

Mental Health

The New Hampshire Public Health Association (NHPHA) holds that mental health is an essential component to overall health and reaffirms findings that a distinction between health of mind and body is not supported by scientific evidence. Scientific advances in understanding brain development and human behavior have resulted in a range of effective medical and psychosocial treatments for many mental disorders across the lifespan. NHPHA also recognizes that stigma and widespread societal discrimination have contributed to disparities in access to care and persistent threats to the dignity and human rights of persons with mental illness. NHPHA therefore supports initiatives in NH that:

- Promote public education to combat the discrimination toward persons with mental illness and the stigma they face;
- Promote implementation of screening and early intervention programs to reduce the need for more intensive interventions;
- Promote integration and coordination of care among providers of primary care, specialty care and related social support services;
- Promote implementation of comprehensive insurance parity law to assure non-discrimination between physical and mental health benefits;
- Address critical gaps in services including those for persons without access to services due to economic circumstances, those with mental illness who are incarcerated, those with co-occurring alcohol and other substance use disorders, and minority populations who experience cultural and linguistic barriers to care.
- Create innovative alternatives to the criminalization of persons with mental illness, such as Court Diversion programs.
- Promote a system of care that is recovery oriented and resiliency focused, and which offers a coordinated continuum of care, and supports consumers and families in their active participation in treatment planning, implementation and evaluation of their care.

Resources

Cook, Benjamin Lé (5/2013). “The role of provider supply an organization in reducing racial/ethnic disparities in mental health care in the U.S.”. *Social Science and Medicine* (1982) (0277-9536), 84, p. 102

National Alliance on Mental Health, NH (2012). <http://www.naminh.org/>

National Institute for Mental Health: NIMH Outreach Partnership Program

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. “Report to Congress on the Nation’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Workforce Issues. 2013.
<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/PEP13-RTC-BHWORk/PEP13-RTC-BHWORk.pdf>