



ABH July Committee Meetings

Friday, July 8
**Corporate
Compliance**, 10 a.m.

Monday, July 11
Billing, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, July 12
ACCS, 2:30 p.m.

Friday, July 15
Children's Services,
10 a.m.

Friday, July 15
Children's Services,
10 a.m.

Tuesday, July 21
RSS TSS, 10 a.m.

Monday, July 25
**CMO Medical
Directors**, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, July 26
DEI&J, 12 p.m.

To learn more about
ABH's Committees, click
[here](#).

Senate Budget

On May 26, the state Senate voted to approve their recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget, which totals \$49.78B. The proposal added approximately \$93M to the initial Senate Ways and Means budget over three days of debate. As a reminder, ABH's analysis of the Senate Ways and Means budget can be found [here](#).

Among the amendments adopted were several proposals that ABH supported, including:

- Establishment of the Behavioral Health Access and Crisis Intervention Trust Fund, which would support CBHCs by creating a sustainable source of funding for crisis services through an insurer surcharge, an ABH priority;
- \$1M in funding for contingency management for individuals with a stimulant use disorder, a Massachusetts Coalition for Addiction Services (MCAS) request;
- Continuing prior appropriations into FY23 for BSAS services not procured in FY22, a MCAS request;
- Enabling and funding the expansion of medications for addiction treatment (MAT) to all county correctional facilities in the Commonwealth, at a cost of \$7M; and
- Implementing recommendations of the Methamphetamine Use Commission as it relates to individuals with stimulant use disorder, including \$2M in funding for: anti-stigma and culturally-tailored education programs, providing support to health care and harm reduction providers serving the LGBTQIA+ community, increasing access to behavioral interventions, and promoting training in best practices for treating individuals with stimulant use disorder.

Next Steps: The Senate President and House Speaker will next make appointments to a conference committee to resolve differences between the House and Senate spending bills and produce a final legislative budget known as a conference committee report. The conference committee report will be voted either up or down (no amendments are permitted) by each chamber, and if approved, sent to the Governor who will have ten days to review the budget and return his vetoes and recommendations for amendment.

ABH COVID-19 Landing Page

ABH has created a COVID-19 resource page where we are collecting the guidance most relevant to ABH members:

Click [here](#).

LADC Application and License Fee Waiver

The Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) is issuing a waiver for the application and licensing fee for Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LADC). The fees are being waived in light of the continuing workforce challenges facing the substance use disorder treatment system as well as to assist and develop this workforce.

The fee will be waived effective May 9, 2022, for both new and renewal LADC applications, including all levels of licensure.

If you have any questions associated with the fee waiver or LADC licensing requirements, please reach out to Ian Bain, LADC Coordinator, at Ian.Bain@mass.gov.

Behavioral Health Integration

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing has recently published a new resource on [Designing, Implementing and Sustaining Physical Health-Behavioral Health Integration](#) that provides an evidenced-based model for better mental health and substance use care integration and guides providers, payers and policymakers to implement integrated care models. It's called the Comprehensive Health Integration Framework (CHI Framework). To read more, click [here](#).

BCBSMA Foundation Call for Proposals — Connecting Consumers with Coverage

The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation has announced the launch of the Connecting Consumers with Coverage grant program.

Under this program, the Foundation will support **both** health insurance enrollment (initial and re-enrollment support) **and** community-centered outreach efforts to connect individuals to health insurance, with a focus on communities with a higher rate of uninsurance, a higher number of individuals that lack insurance, or that are more likely to experience gaps in coverage.

Funding is open to Massachusetts nonprofit organizations that work with communities who are economically, racially, culturally, or socially marginalized with accessing and maintaining health insurance coverage. The Foundation seeks organizations that have sophisticated knowledge of how to enroll in and navigate publicly subsidized health insurance programs **and** organizations that have the capacity and skills in conducting outreach to communities and individuals who may not already be connected with health insurance or the health care system.

Grant awards will be funded in the range of \$40,000 - \$60,000 and will be for one year. Letters of Inquiry are due June 14, 2022, at 12 Noon EST using the Foundation's [online portal](#).

Please read the [Grant Guidelines](#) for more information.

Community Crisis Stabilization (CCS) Licensing Regulations

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) issued proposed amendments to 104 CMR 28.00: Licensing and Operational Standards for Community Services. The proposed amendment inserts a new Subpart C that establishes licensing requirements for Adult Community Crisis Stabilization (ACS) and the new Youth Community Crisis Stabilization (YCS). As you are likely aware, ACS and YCS are part of the restructured 24/7 community-based crisis intervention services and are integral components of the Community Behavioral Health Center (CBHC) Programs currently being procured to benefit MassHealth members. CBHCs will serve as hubs of coordinated and integrated mental health and substance use disorder treatment for MassHealth members of all ages and will provide routine and urgent outpatient services, crisis services for adults and youth, and community crisis stabilization services for adults and youth.

ABH intends to submit written comments to the proposed licensing requirements for Community Crisis Stabilization (CCS) which are due on June 14, 2022 by 5:00 p.m. ABH is holding feedback sessions in order to incorporate ABH members' feedback and comments,

The proposed licensing regulations are posted on the DMH website and can be viewed at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/dmh-proposed-regulations> (all materials); and [104 CMR 28.00 Licensing and Operational Standards for Community Services](#) (red-lined regulations).

The CCS Performance Specifications can be found on the MBHP website at: [Adult Community Crisis Stabilization \(Adult CCS\) Performance Specifications](#); and [Youth Community Crisis Stabilization \(YCCS\) Performance Specifications](#).

Federal Public Health Emergency

As you may recall, in December 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra pledged to provide a 60-day notice of the end of the Public Health Emergency (PHE), which is currently scheduled to end on July 15. The 60-day threshold passed on Monday, May 16, appearing to signal that an extension beyond July 15 will occur. The Secretary is not required to extend the PHE for a full 90 days, however, if it is extended fully the next deadline would fall in mid-October.

Massachusetts Commission on Methamphetamine Use Report

The Massachusetts Commission on Methamphetamine Use which was charged with developing recommendations regarding methamphetamine and other stimulant use in the Commonwealth recently released a final report. ABH served on the Commission, which was chaired by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and included state health officials, state lawmakers, law enforcement officials, medical experts & substance abuse counselors.

The report states that, "although much attention has been focused on the ongoing opioid crisis, stimulant-related overdose deaths from methamphetamines and cocaine have increased dramatically over the past decade." The Commission's recommendations include: pursuing harm-reduction initiatives, expanding treatment programs, and training for law enforcement officers and medical first responders to prepare for what could be a wave of stimulant addiction.

To read the report, click [here](#).

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Federal No Surprises Act

The federal No Surprises Act was passed in 2021 and became effective in January. The new law includes requirements for insurance carriers and health care providers to take to help protect consumers from surprise medical bills. This includes providing uninsured, self-pay and commercially insured consumers with a “good faith estimate” for the cost of their medical services. The Division of Insurance recently posted a Question and Answer document regarding the federal No Surprises Act on its website. To access the document click [here](#).

LGBTQ+ Pride Month 2022

It's Pride Month! Did you know that 60% of LGBTQ+ youth who wanted mental health care in the past year were not able to get it? Or that LGBTQ+ individuals are 2.5 times more likely to experience depression, anxiety and substance misuse compared to their straight counterparts? Want to know what you can do?

Check out the National Council for Mental Wellbeing's recent [blog](#).

Interesting Reads

- [Companies are recognizing value of mental health supports](#). *Commonwealth Magazine*.
- [Dual Diagnosis: Double the Stigma, Double the Trouble](#). *Psychiatric Times*.
- [Prevalence of preteen suicide has more than doubled in 11 years: 'Concerningly high'](#). *Lowell Sun*.
- [School counselors sound alarm on children's mental health](#). *WBUR*.
- [Why a U.S. task force is recommending anxiety screening in kids 8 and older](#). *WBUR*.
- [Why it's so hard to find affordable mental health care](#). *NPR*.
- [Mass General Brigham promises to slash health care spending by \\$70 million a year](#). *WBUR*.
- [The New MADD Movement: Parents Rise Up Against Drug Deaths](#). *Kaiser Health News*.
- [National Addiction Treatment Locator Has Outdated Data and Other Critical Flaws](#). *Kaiser Health News*.
- [Harris gives remarks on mental health after touring Children's National Hospital](#). *PBS News Hour*.
- [Mental Health First Aid helps adults identify and assist children experiencing mental health crises](#). *CBS*.