped by the policies, systems, and spaces we create.

- Participants **explored connection as a shared responsibility** and identified practical ways to **work across sectors** to foster belonging, launching an ongoing effort to advance this work throughout the Commonwealth.

Looking Ahead

Looking Ahead

1. **Hiring:** We will be reposting the Program Director position. They will help guide the daily operations of the office, ensuring that priorities are effectively executed and grants are managed with precision.

2. **Contract Negotiations with Tier C Grantees:** Very excited to begin working with our Tier C grantees through the contract negotiation and onboarding phase.

3. **Program Implementation:** Grantees will continue moving from program start-up to full implementation, by solidifying programming, deepening community partnerships, and beginning to engage participants.

4. **Speaking Engagements:** We have a full calendar of speaking engagements related to our Workforce Campaign, encouraging students, professionals, and community members to explore careers in behavioral health and highlighting pathways into the field.

Next Steps: Advancing Promotion & Prevention Across the Commonwealth

Work Group Sign-Ups Since Prior Meeting

Program Development	Policy, System, & Advocacy	Emerging Evidence & Research
Advise the Office on the development of promotion and prevention initiatives, including program design, evaluation approaches, and strategic planning.	**Identify policy and systems-level opportunities to advance behavioral health promotion and prevention, and support coordinated advocacy.**	**Identify and review emerging research, data, and evidence-based practices; bring in presenters and learning opportunities for the Commission**
*Margaret Hannah**	Nancy Scannell	*Sara Whitcomb*
*Noel Sierra**	Elizabeth Ganz	*Jessica Collins**
	Jacqueline Hubbard	*Margaret Hannah**
	*Jessica Collins**	*Yaminette Diaz-Linhart**
	*Margaret Hannah**	
	*Noel Sierra**	
	*Yaminette Diaz-Linhart**	

**These individuals stated potential interest in multiple groups*

Next Steps

Identify a group to develop a 1–3 year strategic plan to align the Commission's role, establish measurable priorities, and identify opportunities to demonstrate impact.

The strategic planning group will be organized around three primary function areas:

1. **Advise OBHPP:** Provide guidance on priorities, programs, grants, and prevention initiatives while bringing forward emerging research and evidence.

2. **Advise EHS & the Governor's Office:** Elevate behavioral health promotion and prevention priorities and provide recommendations on issues requiring broader executive-branch coordination.

3. **Support the Commonwealth's Broader Prevention Strategy:** Identify opportunities for the Commission to contribute to statewide prevention goals and connect recommendations to broader population health outcomes.

Thank you!