



## **Diverse Faces, Many Lives: New Jerseyans Deserve a Community-based Behavioral Health System that Will Allow Them to Thrive!**

Now, more than ever, New Jersey must invest in a strong, sustainable community-based system of care to meet the needs of New Jersey's diverse children, youth and adults. Inadequate rates have crippled many programs since the transition to a fee-for-service reimbursement system in 2017 and made it nearly impossible for providers to be competitive in recruiting and retaining qualified staff. Investment is needed to sustain quality care for the many diverse lives who stand to benefit and to then expand capacity to increase access to care for all New Jerseyans. Toward those ends, NJAMHAA calls on the Legislature and Administration to support the following:

### **Budget Priorities**

- Maintain the Governor's proposed \$27 million in state funds (with a \$12 million federal match) for wage increases for community-based providers of mental health and substance use treatment and supports to be applied to both contracts and rates.
- Maintain the \$1.7 million of state funding in the Governor's proposed budget (plus \$2.9 million in federal matching funds) for increases to the children's psychiatric assessment, outpatient and partial care rates.
- Maintain the \$100 million investment to address the opioid crisis.
- Maintain the \$5 million increase for existing School Based Youth Services Programs (SBYSPs).
- Close the deficit gap caused by the transition to fee-for-service reimbursement with a \$25 million investment. (\$1244)
- Provide funding for recruitment and retention bonuses.
- Establish new rates in the FY2023 budget and set them as a floor for any service carved into Medicaid managed care.
- Invest to erase the backlogs in program/facility and individual licensing.
- Invest \$1.1 million in existing Early Intervention Support Services programs.
- Invest \$10 million to expand the School Based Youth Services Program.
- Appropriate \$1.5 million to support the Screening Center early intervention grant program.

### **Other Budget Recommendations**

- Provide funding for mobile crisis outreach teams and respite services.
- Appropriate \$10 million as an initial investment into facility resources for behavioral health providers to further develop integrated care.
- Appropriate \$10 million for mental health providers to upgrade, implement and maintain interoperable electronic health records (EHRs).

### **Policy Priorities**

- Pass A508 to establish a formula for automatic upward rate and contract adjustments that are indexed to actual costs.
- Allow Psychiatric Advanced Practice Nurses to fill the role of Psychiatrists on Programs for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) Teams.
- Pass S930 and A1476 (with amendment) to reinstate the 70+ year exemption of vehicle registration fees for nonprofit organizations' vehicles that was reversed in 2017.