



**Vibrant Emotional Health Media Contact:**  
**Josephine Parr, [jparr@vibrant.org](mailto:jparr@vibrant.org)**

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## **Vibrant Emotional Health to Host ‘Bridging the Gap’ Virtual Symposium**

**NEW YORK, NY (April 21, 2022)** – Vibrant Emotional Health, a national leader in disaster mental health and crisis intervention, presents *Bridging the Gap: A Symposium on Disaster Behavioral Health Access for All* on June 9 and 10.

The 2nd annual symposium will bring together diverse voices from across the mental health field to examine the ways in which we can work toward deconstructing barriers to behavioral health access and decreasing disparities in care in times of crisis. Vibrant’s Crisis Emotional Care Team—a cadre of volunteer professional emotional and mental health providers who respond to crises and disasters as they arise— will host the virtual event on June 9 and June 10 from 10AM-4PM. Key learnings and advice from programs and institutions will be featured, along with, best practices for including marginalized and underrepresented communities in behavioral health care response during and following disasters and crises.

“Multiple gaps exist in accessing behavioral health care for a variety of underrepresented communities—Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, and more. At no time are these gaps more apparent than following a disaster or crisis in a community. At Vibrant, we work to acknowledge, examine, and present solutions for those often dismissed or ignored by established structural and institutional systems. With this symposium, we aim not only to bring the realities of those living in the gaps of society to the forefront, but also to present, discuss, and cultivate solutions and practices we can set in motion and create a bridge to access behavioral health care,” said Amy Carol Dominguez, Program Director of the Crisis Emotional Care Team at Vibrant Emotional Health.

**To register for *Bridging the Gap: A Symposium on Disaster Behavioral Health Access for All*, visit <https://tinyurl.com/CECT2022>.** Registration prices range from \$15 to \$35 with discounts available for students.

Every day Vibrant works to change the conversation around mental health and establish wellness as a social responsibility. Part of that requires open and honest discussion about the disparities that exist for marginalized and underrepresented communities.

For more information about the Crisis Emotional Care Team, visit [vibrant.org/cect](https://vibrant.org/cect) or email [crisisectionalcare@vibrant.org](mailto:crisisectionalcare@vibrant.org).

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### **About Vibrant Emotional Health**

For 50 years, Vibrant Emotional Health, formerly the Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC), has been at the forefront of promoting emotional well-being for all people. As leaders, advocates, educators, and innovators in mental health, we have been raising awareness and offering support to people who are struggling. We work every single day to help save lives and assist people to get mental health care anytime, anywhere and in any way that works for them. Vibrant is a nationally recognized leader in disaster mental health and crisis intervention, and currently administers the Disaster Distress Helpline and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. We are unwavering in our belief that everyone can achieve emotional wellness with the right care and support.

### **About the Crisis Emotional Care Team**

In 2019, Vibrant Emotional Health and Disaster Psychiatry Outreach (DPO) joined forces to create the Crisis Emotional Care Team. For over 20 years, DPO mobilized psychiatrists to provide volunteer mental health services following large-scale disasters. Merging with Vibrant provided the opportunity to impact more lives. Vibrant expanded the DPO service model, providing emotional and mental health support to organizations and individuals recovering from disaster and crisis, both in the immediate and longer-term.

The Crisis Emotional Care Team (CECT) provides just-in-time support and care for those in the acute as well as longer-term recovery phases of a natural or human-caused disaster or crisis. Our team fosters individual and community resiliency by training emotional care providers to work collaboratively with those affected to build capacity, self-efficacy and the ability to apply standards of excellence and best practices.