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1. What would you propose to reduce stigma associated with mental health and substance use disorders?

I would propose advocating for legislation to increase access to behavioral health and substance abuse resources.

2. What strategies would you employ to reduce overdose deaths and suicides?

I would and have supported legislation that increases access to behavioral crisis programs. I have also supported legislation to increase access to recovery centers on the Lower Shore. Outside of Annapolis I am actively involved with the local American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Out of the Darkness walks. I also work closely with and support our local suicide prevention organization, Jesse's Paddle in Worcester County. As my late brother, Tony Carozza, was a victim of suicide, I will continue use my public position to support suicide prevention initiatives.

3. What specific initiatives would you to better address the prevention, early intervention and treatment needs of children and youth living with mental illness and/or substance use disorders?

I would and have advocated for initiatives that would address early intervention and treatment for children and youth. This past session, I voted in favor of the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018, which increases behavioral health resources in our local school systems to ensure that students can be referred and treated accordingly. Locally, I also am working with Peninsula Regional Medical Center on its application for a Certificate of Need to develop 15 new child and adolescent beds.

4. Maryland's older adults are the fastest growing demographic with unmet mental health and substance use disorder needs. How would you address the behavioral health needs of this population?

I believe we must better coordinate and maximize existing state and local behavioral health services to identify the gaps and build partnerships to increase resources and services to meet the current needs of older adults with unmet behavioral health needs.

5. What would you do to increase the availability of mental health and addiction providers in the state?

Within budget constraints, I would consider an increase of reimbursement rates for mental health and addiction providers based on future long-term cost savings that could materialize if

these services provided on the front end of patient care. In 2018 I supported legislation that establishes a pilot program for Maryland Medicaid to improve the quality of behavioral health services delivered in primary care settings.

6. How would you ensure health insurance plans are in compliance with existing behavioral health parity laws and educate consumers about their rights to equitable mental health and addiction coverage?

I would support incentives to increase insurance coverage of those suffering from mental illnesses. I also supported legislation this past session that requires insurers that use a provider panel to ensure that all enrollees have access to local health departments (LHDs) and covered services provided through LHDs, including behavioral health care services.

7. What would you do to ensure that low income individuals with mental health and substance use disorders have access to safe, stable and affordable housing?

I would support initiatives that strengthen partnerships at the local level between behavioral health services and programs focused on increasing affordable housing for the underserved.

8. What strategies would you employ to address the overrepresentation of individuals with behavioral health needs in Maryland jails and prisons?

I will continue to support the appropriate implementation of the Justice Reinvestment Act. Last session, I voted for legislation that would allow individuals found incompetent to stand trial or a danger to themselves or others to be placed in a healthcare facility instead of jail.

9. Given the continuing rise in demand for mental health and substance use disorder services, what steps would you take to move Maryland toward a system with true on-demand access and comprehensive behavioral health crisis response services?

I would seek the recommendations of local behavioral health professionals before committing to a specific approach to moving to a on-demand access system. Within budget constraints, I would continue to support additional funding for mental health providers and crisis centers.