

NJAMHAA Promotes Community Based Providers as Life Savers and Economic Engines

"Community providers measure their success in both lives saved and savings of tax dollars and contributions to the state's overall economy," wrote

Debra L. Wentz, PhD, Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, in an op-ed piece published in the Times of Trenton (March 17, 2014).

"The evidence-based treatment and other services afforded by these expert providers are effective. For those who can access mental health treatment, 70 percent to 90 percent are able to reduce the symptoms and impact of their illnesses with a combination of treatment and support, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA also reported high success rates of substance use treatment: as high as 92 percent for heroin," Dr. Wentz explained.

"In addition to being effective, community-based services save taxpayers more than \$1 billion a year by preventing high-cost inpatient care. For example, in the 1970s, nearly 15,000 adults were in state psychiatric hospitals; the current census is fewer than 2,000, thanks to improved treatment options and other supports and progress in reducing stigma," she added.

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