

NAMI-NYS 2022 Legislative Action Agenda

No Recovery Without Mental Health

NYS Must Address Mental Health in Order to Move Forward



Care for Those Who Care for Us: Support the Mental Health Workforce With a 5.4% COLA and \$500 Million Investment for Workforce, Services and Support

At a time when New Yorkers are seeking behavioral health services at an all-time high rate, NYS needs to ensure we have the services to meet this increasing demand. Even before the pandemic mental health providers were struggling due to decades of flat-funding. In the last budget cycle, despite the fact that the American Rescue Plan and the enactment of several revenue raisers led to both a budget surplus and the largest budget in the state's history, expanded mental health funding was not included in this record spending increase. The appropriate investments must be made to meet the ever-growing demand for mental health services and support for New York to move forward. NAMI-NYS joins other behavioral health advocates in calling for \$500 million in new investments in mental health services and a 5.4% COLA increase for the mental health workforce in the FY 2022-23 budget. As part of the \$500M, NAMI-NYS joins the Bring it Home NYS Campaign in calling for \$159.5M to address decades of flat-funding to mental health housing programs.

Create Mental Health Responses to a Mental Health Crisis Improve the Criminal Justice – Mental Illness Interface

The time is now to ensure that a mental health crisis is met with a mental health response. The failure to provide a mental health response has led to people with mental illness being over represented in the criminal justice system and too dependent on hospital emergency rooms and other services not designed to meet their needs. NYS has an incredible opportunity with the implementation of the 9-8-8 Mental Health Crisis number to create a true mental health response. To do so, the state must fund 9-8-8 and pair it with mobile mental health response teams and crisis stabilization services.

- **Fund 988-988** must be funded in order to provide 24/7/365 statewide coverage offered by in-state providers with the ability to provide local resources in a linguistically and culturally competent manner.
- **Support A.4697/S.4814 Daniel's Law**-Ensures that a mental health crisis is met with a mental health response by having mobile mental health response units handle mental health calls in our communities.
- **Expand Crisis Stabilization Services** which provide appropriate Mental Health care to those experiencing a Mental Health crisis.
- **Continue funding for the Institute for Police, Mental Health and Community Collaboration** to implement Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) across the state.
- **Support A.6399-A/S.1553-B The Clean Slate Act**-Which automatically expunges certain convictions after 3 years for a misdemeanor and 7 years for a felony if certain criteria are met.
- **Support A.6603/S.2881**-Expands the use of specialty courts, such as mental health, addiction and veteran courts.

Ensure Access to Appropriate Services and Medication

Access to mental health services and appropriate medications is more important than ever. As the demand for mental health services is at an all-time high, we must meet this demand. We must ensure that people have access to the medications their doctors determine are most beneficial to them. We must ensure that people discharged from hospitals have immediate access to community services by passing Nicole's Law. Additionally, NYS can increase mental health parity by allowing Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHCs) to diagnose and have their services reimbursed by Medicaid.

- **Ensure prescriber prevails language** for Medicaid services in the final budget.
- **Support A.3276 The Mental Health Access Bill**-Which prohibits insurance providers from using "fail-first" and "step-up" procedures for psychiatric medication. This bill passed the Senate in 2021 and now we need the Assembly to act.
- **Support (NEED NEW) Nicole's Law**: Which addresses suicide by reforming hospital practices and enhancing discharge.
- **Support A5238/S3995 Mental Health Parity Amendment**-Amending the NYS Constitution to ensure mental health parity.
- **Support A.3840/S.4870** Allowing pharmacies to administer injectable medications.
- **Support A.5751/S.3221** Which would grant LMHCs and LCs the ability to diagnose.