

NJAMHAA Calls on Legislature to Preserve MH/SA Funding

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“Nearly \$2 billion is saved for new Jersey’s citizens annually as a result of treating individuals in the community rather than in state institutions, while more than \$1 billion is saved by investing in addictions programs,” said Dr. Wentz. The cost of treating individuals in the community is only a fraction of the \$160,000 annual cost in state institutions, while studies indicate that for every \$1 spent on addictions treatment, between \$7 and \$12 is saved in other costs.

Noting that a large percentage of those with mental illness and/or addiction disorders do not access the support they need, she said community providers are straining under ballooning costs and increased demand and regulatory burdens without the resources they need. Recognizing the state’s enormous fiscal constraints, she urged the Legislature to explore proposals to save time and funding that could be utilized to provide additional treatment and services. She proposed shifting resources from incarceration to treatment and reducing time-consuming regulatory burdens that do not improve the quality of care.