State Action Agenda

An Overview

Increase Access to Mental Health Care

- State Medicaid programs and Medicaid expansion benchmark plans should provide an array of effective mental health services that promote recovery and community inclusion.
- States should ensure adequate and stable funding to meet community needs for public mental health services, including inpatient and longer-term care and psychosocial rehabilitation.
- Community mental health programs should provide a comprehensive array of effective services and supports that promote recovery and community inclusion.
- States should ensure full implementation of and compliance with mental health and substance abuse parity legislation.
- Private health care plans should provide a readily available array of effective, evidence-based mental health services.
- States should ensure flexible and timely access to a comprehensive array of mental health medications based on individual need in all health plans and community mental health programs.

Promote Integration of Mental Health, Addictions and Primary Care

- States should ensure that integration of expert mental health, addictions and primary care is the norm in all health care settings.

Strengthen the Mental Health Workforce

- States should actively recruit and train health professionals in effective and culturally competent treatment interventions for children, youth and adults living with serious mental illness.

Eliminate Disparities in Mental Health Care

- States should incorporate cultural and linguistic competence standards in requirements for mental health funding.

Ensure Transparency and Accountability

- States should have standardized statewide data collection and public posting of meaningful performance, process and outcome measures, including data by race and ethnicity.

Improve the Mental Health of Children and Youth

- Screening, assessment and early intervention of mental health conditions for children and youth should be an integral part of health care delivery systems.
- States should provide effective home and community-based services that help children and youth succeed at home, in school and in their communities.

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- States should identify and divert youth living with serious mental health conditions from detention to appropriate community treatment.

Provide Homes and Jobs for People Living with Mental Illness

- States should provide affordable permanent supportive housing for people living with serious mental illness.
- States should have policies and statewide programs that lead to competitive employment for people living with serious mental illness.

End the Inappropriate Jailing of People Living with Mental Illness

- States should divert people living with serious mental illness from jail to appropriate community treatment.
- States should ensure enrollment in federal SSI/SSDI, Medicaid and other benefits upon release from jail or prison for eligible individuals living with serious mental illness.

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