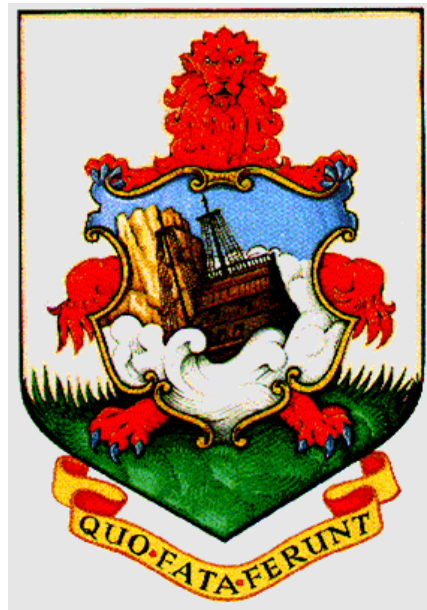


# MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

## Ending the Silence: Reflections on Mental Health Anti-Stigma Month



Prepared for

The Honourable Kim N. Wilson, JP, MP  
Minister of Health

*May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

**Mr. Speaker,**

As Mental Health Anti-Stigma Month comes to a close, I rise today not only to reflect on the progress we have made throughout May, but to reaffirm this Government's sustained efforts to reduce stigma, expand access to care, and invest in the mental wellbeing of the people of Bermuda.

Mental health affects every family, every workplace, every school, and every community in this country. Yet for far too long, stigma has prevented too many people from seeking the support they need. As Minister of Health, I want to be clear: this Government is committed to building a Bermuda where asking for help is seen as a sign of strength, not weakness; where mental wellness is treated with the same urgency and compassion as physical health; and where no person feels isolated because of their mental health challenges.

Throughout this month, Bermuda demonstrated once again that when we speak openly about mental health, we create safer, healthier, and more connected communities.

**Mr. Speaker**, this year's programme was one of the most active and collaborative to date. We began in Victoria Park, where partners from across the island joined us to launch the month and highlight the importance of early intervention, education, and open dialogue. From that moment, the momentum carried through every week, with meaningful conversations and community engagement taking place across Bermuda.

One of the most impactful events was the Youth Mental Health Debate, where young people explored the balance between privacy, autonomy, and parental involvement in accessing care.

Their thoughtful and courageous contributions reflected the real-world challenges young people face today and reinforced the importance of creating systems that both protect their rights and support families. Their leadership continues to help shape our work on youth mental health reform, and I commend them for using their voices to challenge stigma and encourage understanding among their peers.

**Mr. Speaker,** I also want to recognize the outstanding contribution of CedarBridge Academy, whose Vibe Tribe Mental Health Awareness Committee led a full week of student-designed activities focused on emotional wellbeing, peer support, creative expression, and honest conversations about mental health.

What these students demonstrated is exactly what we need more of in Bermuda, young people leading with empathy, openness, and courage. Their efforts are helping to normalize conversations around mental health and create environments where students feel safe to speak up and seek support.

We also hosted a Youth Mental Health Town Hall at Bermuda College, focusing on digital wellness and the impact of social media on mental health and relationships. Local experts shared valuable insights into how digital platforms influence emotional wellbeing and discussed practical strategies to support healthier online habits and healthier connections.

These conversations are essential, particularly as we continue to navigate the growing mental health impacts associated with social

media, cyberbullying, and digital pressures affecting our young people.

We will conclude our Anti-Stigma Month celebration at our Annual Move More Games on June 19th, 2026, where this year, and in the years ahead, the integration of physical and mental wellness will remain a key priority.

As part of this celebration, we will recognize mental health advocates from across the community whose dedication continues to break down stigma and promote wellness for all. The Ministry is proud to honor and celebrate these individuals at Move More Games.

**Mr. Speaker**, while awareness is critically important, awareness alone is not enough. It must be matched by action and investment.

That is why, in the 2025 Mid-Year Budget Review, the Government committed \$2,290,000 to strengthen Bermuda's comprehensive mental health support programme. This investment expanded access to counselling and therapeutic services through

organizations including Family Centre, Age Concern, the Women's Resource Centre, MASC, and the Youth Mental Health Plan delivered through the Bermuda College Foundation.

This investment reflects our belief that there is no health without mental health. It also reflects our commitment to ensuring that every resident has access to timely, affordable, compassionate, and stigma-free care.

**Mr. Speaker**, reducing stigma requires more than policy. It requires people coming together with compassion, honesty, and a willingness to support one another.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Bermuda Hospitals Board and the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute; to Family Centre, Solstice, the Department of Education, Bermuda College, the Bermuda Mental Health Foundation, Mindful Employer Bermuda, Simply Bloom, and all of our partners whose leadership and collaboration made this month a success.

**Mr. Speaker**, although Mental Health Anti-Stigma Month may be ending, our work certainly does not end here.

This Government remains committed to expanding access to care, strengthening services, modernizing mental health legislation, and continuing to invest in the organizations and professionals who support Bermudians every single day.

Together, let us continue building a Bermuda where stigma has no place; where mental wellness is embraced as a shared national priority; and where every person feels seen, supported, and empowered to seek help without fear or shame.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.