# PHOTO RELEASE: Nemours Children's, Delaware Congressional Delegation Host HHS Secretary Becerra for a Children's Mental Health Forum



## To view and download photos from the forum on children's mental and behavioral health, please click here.

**WILMINGTON, Del.** — On Monday, August 1, 2022, Nemours Children's Health hosted **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra** at the Nemours Estate in Wilmington, Delaware for a forum on improving children's mental and behavioral health. Participants of the forum included Nemours Children's leadership and families, **U.S. Senator Tom Carper (D-Del.), U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del.), Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.), Delaware Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long, Delaware Secretary of Health and Social Services Molly Magarik**, community leaders, business leaders, and local and state officials.

"Today's Pediatric Mental Health Roundtables are an example of how we can come together on the critical issue of child and youth mental health, learn from one another, and develop real-world solutions," said **R. Lawrence Moss, MD, FACS, FAAP, President & CEO of Nemours Children's Health**. "We need to meet the youth mental health crisis with action and Nemours Children's is working to increase access for Delaware's children. We look forward to working with our state and federal leaders on policies and legislation that will help Nemours and other providers create the healthiest generations of children."

"I had a great discussion at Nemours Children's Health to learn how Nemours and Delaware's Congressional delegation are working to address the mental and behavioral health needs of children across the state," said **HHS Secretary Becerra**. "As part of the HHS National Tour to Strengthen Mental Health, I've had the chance to travel across the country and hear stories from people from all walks of life, and they all say the same thing: 'we need help.' The Biden-Harris Administration has prioritized addressing our nation's mental health crisis by making historic investments to support children's behavioral health needs. And at the Department of Health and Human Services, we have made a Department-wide commitment to rethink and reimagine how we respond to and treat mental health in this country, and while we've made great strides, the work continues."

"I am so proud that Secretary Becerra was able to come to Delaware and see first-hand how we are implementing good public policy to meet the needs of children and families, especially when it comes to youth mental health," said **U.S. Senator Tom Carper**. "I've been laser-focused on strengthening families since my days as Governor, and one way we are working on that today is to make much-needed investments in school-based mental health care services and telehealth. It's important that we take down the barriers to services for these children and meet them right where they are."

"Looking out for Delawareans' mental health in their earliest years can help our children do better in school, avoid bad outcomes, and lead richer and more fulfilling lives for decades to come," **said U.S. Senator Chris Coons.** "I'm glad we could show Secretary Becerra the great work Nemours Children's Health is doing to expand access to mental health care for kids in Wilmington, and I appreciated hearing what more we can do in Congress to improve and increase mental health care opportunities throughout the First State."

"Children in Delaware and across the country are experiencing unprecedented mental health challenges and have been since before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic," **said Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester.** "That's why today's roundtable on youth mental health is so critical – because it brought together federal and state officials, community partners, young people, and healthcare professionals to engage in meaningful dialogue about how we can best combat this crisis through all avenues available. As a member of the Health Subcommittee in the House, I've introduced four bipartisan bills to support our children by expanding capacity in pediatric behavioral and mental health services, funding community-based activities, supporting training and workforce innovations, and expanding telehealth access. I'm honored to have Secretary Becerra in Delaware for this timely conversation – one that will undoubtedly initiate innovative solutions and policies to support children in Delaware and across the nation experiencing mental health challenges."

The forum consisted of a roundtable split into four panels to discuss four topics: mental and behavioral health challenges youth face, pediatric healthcare workforce shortages and infrastructure needs, school wellness, and innovative policy solutions. Additionally, Secretary Becerra highlighted the work of the Biden-Harris Administration on combating the mental health crisis – highlighting the mental and behavioral needs of children and teachers as they prepare to return to school in the fall. U.S. Senator Tom Carper (D-Del.), U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del.), and Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.) all highlighted their work in Congress to address the crisis, including several key pieces of legislation that have been

introduced or signed into law to improve access to telehealth services and school-based mental health care. Additional information on how HHS, the Delaware Congressional Delegation, and the State of Delaware, including Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long, State Representative Val Longhurst, and State Senator Sarah McBride, are working to combat the youth mental health crisis can be found **here**.

**About Nemours Children's Health**
Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, which includes two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of more than 70 primary and specialty care practices. Nemours Children's seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also caring for the health of the whole child beyond medicine. Nemours Children's also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, Nemours KidsHealth.org.

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves. For more information, visit Nemours.org.

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