



ASSOCIATION
FOR BEHAVIORAL
HEALTHCARE

Budget Priorities for the Fiscal Year 2014 budget

Importance of Stability for Community Based Behavioral Health Services

- ABH strongly supports the philosophy of *Community First* – **that whenever possible, individuals should live and be served in community settings.** The Community First philosophy focuses on decreasing acute and long term hospitalizations and maximizing diversion from inpatient care through the use of community-based emergency services and alternative levels of care.
- The community behavioral healthcare system continues to struggle. As a result, thousands of individuals and families are unable to access services and supports for mental health and/or substance use disorders.
- **Massachusetts must commit additional financial resources to ensure adults and children with mental illness and/or substance use disorders can access treatment and have the ability to live successfully in their own communities.**

Department of Mental Health Budget Request

- Increase Department of Mental Health community placement funding **over the Governor's House 1 recommendation.** Additional funding is vital to ensuring that adults **(5046-5000 by \$12 million)** and children **(5042-5000 increase by \$3 million)** with mental health needs are able to access the services.
- The DMH Community Accounts are not sufficiently funded to truly support recovery and resiliency for clients. DMH offers individuals with mental illness many critical community-based services that are not available through MassHealth or private insurance.
- Include the **\$2 million increase in emergency mental health services (5047-0001)** recommended in House 1. This new funding is to support secure mobile capacity and technology for mobile crisis teams.
- Fund additional DMH line items (5011-0100, 5046-2000, 5055-0000, 5046-4000) at the **level recommended in House 1.**

Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

- Fund the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services at the **maintenance level recommended by the Governor in all line items (4512-0200, 4512-0201, 4512-0202, 4512-0203).** This includes the annualization of funds expended in FY 2013 from the substance abuse services fund.

- Include Governor Patrick's **Outside Section 17** to extend the substance abuse services fund. This fund, created in a FY 2012 supplemental budget, is dedicated to funding an expansion of Section 35 programming. The fund is set to expire at the end of FY 2013, so it is essential that **Outside Section 17** be included to extend the funds use through FY 2014.
- The Bureau of Substance Abuse Services receives a federal block grant to fund Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment services. The block grant requires that the state maintain a specific level of funding to meet the Commonwealth's *Maintenance of Effort* requirement. **It is essential DPH/BSAS funding meets the Maintenance of Effort requirement (approximately \$88 million for FY'14) so as not to lose federal block grant dollars. The Governor's budget meets the Maintenance of Effort requirement.**

MassHealth

- Fund MassHealth at the **maintenance level recommended by the Governor**, which preserves existing behavioral health services. Medicaid finances medically necessary behavioral health services for individuals and families, thereby ensuring the stability of some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society.
- **As the Legislature considers the FY 2014 budget, it must continue to address the issue of access to outpatient behavioral health clinics.** Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012 requires MassHealth to move aggressively towards new payment methodologies for health care for a large portion of its members. MassHealth will begin to enroll individuals in new programs for FY 2014 and demand on an already weakened outpatient system will only increase. Without increased access to outpatient behavioral health services, we believe the important goals of primary and behavioral health integration, and the expansion of the ability of primary care providers to early identify, treat and refer individuals with behavioral health conditions will be unattainable.
- **Continued adequate funding for the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative is necessary to ensure ongoing successful implementation of the Rosie D. court order.** These services are absolutely essential to strengthening our community-based mental health system to better serve children living with Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) in Massachusetts.

Purchase of Service Reform (Chapter 257)

- Include funding for **Chapter 257 rate increases** across Health & Human Services line items as recommended in House 1.
- Fund the **Human Service salary reserve (1599-6901) at \$16.6 million.** The salary reserve gives a modest salary increase to human service workers making under \$40,000 per year.

ABH and its provider organizations strongly support tax and other revenue increases as a way to provide funding for important behavioral health care services.