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Brightli and Centerstone announce plans to merge and create nation's largest nonprofit provider of behavioral health services

SPRINGFIELD, Missouri — Two of the most influential nonprofit behavioral health providers, Brightli and Centerstone, have entered into a non-binding agreement with the intent to merge and create a unified organization.

The due diligence process is underway, and upon the transaction's anticipated close in November 2025, the combined organization will serve a quarter million people annually and be the largest nonprofit provider of mental health and substance use disorder care across the country.

Brightli is a Springfield, Missouri-based company with more than 6,000 associated employees working at more than 220 locations in five states. Its multiple subsidiaries and affiliates include Adult & Child Health, Burrell Behavioral Health, Clarity Healthcare, Firefly Supported Living & Employment Services, Places for People, Preferred Family Healthcare, and Southeast Missouri Behavioral Health. Centerstone is a Nashville, Tennessee-based company with 4,300 employees working at 140 locations across six states plus an international network of more than 1,500 providers serving patients globally. Centerstone also provides nationwide services to veterans and military families and operates its own Institute for Clinical Excellence and Innovation. The two organizations, Brightli and Centerstone, are projecting collective annual revenue totals exceeding one billion dollars.

By joining together, Brightli and Centerstone will have the opportunity to transform mental health and substance use disorder care in a way that neither organization could have achieved alone. Combining expertise, scale, and resources unlocks new possibilities for the organization to serve more people, improve health outcomes, and expand access to life-changing care.

"This partnership represents an incredible opportunity to shape the future of care," Brightli CEO C.J. Davis said. "Across Brightli's history, our organization and affiliates have led more than 25 successful mergers and affiliations across our network. We have seen firsthand the power of joining forces to expand access and improve outcomes. We share Centerstone's deep commitment to compassion, connection, and measurable impact. Together, we're not just growing. We're building a stronger, more sustainable system of care that breaks down barriers and saves lives."



“Growth is deeply embedded in Centerstone’s culture, driving our mission to reach more people in need of mental health and substance use disorder services,” Centerstone CEO David C. Guth, Jr. said. “Since 1997, we have completed 20 affiliations and mergers expanding our footprint and amplifying our impact while preserving local expertise and care delivery. This partnership not only positions us to more effectively navigate the changing behavioral health landscape, but it also helps us achieve our goal of providing more services to more people in need. Additionally, it enables us to further ensure the precision application of science-based care, allowing us to deliver the right treatments to the right people at the right time, all backed by data, research, and measurable outcomes.”

Upon the successful completion of the due diligence phase and approval from regulatory and accreditation agencies, the organization will have more than 360 outpatient, inpatient, and residential locations across nine U.S. states and will have clinical staff serving the mental health needs of students in more than 1,500 K-12 schools across the nation. There will be no disruption to patient care resulting from the merger; Brightli and Centerstone patients will continue to see the same providers they know and trust.

The mental health and substance use care delivery model in the U.S. is at a critical inflection point. Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health providers across the nation faced record-high demand for services. The increased need coupled with workforce shortages, stagnant or even dwindling reimbursements, shifting regulatory requirements, and other challenges have made providing this critically needed care more difficult, especially for smaller providers with fewer resources.

“The merger of Brightli and Centerstone represents a bold and forward-thinking step in strengthening our nation’s behavioral health system,” Chuck Ingoglia, President and CEO of the National Council for Mental Wellbeing said. “By combining resources, expertise, and innovative approaches to care, these organizations are poised to not only expand access, but they’re also setting a new standard for how high-quality, community-based mental health and substance use treatment can be delivered at scale. This partnership is a unique opportunity to enhance efficiency, reduce the overall cost of care, and ultimately create a more sustainable model for behavioral health delivery. The National Council looks forward to learning from this partnership and sharing lessons learned with our members across the country.”

Amidst this rapidly evolving mental health and substance use care landscape, Centerstone and Brightli have been evaluating ways to advance their leadership in care delivery and accelerate innovation while remaining deeply rooted in compassion and healing for the people and communities served by their teams.

**About Brightli:**

Brightli is the one of the largest nonprofit behavioral health, addiction treatment, and developmental disability services provider networks in the U.S. and is the parent company of Burrell Behavioral Health, Comprehensive Mental Health Services, Preferred Family Healthcare, Clarity Healthcare, Southeast Missouri Behavioral Health, Firefly Supported Living & Employment Services, Adult & Child Health, Places for People, and the Brightli Foundation. Services are available in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Learn more by visiting [Livebrightli.org](https://livebrightli.org).

About Centerstone:

Centerstone is one of the nation's largest nonprofit health systems, specializing in mental health and substance use disorder treatments for people of all ages. Services are available in Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee through the operation of outpatient clinics, residential programs, school-based services, telehealth, and an inpatient hospital. Centerstone also offers specialized programs available nationwide for the military community, as well as services for children, including therapeutic foster care. Centerstone's Institute provides guidance through research and technology, leveraging the best evidence-based practices for use across our communities. Centerstone's Foundation secures philanthropic resources to support the work and mission of delivering care that changes people's lives. Learn more by visiting [Centerstone.org](https://centerstone.org).

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