

FY 2014 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH APPROPRIATIONS

INVESTING IN WHOLE HEALTH, CONTAINING COSTS

Access to behavioral health services is a key factor in improving Americans' health status and containing U.S. healthcare costs. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the lead agency providing targeted funding for states to implement proven and effective services for individuals with mental illnesses and addictions. SAMHSA's programs reduce expensive hospitalizations, emergency department use, and criminal justice system involvement. Likewise, federal investments in basic scientific and clinical research through the National Institutes of Health drive innovations in treatment for mental illnesses and addictions. These scientific advances and the development of improved treatments and supports demonstrate that mental illnesses and addictions can be prevented and treated effectively, helping millions of Americans get back on their feet and regain their health.

Unfortunately, the economic downturn and years of sustained cuts are impeding access to care for millions of Americans who desperately need access to evidence-based treatments and lifesaving services and supports. States have cut back funding for mental healthcare by nearly \$5 billion over the last four years. Meanwhile, the fiscal year (FY) 2013 sequester left an estimated 373,000 children and adults with mental illnesses without treatment, and as many as 8,900 homeless people with serious mental illness are no longer receiving services through the SAMHSA PATH program. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) have each seen reductions as large as 20% for new research grants that could help unlock the cure for such critical priorities as opiate addiction and early intervention for schizophrenia.

Proposed cuts in the House of Representative's FY 2014 budget would decimate the health research, treatment programs, and supportive services that play a critical role in keeping Americans healthy and reducing the spillover costs of uncoordinated care and untreated mental illnesses and addictions. Under the leadership of Senator Tom Harkin, the Senate Appropriations Committee has approved a bill (S.1284) that would make key investments in behavioral health services.

The National Council and Hill Day partners urge Congress to support the discretionary spending allocation outlined in S.1284, including the proposed allocations for the following critical programs:

Primary Care-Behavioral Health Integration (PBHCI) The PBHCI program supports community behavioral health and primary care organizations that partner to provide essential primary care services to adults with serious mental illnesses. Because of this program, more than 33,000 people with serious mental illnesses and addictions receive screening and treatment at more than 100 grantee sites for diabetes, heart disease, and other common and deadly illnesses in an effort to stem this population's alarming early death rate from these health conditions. Essential to this program's success is the technical assistance offered by the SAMHSA-HRSA Center for Integrated Health Solutions (CIHS), which SAMHSA funds as "Primary and Behavioral Healthcare Integration TA." Services provided by CIHS support rapid and successful implementation of grant activities.

- S. 1284 includes \$65 million for PBHCI grants and \$2 million for PBHCI technical assistance.

Mental Health First Aid Each year, more than one in five Americans experience a mental illness or addiction. Yet, American society lacks awareness about these conditions and the availability of community resources, often preventing people from getting appropriate treatment and support. Mental Health First Aid is a public education program that helps participants identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and addictions. The course teaches a 5-step action plan to use when reaching out to a person in crisis and connecting them with help.

- S. 1284 includes \$15 million for Mental Health First Aid training activities.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and Mental Health Block Grant Block grant funds support state and local governments in providing effective mental health and addictions treatment and prevention services to meet targeted community needs. This year, the Senate Appropriations Committee allocated an increase to the Mental Health Block Grant to support evidence-based programs targeted to early identification and intervention for individuals with first-episode psychosis. This allocation intends to reduce the long average delay — lasting years or even decades — between when a person experiences the first onset of symptoms and when they are able to receive help. Repeated clinical trials have demonstrated that early identification and treatment are essential for halting the progress of the disease and reducing long-term disability.

- S. 1284 includes \$1.82 billion for the Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention Block Grant (a \$23 million increase over FY 2013) and \$483.7 million for the Mental Health Block Grant (a \$25 million increase over FY 2013).

Mental Health and Addictions Research Scientific advances have led to astounding discoveries about the brain and the roots of mental illnesses and addictions. Continued investments in basic scientific and applied research will help develop rapid, effective treatments that target the core pathophysiology of these conditions, while new diagnostic markers will facilitate early identification and intervention. NIDA and NIMH have the research tools they need, but they need sufficient funding resources to realize this ambitious vision of finding cures to these disabling illnesses.

- S. 1284 includes \$1.071 billion for NIDA and \$1.466 billion for NIMH, restoring the FY 2013 sequestration reduction to both Institutes and reversing the effects of past years' continuing resolutions that have eroded the capacity of NIDA and NIMH to fund new and continuing grants.

Children's Mental Health, Safe and Healthy Schools Safe and positive school environments can help reduce unhealthy student behavior, increase academic achievement, and counter the effects that violence can have on students.

- S. 1284 includes \$195 million to improve learning conditions in the nation's schools, including through School Climate Transformation Grants, Project Prevent, Project SERV, and Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiatives.

Supportive Housing to Promote Recovery and Integration Access to decent, safe, and affordable housing and supportive services is critical for long-term recovery from mental illnesses and addictions. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs such as the Section 811 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PRA) Demonstration and the McKinney-Vento permanent supportive housing programs are proven, effective models that promote recovery and cost savings.

- The FY 2014 Senate Transportation-HUD Appropriations bill (S. 1243) includes \$2.381 billion for McKinney-Vento homeless programs, a \$228 million increase over the FY 2013 level.