

NJAMHAA CEO Emphasizes Value of Providers and Need for Adequate Fee for Service Rates at DHS Budget

Debra Wentz, PhD, Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, testified on the FY 2015 state budget before the Department of Human Services (DHS) Commissioner Jennifer Velez, Esq., and other DHS staff.

"We must demonstrate that we value the people who are in need of behavioral healthcare services and we must value those who provide these services. As with everything, what you gain from something is directly related to what you put into it. We urge you to develop your fiscal year 2015 budget based on recognizing the value of all providers in our behavioral healthcare system and what they contribute to all New Jersey residents whose lives depend on behavioral healthcare services," Dr. Wentz stated.

Naturally, Dr. Wentz continued her ongoing advocacy for adequate reimbursement rates in the new Fee for Service system. "We urge DHS to ensure that Fee for Service rates cover all costs: utilities, building maintenance and repairs, compliance-related activities, health insurance for staff, overhead costs and many other expenses, in addition to the costs of providing care. The rates also need to cover funding that may be lost from county governments, grants from private foundations and other funds gained through fundraising, as well as state contracts," she said.