



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES  
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CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

JENNIFER VELEZ  
*Commissioner*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

LYNN A. KOVICH  
*Assistant Commissioner*

February 23, 2015

Dear Colleagues:

The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health recommended that a National Center for Trauma Informed Care (NCTIC) be developed to research evidence in trauma informed treatment (The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003.) NCTIC and SAMHSA have subsequently issued state toolkits for the development of systems that are trauma informed, and we have joined other states in efforts toward becoming Trauma Informed and Trauma Sensitive.

As DMHAS embarked on becoming Trauma Informed, we identified a State-level designee for Trauma-Informed Care, as well as work groups comprised of providers, administrators, and individuals with lived experience to advise us as we adapt the materials from SAMHSA to our needs here in New Jersey. You have received the benefits of their projects over the last year. Our Trauma Informed Care Work Group has developed a Blueprint for Action (attached.) This blueprint describes steps to infuse trauma-informed practices into the New Jersey Mental Health and Addictions system of care and provides specific recommendations and practices to meet the needs of trauma survivors.

Please review this Blueprint for Action, and begin to use the information that I have been circulating to you about trauma. Our work groups are now looking at assessment tools, as well as a system of care measurement tool to examine how trauma informed our service system is. We are widening the membership of our Trauma Informed Care work group. On February 6, 2015; I circulated an Agency Self-Assessment, and you were asked to look at staff competencies and begin to choose trauma champions from among your staff. Please consider this as a request to have your trauma champion(s) join us as we continue to develop technical assistance tools and direction for continued growth. Have your staff contact Kathi Bedard at: [Kathi.bedard@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:Kathi.bedard@dhs.state.nj.us) for information about our meetings and upcoming projects.

Thank you for joining with us in this important effort!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lynn A. Kovich".

Lynn A. Kovich  
Assistant Commissioner