

Where We Stand:

NAMI believes that all people with mental health conditions deserve accessible, affordable, and comprehensive health care. NAMI supports coordinated care models that integrate physical and mental health services.

Why We Care:

Millions of people in the U.S. have both a physical and a mental health or substance use condition. However, our health care system often separates physical health treatment from mental health care. This creates a fragmented system that leads to poor health outcomes.

Integrated health care has the potential to help people address their mental health needs in a primary care setting. By bringing doctors, nurses, social workers and therapists together, integrated care can normalize and de-stigmatize mental health treatment. It also ensures that all health needs are addressed holistically, leading to better treatment and quality of life.

Integrated health care also has the potential to help address the physical health needs of people with mental illness. People with serious mental illness die earlier than the general population, but the vast majority of these deaths are due to chronic physical medical conditions such as

cardiovascular, respiratory and infectious diseases, diabetes and hypertension.

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We need an integrated system that uses person-centered care: where individuals participate and engage in their treatment with their health care providers, and those providers respect their wants, needs and preferences. Reducing the fragmentation between behavioral and physical health services can produce better health outcomes for both physical and behavioral health diagnosis.

To learn more about NAMI's work on this issue, visit www.nami.org/Advocacy/Policy-Priorities