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VNS Health Gets \$34M Contract for Intensive Mental Health Treatment

JACQUELINE NEBER



Photo: Buck Ennis

Intensive mobile treatment teams provide New Yorkers with mental illness with support and treatment, including medication.

Midtown-based home and community health care provider VNS Health has received a \$34 million contract from the city Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for its intensive mobile treatment program.

Tara Noto, the vice president of behavioral health at VNS Health, said the organization already operates five IMT teams and the contract adds two more. Each team is working with 27 patients; one serves clients in Brooklyn and Staten Island and the other covers Queens.

Prescribers such as nurse practitioners and psychiatrists, behavioral health specialists and peer advocates will work with New Yorkers and travel to where they are to provide treatment, Noto said. [Intensive mobile treatment](#) teams provide New Yorkers with serious mental illness with support and treatment including medication, substance-use care and connections to housing. Teams work with clients who have exhibited recent unsafe and escalating behavior.

The city is working to expand the program's capacity to reach more individuals, a goal outlined by Mayor Eric Adams in the latest update on his plan to address mental illness.

In addition to the program, VNS Health operates mobile crisis teams that provide short-term, in-home behavioral health services for people who are experiencing crisis, care through the state's Health Home program for Medicaid recipients, and suicide prevention outreach for at-risk young adults who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or nonbinary or as people of color.

According to the Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health, 837 New Yorkers can be served by intensive mobile treatment teams in the city at any given time. Adams has committed to [doubling](#) IMT capacity moving forward.

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