



Bringing Mental Healthcare to the Ballot **Action Agenda Summary**

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots organization for people with mental illness and their families. Our goal is simple: To ensure that Americans with mental illness receive the treatment and supports they need to live full and satisfying lives as valued members of the community. NAMI's Action Agenda Summary outlines policy recommendations to advance this important goal.

1. Increase America's Coverage and Improve Treatment for Mental Healthcare

- Ensure mental health and substance abuse coverage in all plans to provide affordable health care.
- Pass federal mental health and substance abuse parity legislation.
- Ensure that active duty military, veterans and reservists receive the mental health care and disability payments they need to live successfully with mental illness.
- Provide parity of mental health coverage in the Medicare program.
- Support policies that remove barriers and promote full access to mental health medications in Medicare, Medicaid and other programs.
- Renew Medicare Part D guidance supporting access to mental health medications.
- Ensure that Medicaid coverage and reimbursement policies provide an array of effective, recovery-oriented and evidence-based mental health services.
- Repeal Medicaid IMD policy that excludes coverage for inpatient care in facilities that primarily serve adults with mental illness.
- Provide parity of mental health coverage in the SCHIP program.
- Invest new resources in the Mental Health Services Block Grant.
- Promote and enforce policies that eliminate the inappropriate use of seclusion and restraint and foster humane alternatives for crisis intervention.

2. Accelerate America's Investment in Research on Mental Illness

- Accelerate investment in National Institute of Mental Health research on mental illness, co-occurring disorders, recovery and reintegration into the life of the community.

3. Eliminate Disparities in America's Mental Healthcare

- Incorporate cultural competence standards in requirements for federal mental health funding.
- Create federal incentives to recruit and train mental health professionals, particularly to increase workforce diversity and serve rural areas.
- Promote integration of mental health and primary care to achieve better health outcomes, particularly for older adults and communities of color.

4. Improve the Mental Health of America's Children and Youth

- Increase funding for the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act to expand youth and young adult suicide prevention and early intervention strategies.
- Fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and pass legislation to fund school-based mental health services.
- Pass Keeping Families Together legislation to end unnecessary custody relinquishment by families seeking mental health services for their children.

5. Provide Opportunities for Homes and Jobs for Americans Living with Mental Illness

- Increase investment in permanent and supportive housing for people with serious mental illness.
- Enhance funding and support for programs and policies that result in competitive employment for people with serious mental illness.
- Maintain health care coverage for people with disabilities who return to work.

6. End the Inappropriate Jailing of Americans with Mental Illness

- Increase programs to divert people with mental illness from jail to appropriate community treatment.
- Promote programs to identify youth with serious mental disorders at first contact with juvenile justice systems and increase diversion to appropriate community treatment.
- Ensure access to SSI/SSDI, Medicaid and other benefits upon release from jail or prison for people with serious mental illness.