



Strengthen the Foundation of New Jersey's Community-based Behavioral Health System – Invest in New Jerseyans' Well-being!

New Jersey's community-based behavioral health system is highly effective in improving the quality of life, and often saving the lives, of children and adults throughout New Jersey who have mental illnesses, substance use disorders, intellectual/developmental disabilities and co-occurring disorders.

New Jersey must invest in community-based behavioral health services to ensure the sustainability of a system that is weakening under intense pressure. Community-based services are extremely cost-effective. They prevent the need for significantly more expensive institutional care. Investing sufficiently in these services is the right thing to do for the state's fiscal viability, as well as the health and well-being of New Jersey's residents. Toward that end, NJAMHAA calls on the Legislature and various Departments to do the following:

Budgetary Recommendations

Improve capacity and sustainability for adult and children's services:

- Provide \$25 million of safety net funding for programs that transitioned to fee-for-service and are facing deficits.
- Restore \$7 million in state funds to Care Management Organizations (CMOs).
- Increase outpatient and residential reimbursement rates to cover the actual costs of providing care.
- Restore funding for the Recovery Coach program that sustains it in all 21 counties.
- Provide capital funding to support increased capacity and integrated care capability.

Ensure access to vital adult services:

- Pass legislation to expand Early Intervention Support Services (EISS) (A2391/S1635) and Screening Services (A2389/S1032).
- Support expansion of Medication Assisted Treatment services.

Strengthen the Children's System of Care:

- Increase rates for Board Certified Behavior Analysts.
- Compensate Intensive In-Home and Family Support Services staff for time and travel costs.

Other Legislative Recommendations

- Develop a formula for upward adjustments of rates and contracts that is tied to an inflationary index to ensure continued sufficiency of reimbursement rates.
- Implement fee-for-service oversight that was mandated in 2017 (P.L.2017,c.85).
- Add children's rates to the fee-for-service oversight process.
- Pass parity legislation that ensures compliance with federal parity laws (S1339/A2031).
- Establish an ombudsman position in the Department of Banking and Insurance that would be dedicated to behavioral health services.
- Identify alternative funding options for Medicaid services in case of federal cuts.
- Pass a resolution supporting a federal extension of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC) demonstration program.