**GENERAL ELECTIONS 2022**

**SUGGESTED EMAIL TO LOCAL CANDIDATES:**

Dear NAME,

I am writing to you today as a constituent of ELECTORATE NAME electorate to express my concern at the large gaps in care for young KENYANS with more serious and complex mental health issues.

**We encourage you to include a personal story here about why you think it’s important to invest in mental health services for these particularly vulnerable young Kenyans. Here’s an example you can use for inspiration:**

[I/my sister/brother/cousin/friend etc. have/has been having difficulties with my/his/her/their mental health since [year]. My/her/his/their experience of accessing mental health care [describe the challenges in accessing mental health services or the right amount/length of treatment and how it could have been improved].

Just like me/my sister/brother/cousin/friend, tens of thousands of young Kenyans are experiencing serious or complex mental health issues. Early Childhood Traumatic Experiences have become a common thing for many youths. There is a huge need for more preventive measures and access to Mental Health care than is available within the public hospitals and community services. Young people want services brought to the county level through integrating the Youth Centres and use of community based friendly organizations.

I strongly believe that mental ill-health should be treated similarly to other illnesses: with a priority on early intervention and access to services. I am not alone in these beliefs. Recent confirmations by the ministry of health have demonstrated that 1 in 4 Kenyan live with a mental health illness. [Experts join forces for mental health in Kenya](https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2021/05/23/default-calendar/experts-join-forces-for-mental-health-in-kenya#:~:text=A%20staggering%201%20out%20of,substance%20and%20alcohol%20use%20disorders). This makes our future deem and dreams elusive. Preventive and Promotive Mental Health Should be a priority for the next government.

As a representative of the interests of our electorate, I hope you agree that these young futures matter. With a general election approaching I ask you and your party to state a commitment to investing in preventive initiatives and support for young people with more serious and complex mental health issues.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,

YOUR NAME