



Question for Statewide Candidates

**If elected, what will
you do to support our
mental health system to be
as responsive as possible to
adults, children and families
in Mississippi who are
affected by mental illness?**

Response from Candidate for Governor Jim Hood

Mental Health is an issue that I've been focused on for years. Due to legislative underfunding of community mental health services, Mississippi was sued for not adequately providing mental health services out in the communities. Despite my repeated requests to increase funding for community-based services after handing over millions in recoveries, the legislature and Tate Reeves consistently failed to do so.

As a result, we see too many people relying on the mental health services most costly to governments: jails, emergency rooms, and inpatient hospitalization at psychiatric hospitals. As governor, I will advocate for increased funding for community based mental health services and a more centralized mental health system so families are able to receive the treatment they need before reaching crisis levels that can lead to hospitalization, incarceration, and homelessness.



In addition to underfunding from the state level, many of the 14 regional mental health centers experience financial trouble due to uncompensated care. Last year alone, Mississippi's community mental health centers provided more than \$33 million in uncompensated care to uninsured or underinsured patients. As governor, I'll work with the legislature to increase access to health coverage by accepting \$1 billion per year the federal government is offering us. In states that have done so, those suffering from mental health issues receive treatment, services, and medication at higher rates than those like Mississippi that have not accepted federal assistance.