

Maryland Mental Health Coalition

711 West 40th Street ♦ Suite 460 ♦ Baltimore, Maryland 21211 ♦ (410) 235-1178 ♦ FAX (410) 235-1180 ♦ info@mhamd.org

Position Statement on Behavioral Health Reform

August 2011

The undersigned organizations are united in their support of the reforms detailed in this position statement to advance the delivery of behavioral health services to the citizens of Maryland.

We support the following actions to advance the delivery of behavioral health services consistent with our vision of a public mental health system that enables individuals with mental illnesses to live healthy and productive lives. Maryland's Public Mental Health System must ensure access to an efficient continuum of treatment and support services of the highest caliber that promotes resiliency and recovery for Marylanders of all ages.

Recommendations

1. Creation of a single set of behavioral health regulations to promote and support dual licensure of mental health and addiction treatment programs.
2. Maintenance of the current service array and structure of the carve-out of specialty mental health services.
3. A continued requirement that physicians within the network of Managed Care Organizations provide primary mental health services and refer clients to the system of specialty mental health services in a manner consistent with clinical judgment decision making for primary and specialty somatic care.
4. Establishment of a behavioral health home pilot for individuals with serious mental illness for the primary purposes of improving integration of somatic and behavioral health care, enhancing the efficiency and quality of care rendered in both areas, realizing improved overall health status of the individuals served and reducing costs.
5. Expansion of current strategies to improve care, efficiency and outcomes for high utilizers of the Public Mental Health System – including the high utilizer initiatives (there are two in Baltimore City), the Capitation Project, co-occurring crisis services, residential crisis beds, enhanced psychiatric and somatic case management, and hospital diversion.
6. Adequate resourcing of streamlined and efficient quality oversight and outcome evaluation of current services and pilot initiatives.

7. Rapid adoption of technology to advance the use of electronic health records to improve the integration of somatic and behavioral health care, and to improve access to care for underserved populations. Ensure that behavioral health has the same access to health IT resources and incentives as the rest of health care.
8. Examination of the impact of administrative costs, profit and current behavioral health and somatic provider payment on the delivery of high quality and efficient care, the ability of the provider network to render needed care, and the availability of public funds for service delivery. Ensure that financing strategies:
 - are aligned toward the primary goal of delivery of health care which promotes wellness to the citizens of Maryland,
 - provide no incentive to deny care, but rather promote cost savings and achievement of prescribed consumer outcomes at the provider level, and
 - allocate cost savings achieved through better care management to service delivery and provider incentives that promote increased efficiency, quality and service outcomes.
9. Examination of the current structure and financing of addiction treatment services in Maryland, the pros and cons of aligning addiction treatment within the MCO system versus integration within the fee for service specialty mental health system, and implementation of restructuring as indicated through this analysis.
10. Examination of the adequacy of the current administrative infrastructure of Maryland's behavioral health system, its ability to adequately carry out necessary management/operations, oversight, evaluation and strategic planning functions, and realignment of staffing as indicated by this analysis and the implementation of service system reform.

LIST OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Archway Station
Arundel Lodge
Baltimore Crisis Response
Baltimore Mental Health Systems
Care Connection
Catholic Charities
Center for Children
Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland
Family Services
Family Service Foundation
Garrett County Lighthouse
Go-Getters
GUIDE Program
Health Care for the Homeless
Hearts & Ears

Howard County Mental Health Authority
Humanim
Key Point Health Services
Lower Shore Friends
Martylog Wellness and Recovery Center
Maryland Association of Core Service Agencies
Maryland Association of Resources for Family and Youth
Maryland Association for Partial Hospitalization Programs and Intensive Outpatient Programs
Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition
Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health
Maryland Consumer Leadership Coalition
Maryland Disability Law Center
Maryland Psychiatric Society
Mental Health Association of Frederick County
Mental Health Association of Maryland
Mental Health Association of Montgomery County
Mental Health Association in Talbot County
Mental Health Center of Western Maryland
Mid-Shore Mental Health Systems
Mosaic Community Services
NAMI Maryland, National Alliance on Mental Illness – *also representing:*
 NAMI Anne Arundel County
 NAMI Carroll County
 NAMI Cecil County
 NAMI Frederick County
 NAMI Harford County
 NAMI Howard County
 NAMI Lower Shore
 NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore
 NAMI Montgomery County
 NAMI Prince George's County
 NAMI Southern Maryland and
 NAMI Washington County
Office of Consumer Advocates – *also representing:*
 Harvey House
 Hope Station
 Soul Haven
 Self-Directed Care Program
 Listening Line
 Transportation Program
Office on Mental Health – Core Service Agency of Harford County
Omni House
On Our Own of Anne Arundel County
On Our Own of Calvert County

On Our Own of Cecil County
On Our Own of Frederick County
On Our Own of Howard County
On Our Own of Maryland
On Our Own of Montgomery County
On Our Own of St. Mary's County
Pathways
Pro Bono Counseling Project
Prologue
St. Luke's House
Threshold Services
University of Maryland, Division of Community Psychiatry
Upper Bay Counseling and Support Services
Way Station