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upport Increased Funding for Primary Care and Behavioral Health Integration

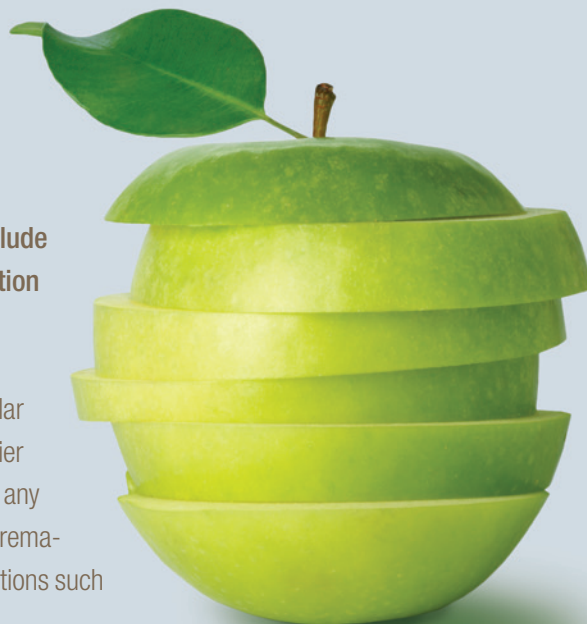
The National Council and its member agencies urge Congress to include \$35 million for the Primary and Behavioral Health Care Integration Grant Program in the FY 2010 Budget.

People with serious mental illnesses — which include schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major clinical depression — die, on average, 25 years earlier than the general population.¹ This represents the highest mortality rate of any population anywhere in America's public health system. Sixty percent of premature deaths in persons with serious mental illness are due to medical conditions such as cardiovascular, pulmonary and infectious diseases.

A 2007 National Council survey of community behavioral health organizations revealed that although 91% of respondents place high or medium priority on increasing the quality of general medical healthcare for their clients, only one in two providers has the capacity to provide any treatment for those conditions, and one in three has the capacity to provide the services onsite.

There are solutions to this epidemic of premature death and morbidity among individuals with severe mental illness. In the FY 2009 Omnibus spending bill, \$7 million was directed to integrating primary care and specialty medical services in community mental health centers and other community-based behavioral health agencies under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services. The National Council and its member agencies strongly encourage Congress to include \$35 million for primary and behavioral healthcare integration efforts in the FY 2010 Budget. This will help community-based providers to overcome the common barriers to providing general medical services and expand their ability to collaborate effectively to provide integrated healthcare.

1. Colton, C.W., Manderscheid, R.W. *Congruencies in Increased Mortality Rates, Years of Potential Life Lost, and Causes of Death Among Public Mental Health Clients in Eight States.* *Preventing Chronic Disease.* Vol. 3(2). April 2006.



Request

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