

# **Rep. Kelly Underscores Importance of Increased Mental Health Care Access for Black Americans**

May 5 2022 1:10 PM



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Robin Kelly (IL-02), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, released the following statement underscoring the importance of mental health care access, especially among Black Americans:

“Data shows that both new instances of mental health issues and exacerbation of existing mental health issues are on the rise across the country. According to the Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, Black adults in the U.S. are more likely than white adults to report persistent symptoms of emotional distress.

“However only one in three Black Adults who need mental health care receive it. Additionally, there is a growing mental health crisis among our youth. According to the CDC, only 20 percent of children with mental health issues receive care from a specialized mental health provider.

“We must continue working to expand availability of care, increase the diversity of our mental healthcare workforce, develop culturally informed models of care, expand telehealth options and make mental health care more affordable.

“Awareness of mental health conditions and treatment options are increasing, but stigma still exists, especially among Black Americans. Mental health is just as important as physical health, and there is no shame in asking for help.

“This Mental Health Month, we will continue normalizing talking about our mental health while connecting our communities to care and working to make our healthcare system work better for everyone.”