

## Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams

Support \$3.5 million for EOE Line Item #: 9110-1640  
in FY 24 budget, a \$1 million increase

### Background:

- According to MA Healthy Aging data, 1 in 3 older adults are diagnosed with a behavioral health condition.
- Older adults are the **least likely** of any age group to receive treatment due to barriers including: ageism/ableism, cost of co-pays, social isolation, difficulty getting to appointments/accessing telehealth
- Untreated behavioral health conditions are associated with high health costs including high rates of hospitalization/ED use, nursing home admissions, and preventable health concerns.

### Recommendation:

- Add \$1 million to the Geriatric Mental Health Line item over the Governor's FY23 H2 Budget to expand access to Elder Mental Health Outreach Services (EMHOTs) across the Commonwealth.

### Proven Track Record:

- EMHOTs overcome treatment barriers by working with older adults **in their own homes** to address issues associated with behavioral health conditions, such as chronic diseases, social isolation, housing insecurity, and financial challenges.
- The current allocation of \$2.5 million is a significant investment which provides vital services but is only enough to cover [less than 50% of the municipalities.](#)

### Estimated Cost Savings:

- From 7/1/2021 through 12/31/2021 92 individuals referred to EMHOTs were in crisis. If these 92 individuals were hospitalized due to lack of EMHOT services, the economic impact would be between \$460,000 to \$1,472,000 (at \$5k to \$16k per admission).
- This is massive increase over the \$826 average per client cost of the EMHOTs for the 564 EMHOT clients who received services in the first six months of 2021.
- Providers report that EMHOTs are critical to helping avoid unwanted and costly nursing home admissions.