

A close-up, high-angle portrait of a young child with light brown hair and eyes. A single tear is visible on the child's right cheek, falling down. The child's expression is somber and contemplative. The background is dark and out of focus.

unkept

the promise
the promise unkept

 NATIONAL COUNCIL
FOR COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

Healthy Minds. Strong Communities.



the promise
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the promise unkept
partnerships
investment

An 85-year-old — anxious and depressed; a 9-year old, lonely and frightened, living in a foster home — acting out at school; a college student — hearing voices, afraid to leave his room, and suicidal; a 42-year-old man who served his country — homeless and addicted; a young mother with schizophrenia — abused, incarcerated, and about to be released back into the community...are among the millions being helped by the members of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare.

crisis
success
responsiveness
innovation
taxpayer return

The National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) association representing 1,300 organizations that provide treatment and rehabilitation to help people recover from mental illnesses and addiction disorders.

“ The mentally ill need no longer be alien to our affections or beyond the help of our communities.”

President John F. Kennedy



National Council members serve nearly six million adults, children, and families in communities across America. Medicaid pays for approximately 75% of the services provided.

www.TheNationalCouncil.org



“**Julia**” was just a child when she started hearing voices. Her mental illness worsened as she was molested by her grandfather and uncles. At age 12, Julia attempted suicide. She was briefly hospitalized but did not receive follow-up care or family support after discharge and stopped taking her medication. Julia ended up in reform school, jail, and eventually in prison. She started drinking and using drugs. “I wanted to die,” says Julia. “But then I found help. I’ve been clean and sober now for three years. I’ve learned to love myself again because I’m able to work and help others.”

A true story from the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County, Houston, Texas

To protect the privacy of the individuals whose stories we have shared, last names and real pictures are not used. Go to www.TheNationalCouncil.org to read more “Real Stories, Real People”

Economic, social, and human cost

- > > Mental illness drains our economy of more than \$80 billion every year, accounting for 15% of the total economic burden of all disease.
- > > Alcohol and drug abuse contributes to the death of more than 100,000 Americans and costs upwards of half a trillion dollars a year.
- > > More than half of all prison and jail inmates have a mental health problem, and approximately 75% of these inmates also meet the criteria for substance abuse.
- > > Up to two-thirds of homeless adults suffer from chronic alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, or some combination of the three, often complicated by serious medical problems.
- > > A quarter of all Social Security disability payments are for individuals with mental illness.
- > > More than 30,000 Americans die by suicide every year.

“ Science has revolutionized our understanding of addictions.”

*Nora D. Volkow, MD
Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse*

Almost 60 million Americans – one of four adults and one of five children – have a mental illness that can be diagnosed and treated in a given year. Mental illness is more common than cancer, diabetes, or even heart disease.

fact:

Fact citations at www.TheNationalCouncil.org

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commitment return on investment
recovery

High-quality community-based care
for mental illnesses and addictions comes at
lower cost — to the taxpayer and private payer —
than institutionalization.

quality care
local control responsiveness
service
innovation treatment

Help in communities across America

Today, a majority of people with mental illnesses and addiction disorders are cared for by our nation's community behavioral health system, comprising state and county, not-for-profit, and private organizations and employing more than 250,000 professionals.

We use advances in medicine and treatment to help those with mental illnesses and addictions recover and lead productive lives. And we work collaboratively with many agencies — general healthcare, law enforcement, criminal justice, schools, and others — to build strong communities.

The community behavioral health system offers a vital safety net to some of the poorest and most vulnerable in our society — Medicaid beneficiaries, the uninsured, the destitute and homeless, children in foster care, older adults, those with HIV/AIDS, veterans, and those in our criminal and juvenile justice systems.

“Effective treatments [for mental and substance use problems] exist and continually improve. However, as with general healthcare, deficiencies in care delivery prevent many from receiving appropriate treatments. That situation has serious consequences...for the nation as a whole.”

Institute of Medicine (in Improving the Quality of Health Care for Mental and Substance-Use Conditions)

Success rates for treating mental illnesses now exceed those of leading physical illnesses. Up to 90% of people treated with a combination of medication and therapy experience substantially reduced symptoms, enhanced quality of life, and increased productivity.

fact:



“Marvin” had been homeless for many years when Pathways staff found him at a New York City drop-in center. Marvin’s untreated schizophrenia and drinking were serious barriers to his finding a place to live, off the streets. After weeks of talking with Marvin, Pathways gained his trust and helped him move into an apartment in East Harlem. Safe in his own place, Marvin accepted treatment and began to think about a future. He wants to find a program where he can make friends and work on his art, something he was unable to do while on the streets. Traditional housing programs require individuals to be in treatment and abstinent from drugs and alcohol prior to being eligible for housing. Pathways reverses this sequence — providing housing first. Having a place to live is the first step in recovery.

A true story from Pathways to Housing, Inc., New York, New York

Services in our communities

- > > 24-hour crisis response
- > > Residential and outpatient treatment and rehabilitation for psychiatric illnesses
- > > Alcohol and drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation
- > > Treatment for trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder
- > > Suicide prevention
- > > Safe schools and school mental health programs
- > > Jail diversion and prisoner re-entry initiatives
- > > Specialized services for children, including therapeutic foster care and family therapy
- > > Housing for people recovering from mental illness and addiction disorders
- > > Job training and employment services
- > > Case management and assertive community treatment
- > > Disaster preparedness and response

“ Our challenges are great, but our will is greater. And in our America, the most generous, optimistic nation on the face of the Earth, we must not and will not rest until every man and woman with a dream has the means to achieve it. ”

President George H.W. Bush

Addictions treatment has been shown to cut drug use in half, reduce crime by 80 %, and reduce arrests up to 64 %.

fact:



Javier, who was six years old, had a knife to his throat and was threatening suicide. His parents spoke only Spanish and were uninsured. It was a Friday night. The police in Campbell, California, called EMQ Children and Family Services for help. EMQ sent out its Mobile Crisis Team and had a psychiatrist see Javier. They devised a safety plan with Javier's family, keeping in touch with them throughout the weekend. Today, Javier is at home, and he and his family are getting the treatment and help they need.

A true story from EMQ Children and Family Services, Campbell, California

Fulfilling the promise

Mental illness and addictions have for too long been about ignorance, discrimination, injustice, chronic underfunding, and getting by.

America's community-based mental health and addictions treatment organizations have done the best job possible with available resources.

But significant unmet needs remain. People wait for services. Caregivers are underpaid — making recruitment and retention of qualified personnel increasingly difficult.

With modest increases in investment, today's community behavioral healthcare system is poised to help bring about an approach to mental health and addictions treatment worthy of America in the 21st century.

“ Just as despair can come to one only from other human beings, hope, too, can be given to one only by other human beings. ”

Elie Wiesel

Those with serious mental illness die 25 years sooner than the general population — men at about age 53 and women at age 59.

fact:



When “Jonathan” was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, he was the captain of the track team, on his school honor roll, and a member of the school orchestra. It was the beginning of a long struggle. But 18 years later, Jonathan has become a crusader, using his own experiences to advocate for and support others with mental illness. As an instructor at The Providence Center, he educates staff and consumers about recovery and helps motivate consumers to move forward in their journey to recovery.

A true story from The Providence Center, Providence, Rhode Island

What policy makers can do

Government leaders can improve and strengthen mental health and addictions treatment by acting to:

- > > Assure adequate resources to meet mental health and addictions treatment needs through necessary increases in Medicaid and Medicare.
- > > Ensure “parity” by bringing mental health and addictions treatment benefits more in line with coverage for general healthcare.
- > > Further develop the capacity of the nation’s community-based mental health and addictions treatment system to maximize its contributions to taxpayers and our communities.
- > > Promote increased public understanding of the nature and science of mental illness and addictions.



“ A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has. ”

Margaret Mead



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commitment recovery
success
cost-efficiency

EMERGENCY DOOR
SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW

sound investment
community compassion
future local control



“ Everything that is done in
the world is done by hope. ”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Together, we can assure healthy minds,
strong communities...and a better America.



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