



Maryland Chapter
National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence
2013 Public Policy Agenda

Funding for Services for People with Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders

With the implementation of health care reform and behavioral health integration, it is essential that state-only funding for various services for people with substance use and mental health disorders be maintained and strengthened. These funds provide services to people who are without insurance and for services that are not covered by Medicaid, including prevention, most residential services, and recovery supports. Ensuring enough resources for treatment for adolescents is also essential.

- FY 2014 funding to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA) and the Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) must, at a minimum, remain level with FY 13 funding allocations.

Behavioral Health Integration

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and a large number of stakeholders spent eight months engaged in a process to determine how to integrate addiction treatment and mental health Medicaid financing. NCADD-Maryland will continue to participate in discussions around the implementation of the integration recommendations, maintaining a focus on consumer-oriented concerns and issues. NCADD-Maryland will also continue to work with DHMH and other stakeholders on shaping a new Behavioral Health Administration that is a merger of ADAA and MHA.

- NCADD-Maryland will continue its work to ensure that an integrated system includes services easily accessible to people seeking treatment, is compliant with the federal parity law, and includes appropriate outcome expectations.
- NCADD-Maryland will advocate for a Behavioral Health Administration that includes a significant consumer relations division and a robust recovery support component.
- NCADD-Maryland will also advocate for retention of all current staff positions through this merger process to ensure staff capacity in light of both behavioral health integration and health care reform implementation.
- NCADD-Maryland will support efforts led by the Maryland Addictions Directors Council to ensure high quality behavioral health services are provided through a strong and well-qualified workforce.

Health Care Reform

As the State nears full implementation the Affordable Care Act, substance use and mental health disorder services must be accessible and comprehensive. Qualified Health Plans (QHP) in the Health Benefit Exchange must demonstrate compliance with the federal parity law. QHPs must have adequate networks of providers. Navigator entities must have competency in assisting people with identifying QHPs that have adequate behavioral health services.

- NCADD-Maryland will support legislative efforts to address policies regarding the implementation of federal health care reform to ensure compliance with the federal parity law, establish greater transparency of benefit coverage for consumers, and ensure carriers have an adequate number of providers in their networks.

Recovery Supports

Along with supporting efforts to fund recovery support services, NCADD-Maryland will work in support of reasonable legislative and regulatory initiatives that assist people in recovery. Initiatives supported will include those that reduce barriers faced by people in recovery with criminal records, that assist people re-entering the community from State institutions, and that reduce stigma and discrimination of those with alcohol and drug abuse problems. Specifically, NCADD-Maryland recommends:

- Passing legislation to prohibit the State of Maryland from asking certain applicants for employment to answer a question about criminal background on the initial application form.
- Passing legislation to shield from the public certain criminal records after certain periods of time in order to help people with criminal records who have not re-offended to find employment and housing.

Overdose Prevention

According to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, there were six percent more drug overdose deaths during the first seven months of 2012 compared to the same period in 2011. The most substantial increases in overdose deaths have occurred in Central Maryland, Southern Maryland, and the Eastern Shore. Deaths among 15 to 24 year olds increased by 53%.

- NCADD-Maryland will strongly support legislation to establish a statewide overdose prevention program that provides training to people to knowledgably assist another individual experiencing a life-threatening overdose emergency.

Additional Issues

During the 2013 Maryland General Assembly Session, NCADD-Maryland will closely monitor all legislation introduced that impact addiction treatment and recovery supports directly and indirectly. These issues will include gambling expansion and resources to address problem gambling, implementation of the state's prescription drug monitoring program to ensure appropriate intervention for people with substance abuse problems, and criminal justice issues that further criminalize behavioral health problems creating collateral damage instead of resources to provide appropriate intervention, treatment and recovery supports.