



STATEMENT

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CONTACT: Carole Szpak
202/393-6700, ext. 101
comm@naphs.org

The following is a statement from:

Mark Covall,
President and CEO,
National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS).
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NAPHS Applauds House Energy and Commerce Committee's Markup of Legislation to Address Nation's Mental Health Crisis; Urges Congress to Pass Comprehensive Reform

(Washington, DC, June 15, 2016)...Today the U.S. House of Representatives' Energy and Commerce Committee marked up and unanimously approved with a bipartisan vote (53-0) the *Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act*, H.R.2646, introduced by Reps. Tim Murphy (R-PA) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX).

As an association representing professionals and facilities delivering behavioral health care, the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS) congratulates the House Energy and Commerce Committee for their major effort to bring this legislation one step closer to enactment. Today's action is an important move toward the types of reforms that can ultimately save lives, communities, and money.

The House bill as approved includes several key provisions that are critical to helping Americans who live with serious mental and substance use disorders.

The bill will help to ensure that the vast majority of adult Medicaid beneficiaries with mental and addictive disorders can access the same hospital treatment for psychiatric care that their Medicaid insurance card covers for all other conditions. The bill would do this by codifying into law changes included in a recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [final rule on Medicaid managed care](#). Codifying the rule will ensure that managed care organizations (MCOs) will be able to contract with Institutions for Mental Disease (IMDs). (Adult Medicaid beneficiaries ages 21-64 are otherwise prohibited by law from accessing short-term, acute care in psychiatric hospitals.) It is estimated that 50% to 75% of Medicaid adult beneficiaries will be subject to the new Medicaid managed care rule, allowing them to get care in IMDs through MCOs. This is a solid step forward, but further work will be needed over time to finally eliminate the IMD barrier for all Medicaid beneficiaries who require short-term, acute care in psychiatric hospitals.

The House bill would also create an Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use. This provision would help to elevate mental health and substance use within the Department of Health and Human Services and emphasize the importance of treatment for serious behavioral health disorders.

In addition, the House bill calls for health plans to be more transparent in how they are conforming to the requirements of the federal parity law (the *Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act*). Additional provisions address suicide prevention, workforce development, and privacy.

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Taken together, these provisions in the House bill create a valuable framework and starting point for reform.

With the concerted effort of both chambers, we believe comprehensive reform legislation can move forward and be signed into law. Helping Americans access the right treatment for mental and addictive disorders is good public policy, and there is bipartisan support for change.

The time to act is now. We urge both the House and the Senate to bring comprehensive mental health reform legislation to the floor before the summer recess.

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The National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems advocates for behavioral health and represents provider systems that are committed to the delivery of responsive, accountable, and clinically effective prevention, treatment, and care for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults with mental and substance use disorders. Its members are behavioral healthcare provider organizations that own or manage more than 800 specialty psychiatric hospitals, general hospital psychiatric and addiction treatment units and behavioral healthcare divisions, residential treatment facilities, youth services organizations, and extensive outpatient networks. The association was founded in 1933.