



Bestself Plans East Side Mental Health Clinic Less Than a Mile from Tops

By [Tracey Drury](#)

Reporter, Buffalo Business First

May 1, 2023

BestSelf Behavioral Health is planning a 5,000-square-foot clinic on Buffalo's East Side as part of a new multi-use building in the Coldspring neighborhood.

The nonprofit mental health provider signed a lease with developer [Cory Haqq](#) to take about half of the ground floor space at a four-story, \$8.5 million affordable housing project he's developing on Jefferson at Dodge streets. The ground floor will also house a 3,000-square-foot organic grocery from Urban Fruits & Veggies.

Plans call for a full-service behavioral health clinic with various support services and ancillary programs, said [Kelly Dumas](#), chief operating officer at BestSelf.

"We've already been providing what has been coined 'nontraditional mental health supports' through our [Black mental health team](#). We're looking to embed those services into that clinic," she said.

Operating on a budget of \$95 million, BestSelf has grown to the region's largest behavioral health provider, with a 1,240-FTE workforce at 70 locations and 13 outpatient clinics.

With the Jefferson/Dodge office as its home base, the team will provide on-site services, as well as continue to collaborate with other community partners at locations including True Bethel Church and Zion Dominion and the Resource Council of Western New York.

Plans call for posting 20 to 30 employees at the clinic to provide services through its federally funded Certified Community Behavioral Health Center.

"Right now we don't have a full CCBHC in the East Side area. We have one on Broadway, but not one in this community," she said. "We've been trying, and it's been our desire for years to bring that service to the neighborhood, so that'll be home base."

The CCBHC program gives provides more latitude when it comes to creating programs that will boost care for patients with mental health needs. In addition to traditional counseling and therapy, BestSelf also offers such options as Zumba, meditation and music therapy for its clients.

The Black mental health team was created last year following the shootings at Tops, when BestSelf and other providers pulled together its Black mental health staffers and hired additional providers per diem and on contract. This new clinic will be located less than a mile from the Tops.

"That came directly out of the shootings when there was that strong cry from the community of needing mental health response supports to look like those who were directly impacted," Dumas said.