A Guide to the Federal Parity Law
On June 30, 2016, the Legal Action Center released Health Insurance for Addiction and Mental Health Care: A Guide to the Federal Parity Law. The Guide explains patients’ and providers’ rights to insurance coverage for substance use and mental disorders.

The Guide includes:

- A summary of the federal parity law
- An in-depth explanation of the federal parity law for those who want more information
- A list of “red flags,” or signs that your insurer might be violating the law
- A tool to help you determine what type of health plan you have
- Information about some additional protections under New York State law
- What to do if you can’t get health insurance coverage for substance use or mental health care
- Sample appeals, letters, and complaints

HRSA Updates Lists of Health Professional Shortage Areas
On July 1, 2016, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) published a notice of all geographic areas, population groups, and facilities designated as primary medical care, mental health, and dental health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) as of May 13, 2016. New Jersey currently has 33 mental health HPSAs and 30 primary care HPSAs.

“The lists are reviewed and revised every year or as needed. Qualified providers in HPSAs are eligible for increased levels of Medicare reimbursement, and entities with clinical training sites in these areas are eligible to receive priority for certain residency training program grants administered by HRSA’s Bureau of Health Workforce. Nonprofit entities also can apply to have National Health Service Corps personnel assigned to provide care to these areas,” according to the American Hospital Association’s July 1, 2016 News Now edition.

NJAMHAA is sharing the following information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HRSA website:

There are currently approximately 4,000 Mental Health HPSAs
Mental Health HPSAs are based on a psychiatrist to population ratio of 1:30,000. In other words, when there are 30,000 or more people per psychiatrist, an area is eligible to be designated as a mental health HPSA. Applying this formula, it would take approximately 2,800 additional psychiatrists to eliminate the current mental health HPSA designations. Additionally while the regulations allow mental health HPSA designations to be based either on psychiatrist to population ratio or core mental health provider to population ratio, most mental health HPSA designations are currently based on the psychiatrists only
to population ratio. Core mental health providers include psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, psychiatric nurse specialists, and marriage and family therapists.

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**New UN Resolution on Mental Health and Human Rights**

*NJAMHAA is sharing the following information from Dr. Michelle Funk, Coordinator, Mental Health Policy and Service Development (MHP), Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse at the World Health Organization:*

Today, 1 July 2016, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a Resolution on Mental Health and Human Rights, led by Portugal and Brazil and cosponsored by 61 countries, with more countries still joining.

The resolution highlights:

i) that “persons with mental health conditions or psychosocial disabilities, in particular persons using mental health services, may be subject to, inter alia, widespread discrimination, stigma, prejudice, violence, social exclusion and segregation, unlawful or arbitrary institutionalization, over-medicalization and treatment practices that fail to respect their autonomy, will and preferences” and

ii) “the need for States to take active steps to fully integrate a human rights perspective into mental health and community services, particularly with a view to eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination within that context, and to promote the right of everyone to full inclusion and effective participation in society”

This resolution provides additional impetus to address human rights in mental health and also signals a commitment by countries to achieve this.

In the next weeks we will send you an update on the actions that WHO is taking through its QualityRights initiative, along with information and suggestions about how you can join our efforts to improve quality of care and respect for human rights in mental health services around the world.

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**DHS Seeks Feedback on Addendum to State Transition Plan; Listening Sessions Scheduled; Comments Due Aug. 31st**

*NJAMHAA is sharing the following information from the Department of Human Services that was sent on July 1, 2016:*

**On behalf of acting Commissioner Elizabeth Connolly…**

Dear Stakeholder:
Today the Department released for public comment an Addendum to the Statewide Transition Plan (STP) that was submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in April 2015.

The addendum is a DRAFT response to an October 2015 letter from CMS requesting supplemental information and clarifications to the proposed plan. With input from affected residents, providers and partner state agencies, the Department has made revisions for which it will be accepting public comment from July 1 – August 31, 2016.

I’ve already spoken with some of you about our proposals and I’m encouraged from the feedback. I think that together we’ve struck a balance of interests that has resulted in a workable, reasonable blueprint for transition, with policies that comply with the HCBS rules and a level of flexibility and openness to reviewing innovative operations under certain circumstances.

The Department will host three STP Addendum Listening Sessions for individuals interested in sharing their constructive input in person. Those dates and locations are listed below. There also is a Webinar posted online.

Many of the topics covered in the Addendum address issues that were raised during the STP public comment period and that have remained areas of interest to the DD community, in particular.

Specifically, it:

- Formalizes a state process for Density Review of residential settings that don’t meet the HCBS criteria but can show how individuals living there will be meaningfully integrated in their communities. Provider will have to meet a high bar to prove that true and meaningful integration is occurring. Developers/Providers will not be able to apply for state density review until the setting is operational and occupied. The state will not provide funding until the density review process is completed and approved.

- Adds a Heightened Scrutiny Review for residential settings presumed to have institution-like qualities. Developers/Providers cannot apply for CMS’ Heightened Scrutiny review until the setting is operational and occupied. The state then can submit to CMS evidence demonstrating that the setting does have the qualities of a HCBS. Until the review is completed and approved by CMS, the state will not provide funding to support the residents.

- Changes day-program settings requirement to allow for a more individualized approach to integration. Community experiences and ideas for community opportunities will be included in each individual’s PCPT. Providers also will: identify community opportunities and areas of interest along with potential barriers, solutions, and support needs related to community integration strategies; track individual progress to achieving community integration goals, and; conduct community outreach and maintain lists of connections, events, and ongoing opportunities to be posted and reviewed with individuals regularly when developing activity schedules.
As always, we welcome your feedback. The public comment period for the STP Addendum is from **July 1 – August 31, 2016.** Submissions can be sent by email to **mahs.hcbs@dhs.state.nj.us** or by USPS to:

**Statewide Transition Plan**  
**NJ Department of Human Service**  
**P.O. Box 700**  
**Trenton, NJ 08625-0700**

**DHS Listening Sessions:**

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| August 3  | 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. | Seton Hall University  
Google Map Address:  
1109 Raymond Blvd.  
Room 273  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Parking at One Newark Center - adjacent to Seton Hall Law. Proceed past the Law School on Raymond Boulevard and turn right onto Mulberry St. Then turn right onto the Laz Parking Garage. After parking, use the exit on Level C to get to the Law School More address |
| August 10 | 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. | DDD Central Office  
195 Gateway Center  
5 Commerce Way, Suite 100  
Hamilton, NJ 08691  
Parking in front or back, but guests are required to enter through the front door and sign in. |
| August 11 | 9:30 a.m. to noon | Rowan College at Gloucester County (formerly Gloucester County College)  
Nursing and Allied Health Building (no room number)  
1400 Tanyard Rd.  
Sewell, NJ 08080  
There will be signage indicating “DHS Hearing”. |

**AllSpire Health Creates New Purchasing Organization**

“Atlantic Health System and Hackensack Meridian Health are listed as two of five health systems which are part of a new group purchasing organization for AllSpire Health Partners,” according to an [article](https://www.njbiz.com/article/20160701/BI01/607019972/allspire-health-creates-new-purchasing-organization) published on NJBIZ.com on July 1, 2016.

In 2013, Atlantic; Hackensack Meridian (which are listed as two separate entities); Lehigh Valley Health Network in Allentown, Pennsylvania; Reading Health System in Reading, Pennsylvania; and WellSpan Health in York, Pennsylvania came together. These partners signed an exclusive agreement with HealthTrust, a national group purchasing organization provider. “All members of AllSpire Health
GPO will become members of HealthTrust which translates to access to an extensive contract portfolio, according to a statement.

14,800 NJ Drug Cases Potentially Undermined After Faked Lab Test

“The number of drug cases potentially undermined by a State Police lab technician accused of fabricating test results in a single marijuana analysis is even higher than the thousands prosecutors had already identified, the judge handling the matter said Wednesday,” according to an article published in the Star-Ledger on June 30, 2016.

Oaks Integrated Care's Summer Series CEU Workshops

Oaks Integrated Care, a NJAMHAA member organization, is offering several CEU workshops this summer. You can learn more about the specific workshops by clicking here. To register for all or some of the workshops, please click here.

7/20/16 – Understanding Gender Variance
9:00am-12:30pm (8:30am registration/refreshments)
Presenters: Deb Wolff, LCSW, Renee Bennett-Holmes, LCSW
Earn 3 Cultural Competence/Clinical Education Credits – $60.00

8/4/16 – Family Engagement: Turning Values Into Practice
9:00am-12:30pm (8:30am registration/refreshments)
Presenter: Deb Wolff, LCSW
Earn 3 Clinical Education Credits – $60.00

8/11/16 – Cultural Perspectives in Out-of-Home Placement and Adoption
9:00am-3:30pm (8:30am registration/1 hour lunch)
Presenter: Deb Wolff, LCSW
Earn 5 Cultural Competence/Clinical Education Units – $100.00

How to Transform Your Team from Firefighters to Business Drivers – Free Webinar
Relias Learning, a NJAMHAA Technology Council member, is hosting an upcoming webinar titled “How to Transform Your Team from Firefighters to Business Drivers” on Thursday, July 14, 2016 from 2 – 3 p.m. For more information and to register, please click here.

During this webinar, attendees will learn how to:
• Examine 3 major areas of human capital performance to which we often turn a blind eye or “bandaid” due to lack of resources, focus or time.
• Calculate the impact this lack of focus may be having on your operations.
• Discover solutions for your business that successful Fortune 100 companies use to attack these performance gaps and drive performance and execution.