

Band of Behavioral Health Care Agencies Form Independent Practice Association

A [group of](#) 10 community-based behavioral health care agencies has formed the independent practice association Behavioral Health NYC, or BHNYP.

The association was formed under the state Department of Health Value-Based Payment Readiness program for behavioral health providers, part of New York's Medicaid payment reform. The state awarded nearly \$5 million in grant funding for the association's formation, its co-chair, Robert Basile, said.

The combined patient population served by the association's members is 20,000 individuals, of which about 70% are Medicaid beneficiaries. The goal of the association is to engage in value-based payment arrangements with managed-care organizations through quality-improvement initiatives for cost-effective care and better patient outcomes.

Since the state's Medicaid reform has a focus on integrating primary and behavioral health care—with dollars slated to flow through primary care entity contracts with managed-care organizations—the association's value-based payment arrangements will come through primary care partners.

The bulk of the association's members first partnered back in 1960 to form the Federation of Mental Health Services, a trade association and lobbying organization.

"The one thing I can say we're most proud of is keeping the foundations of what allowed us to thrive in the past alive in a network – being close to the ground, connected to our communities and giving fast and easy access to care," said Basile, who is also president of the federation.

There are 35 affiliate providers—including health systems and primary care providers as well as community-based organizations—that will collaborate with the association. Primary care partners for future value-based payment arrangements may be sourced from these affiliate providers.

"We are pleased to work with BHNYP to help meet the behavioral health needs of our shared communities," said Isaac Kastenbaum, director of population health at the New York-Presbyterian Performing Provider System, one of the association's affiliate providers, in a statement. "We look forward to working together to improve the health of the diverse populations we serve."