



HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER
TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY

T E X A S — **M I N D**
S T A T E *of*
THE MEADOWS MENTAL HEALTH POLICY INSTITUTE

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Mental Health Thought Leaders Gather for Forum in Round Rock

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute and Texas A&M Health Science Center host discussion of regional mental health landscape as part of Texas State of Mind tour

- At least 500,000 Texas adults have serious and persistent mental illness, and over 175,000 Texas children have severe emotional disturbance.
- Over 90 percent of Texas counties have shortages of mental health professionals in all or part of their county, especially those that are culturally and linguistically diverse.
- On any given day, there are more people in the state's criminal justice system with serious mental illness than in Texas state mental health hospitals.

These are just some of the concerns that led the Texas A&M Health Science Center to host the local installment of The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute's (MMHPI) statewide "Texas State of Mind" tour. Today's event at the Texas A&M Health Science Center in Round Rock brought together more than 100 mental health professionals, civic and business leaders and public officials to discuss mental health issues and best practices in Round Rock and throughout the state.

Among the featured speakers and panelists were The Honorable Dr. Charles Schwertner, Texas Senate, and MMHPI president and chief executive officer Tom Luce. Panels of local experts discussed Round Rock issues surrounding the state of mental health services for children, veterans and individuals involved in the justice system.

"Mental health is an issue that reaches us all, in big or small ways. To impact change, it's imperative that we all work together - organizations, facilities, providers and elected officials - in order to improve how mental health services are provided and how we as Texans view the disease," said Jim Donovan, M.D., vice dean at the Texas A&M College of Medicine in Round Rock. "We are proud to partner with Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute to raise awareness and join the conversation on this crucial subject."

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The Round Rock event was the third stop on the MMHPI's "Texas State of Mind" tour. Held throughout the fall in cities around Texas, each tour event is regionally tailored, bringing together partners, speakers and decision makers to discuss, analyze and raise public awareness on key regional and statewide mental health issues. The tour has already visited El Paso and Fort Worth, with additional events planned in Amarillo, Houston and Laredo.

"With the upcoming 2015 legislative session, we have a unique opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how mental health care is delivered to Texans," said Luce. "In order to impact change, input from those at the local level is critical. We hope that this tour will spark thoughtful conversations about mental health issues and help us identify and implement promising best practices and policies."

The "Texas State of Mind" tour follows the successful launch of the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute in April 2014. The Meadows Foundation established the institute to work with partners across the state to identify best practices, explore innovative new approaches, and find policies that work to deliver efficient and effective mental health care to Texans.

About The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that identifies and encourages the implementation of mental health policies and practices to enable Texans to get help when and where they need it.

About Texas A&M Health Science Center

Texas A&M Health Science Center is **Transforming Health** through innovative research, education and service in dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health and medical sciences. As an independent state agency and academic unit of Texas A&M University, the health science center serves the state through campuses in Bryan-College Station, Dallas, Temple, Houston, Round Rock, Kingsville, Corpus Christi and McAllen. Learn more at news.tamhsc.edu or follow [@TAMHSC](https://twitter.com/TAMHSC) on Twitter.

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