



National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery

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President Trump's Statement Blaming Gun Violence on People with Mental Health Conditions Is Outrageous, Says National Organization of Mental Health Advocates with "Lived Experience"

[Press Release – August 7, 2019]

WASHINGTON (August 7, 2019)—The National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery (NCMHR), which advocates to improve policies affecting individuals with mental health conditions nationwide, offers its sincere condolences to all those affected by the tragedies in El Paso and Dayton.

At the same time, the NCMHR is disgusted by [President Trump's recent statement](#) in which he conflated perpetrators of violence and people with psychiatric diagnoses.

"As a national organization representing persons with mental health issues—many of whom are trauma survivors—the National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery condemns President Trump's statement blaming people with mental health conditions for gun violence," said NCMHR co-founder and board president Daniel B. Fisher, MD, PhD, a psychiatrist with lived experience of a mental health condition.

"As the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, and [numerous studies](#) have reported, people with mental health conditions are the wrong scapegoat after mass shootings," Dr. Fisher continued. "Instead, frequently the shooter in these tragedies is an isolated, [angry](#) white male with an automatic weapon.

"But the President refuses to take responsibility for his central role in ginning up racism and anti-immigrant hatred in countless statements and [at numerous rallies](#) over a period of years.

"Economic and social oppression have alienated and disempowered people, putting the American Dream out of reach for many. We need a more economically and socially equitable society to address the roots of society's anger. It is crucial that we hear, and respect, the voices of people angered by these economic factors, because so many feel unheard and unrespected.

"And we must immediately pass and implement effective gun control laws. *When economist [Richard Florida](#) examined gun deaths and other social indicators, he found that higher populations, more stress, more immigrants, and more mental illness didn't correlate with more gun deaths. But he did find one telling correlation: States with tighter gun control laws have fewer gun-related deaths.*

"After a mass shooting in 1996, Australia adopted tougher gun control laws—and this resulted in a huge decrease in gun violence.

"Unfortunately, [many of our legislators feel obligated to the National Rifle Association](#). Republicans received nearly \$6 million in the 2016 election cycle; Democrats received \$106,000. [President Trump received at least \\$21 million](#) from the gun lobby. At the same time, [90% of Americans support background checks](#) for all gun sales.

"We can do this. At long last, we just need to summon the political will."

The [National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery](#) (NCMHR) works to ensure that people with psychiatric diagnoses have a major voice in the development and implementation of health care, mental health, and social policies at the state and national levels, empowering people to recover and lead full lives in the community.

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