

Parity Rules Help Ensure Access to Care, Reduce Healthcare Costs and Help Eliminate Stigma

Earlier today, the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor and Treasury released the final rules for implementation of the federal 2008 Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), which requires insurance companies that offer coverage for behavioral health care to do so at parity with medical and surgical healthcare services. Behavioral healthcare coverage, as well as compliance with the parity law, is required for insurance plans that are part of the Health Insurance Marketplace, as mental healthcare and addiction treatment services are part of the Essential Health Benefits that apply to these plans.

"The passage of MHPAEA was exciting news and today's release of the final rules for implementation, which have been too long in coming, is monumental. We are ecstatic that equal health insurance coverage will soon be a reality for many individuals who need mental healthcare and addiction treatment services," said NJAMHAA CEO Debra Wentz, PhD.

"With parity of behavioral healthcare coverage, not only will consumers have the opportunity to greatly enhance the quality of their lives, but there will also be tremendous cost savings to New Jersey and the nation," Dr. Wentz added.

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