

QUARTERLY REPORT Q2

(April – June 2022)

INTRODUCTION

Young adults ages 18-25 experience the highest rates of depression among adults in the US, and communities of color are disproportionately affected due to racial disparities across the mental health system. As rates of depression among black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) youth increase, not enough is being done by mental health providers to respond. StrongMinds is addressing this growing youth mental health crisis by launching **StrongMinds America**.

Compelled by the severe lack of mental health services for BIPOC youth experiencing depression, StrongMinds is leveraging its deep experience expanding access to depression treatment in Africa—where we have treated more than 150,000 people suffering with depression--and adapting our evidence-based, culturally appropriate group interpersonal therapy (IPT-G) model to meet the needs of youth adults in the US.

Our work begins in Newark, New Jersey, identified as a mental health shortage area by the Health Resources and Services Administration, and will continue until we have transformed mental health care across America.

Q2/2022 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- We are thrilled to report that our new presence in the US has a new name: **StrongMinds America**. We have secured a web domain and website development is underway.
- Rosco Kasujja, Ph.D., the StrongMinds Uganda Director of Innovations and a recognized global expert in IPT-G, traveled to the United States in June to conduct a clinical training with the team at StrongMinds America. The weeks-long training was rigorous, and all attendees reported it was instrumental in preparing them to operate depression talk therapy groups. We are incredibly grateful to Dr. Kasujja for sharing his time and expertise. Our clinical team at StrongMinds American is now positioned to offer transformative help and support to depressed young adults in Newark.
- We are so pleased to report that StrongMinds America received a generous grant of \$50,000 from a funder in New Jersey that has allowed us to hire clinical program staff and provide specialized IPT-G training.
- We onboarded mental health program staff of three, including a Program Manager and clinical staff comprised of an LCSW and LPC:
 - **De'Jon Buie, MPA (Program Manager)** - De'Jon has more than a decade of experience in the nonprofit sector, with a focus in child welfare, foster care, and family advocacy. De'Jon most recently served as a Family Advisor with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and led a consulting firm where she provided organizational leadership strategies to nonprofit organizations in New Jersey and New York. De'Jon holds a Bachelor of Human

Services and a Master of Public Administration from the Metropolitan College of New York. She also holds a Certificate in Business Excellence from Columbia School of Business.

- **Catina Burkett, LCSW, ACSW** - Tina is a seasoned Licensed Clinical Social Worker with many years of experience as a private practitioner and within several community-based organizations spanning New York, New Jersey, and South Carolina. She specializes in both individual and group work, providing psychosocial assessments, therapeutic services, counseling, and planning that enhance a patient's ability to set goals, problem-solve and connect with appropriate resources for ongoing support. Tina holds a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from Columbia College and a Master of Social Work in Individual and Families from the University of South Carolina.
- **Terri Hunter, MA, LPC, NBCC** - Terri is a Licensed Professional Counselor with several years of experience in mental health education and counseling. Terri has strong connections within StrongMinds' targeted areas, including Newark, and most recently worked with RWJ Newark Beth Israel Hospital, Trinitas Regional Medical Center, and many nonprofit organizations where she provided group and individual services to youth and adults. She is a National Board-Certified Counselor and earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Bloomfield College and a Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Caldwell University.
- An informative report based on focus groups with young people in Newark was completed for StrongMinds and work has begun to review and disseminate key findings. A task force will examine recommendations and modify the program model accordingly. Key findings address preferences regarding in-person, online, or hybrid therapy, developing trust with the client population, and overcoming stigma surrounding mental health treatment, particularly in BIPOC communities.

FOCUS FOR Q3

- Complete preparations for launch of first depression groups to start in August.
- Conduct enrollment and screening of BIPOC youth into talk therapy groups.
- Continue to identify potential programming and funding partners for StrongMinds America.
- Launch the StrongMinds America website and social media channels.

PLANS FOR Q4

- Leverage learnings and complete plans/budget for 2023.
- Continue to identify potential partners for program/fundraising.
- Continue to plan for a separate 501c3 entity (to include a NJ focused Board of Directors) to begin by the start of 2023.