Understanding the Superstorm Sandy Profiles: Behavioral Health Conditions At-a-Glance

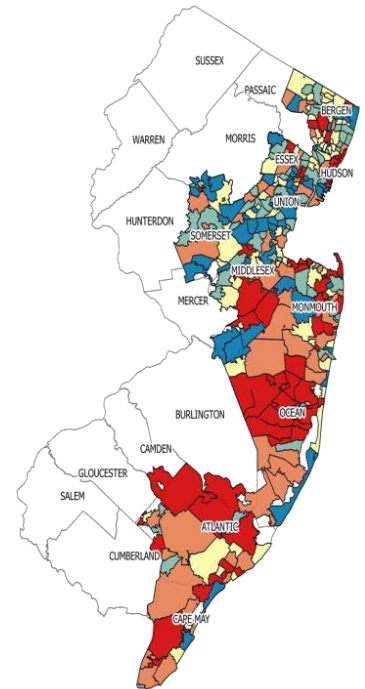## Superstorm Sandy Devastates New Jersey

On October 29, 2012 Superstorm Sandy hit the Eastern Seaboard of New Jersey displacing thousands of residents and destroying homes and businesses.

The disaster placed more than 822,000 Medicare Fee-for-Service beneficiaries at an elevated risk for behavioral health issues, especially those with pre-existing mental health conditions.

Project Framework

HQSI received funding from Medicare for a special innovations project designed to develop data profiles to assist 10 selected communities—within the 10 FEMA-declared disaster counties—form targeted, community-based approaches to:

- Increasing Medicare-covered depression screenings among at-risk beneficiaries residing in the 10 targeted communities
- Using behavioral health data to enhance each community's ability to coordinate behavioral health services during and after a disaster

Selected Behavioral Health Conditions

The eight behavioral health conditions highlighted in these profiles were chosen based on literature and data review and analysis as well as on feedback from the subject matter experts consulted for the project. The following conditions were chosen for these profiles:

- Depression or proxy disorders
- Depression
- Adjustment disorders
- Anxiety disorders

- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Substance abuse alone
- Suicide and intentional self-inflicted injury

The depression or proxy disorders measure was developed by HQSI since estimating the widespread presence or occurrence of depression using claims data can be difficult. Depression is often undiagnosed and can be present with symptoms of anxiety and adjustment disorders. Therefore, if a beneficiary is diagnosed with at least one of these three conditions, they appear in this profile under depression or proxy disorders.

What's in This Section of the Profiles?

Summary charts of quarterly and annual trends in the widespread presence or occurrence of the eight selected behavioral health conditions

- County: Pages 19 – 20; Community: Pages 14 – 15

Population demographics and breakdown of beneficiaries diagnosed with depression or proxy disorders before and after Superstorm Sandy

- County: Pages 21 – 23; Community: Pages 16 – 18

Observations on the annual trend, widespread presence, and percent change as well as the quarterly new occurrences of selected behavioral health conditions

- County: Pages 24 -33; Community: Pages 19 -28

How to Use These Profiles

- The selected behavioral health conditions data can help providers determine which population and which diagnoses may need more attention or extra planning when preparing for the treatment of beneficiaries with behavioral health conditions

Where to Find the Profiles

All 10 county and community profiles are available on the HQSI website at:
http://www.hqsi.org/index/Super-Storm-Sandy/Super-Storm-Sandy-Profiles.html