



Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.

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First View of Mental Health Budget

No COLA in Budget, Ten Million Dollar Increase for Housing Rates, Greater Funding Commitment to Parity and Mental Health Education in Schools

We have a few early take away from the budget. As always, we will provide greater details in the coming days but here is what we have found out so far.

Human Services COLA

- We are very disappointed that a human services COLA was not included in the proposed budget. Advocates across New York State made a very strong case to make this happen. The good news is that there has been a lot of attention now being paid to this issue. Our next goal is to try to get it in the 30-day amendment. As we said in yesterday's press conference, we are not going away. Our members are in too much need and their personal narratives like those of Phyllis Fisher (a peer who spoke at our press conference yesterday about having 12 case managers in 12 years) are what will drive our entire behavioral health community to work tirelessly to make this happen.

Housing Rates

- Ten million dollars was added to the budget for the continuation of the funding for housing rates. This has been a ten-million-dollar commitment every year for the last five years. While this will certainly be helpful, it is far from the need in the community. As part of the Bring It Home campaign, we are disappointed that there is not more funding in the budget for existing housing rates.

Behavioral Health Parity

- Funding Commitment to Parity---The good news is that the State budget is continuing their strong commitment to behavioral health parity. There are

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several million dollars being dedicated to enhancing staff at the Department of Financial Services and the Department of Health dedicated to network adequacy and reviewing existing health plans to insure compliance with parity. We are pleased to see that the State budget is committing resources to parity and we hope that they will focus much of their attention on the Non-Quantitative Treatment Limits which continues to be a major reason for denial.

Mental Health Education in Schools

- Commitment to Mental Health Education. The State is committing \$1.5 million in the education budget to mental health in schools with an emphasis on school climate, bullying, trauma and suicide prevention in middle schools. We were pleased that the Governor's budget also references the MHANYS School Mental Health Resource Center. There is also a commitment in funding to Recovery High Schools.

Suicide Prevention

- The Executive is continuing their commitment to Suicide Prevention based on the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force, we are still attempting to find out how much money has been dedicated to suicide prevention.

Reinvestment

- The budget includes five and a half million dollars for reinvestment that is annualized to eleven million for community services.