Economic Stimulus and Healthcare Reform: *Implications for Behavioral Health*

Charles Ingoglia, Vice President, Public Policy
Alexa Eggleston, Director Public Policy
Al Guida, Consultant

National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
The National Council

An assertive, focused policy agenda
The National Council Policy Agenda

- Medicaid
- Medicare
- Commercial Insurance Parity
- Second Chance Act
- Community Mental Health Services Improvement Act
- Veteran’s Access to Treatment

- $825 billion economic stimulus plan: includes $550 billion in spending on infrastructure, health care and education and $275 billion in wide-ranging tax cuts

- Received mixed criticism from Republicans and some Democrats, but Democratic leaders hope to get the package through Congress by the middle of February.

- Senate will soon move its own bill (S 1), and Democrats in both chambers said they have been working with the Obama transition team to ensure quick negotiations over final legislation.
Overview

- $87 billion for Medicaid programs
- $2 billion for health care information technology projects such as electronic medical records
- $20 billion for the food stamp program
- $43 billion for extending and expanding unemployment benefits and training.
- $30 billion for highway construction, $31 billion for federal and other public infrastructure, $10 billion for mass transit and rail, and $19 billion for wastewater, flood control, and environmental restoration projects.
Medicaid Provisions

- **Medicaid Aid to States (FMAP):** Approximately $87 billion to states, increasing through the end of FY 2010 the share of Medicaid costs the federal government reimburses states, with additional relief tied to rates of unemployment.

- **Medicare and Medicaid Regulations:** The bill extends the moratorium on Medicaid and Medicare regulations through October 1, 2009.

- **Medicaid Coverage for the Unemployed:** Provides 100 percent federal funding through 2010 for optional State Medicaid coverage of individuals (and their dependents) who are receiving unemployment benefits or have exhausted those benefits and have no health insurance coverage.
Health Information Technology

- Health Information Architecture
- Integration of health information technology, including electronic medical records
- Training on and dissemination of information on best practices to integrate health information technology, including electronic records, into a provider’s delivery of care
- Infrastructure and tools for the promotion of telemedicine, including coordination among Federal agencies in the promotion of telemedicine.
- Promotion of the interoperability of clinical data repositories or registries.
Additional Provisions

- **National Health Services Corps** - $600 million to address shortages in doctors, dentists and nurses
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families**: $2.5 billion
- **Community Services Block Grant**: $1 billion for grants to local communities to support employment, food, housing, and healthcare efforts serving those hardest hit by the recession.
Additional Provisions

- **Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants** - $500 million for state formula grants for construction and rehabilitation of facilities to help persons with disabilities prepare for gainful employment.

- **Wireless and Broadband Grants**: $6 billion for broadband and wireless services in underserved areas to strengthen the economy and provide business and job opportunities in every section of America with benefits to e-commerce, education, and healthcare.
Additional Provisions

- **Payments to Disabled and Elderly** - $4.2 Billion to help 7.5 million low-income disabled and elderly individuals with an additional SSI payment in 2009 equal to the average monthly payment under the program (approximately $450 for an individual and $630 for a couple).
Our Requests for Stimulus:

- Increase in the federal Medicaid match rate (FMAP) for states and localities
- Increase of $100 million for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG)
- Increase of $100 million for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SAPTBG)
- Non-profit stabilization fund
Next Steps: Timeline

- House Committee plans to mark up the spending part of the stimulus package Jan. 21. The bill would come to the floor the following week.
- House may consider the fiscal 2009 omnibus spending bill, which contains the nine remaining spending bills, the week of Feb. 2, while Senate considers its version of the economic recovery package.
- Senate Appropriations will hold a markup of the stimulus bill week of Jan. 22.
SCHIP

- The SCHIP Reauthorization bill, HR 2 was passed by the House on January 14th.
- Includes parity for mental health and substance use disorders and coverage for legal immigrant children and pregnant immigrants.
- SCHIP is set to expire on March 31, 2009
- The Senate Finance Committee passed Senate version of SCHIP on January 15th.
Healthcare Reform

- Senator Tom Daschle has been nominated to be Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services as well as Director of the White Office of Healthcare Reform.

- Senator Max Baucus, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee Released a White Paper on Healthcare Reform on Nov. 12

- Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee has established working groups to develop a plan and is working cooperatively with the Finance Committee.
Healthcare Reform – National Council Priorities

- Raising profile of behavioral health provider organizations and persons with mental illness and addictive disorders.

- Ensuring that proposed plans and programs explicitly include these providers and consumers.

- Seeking opportunities to enhance status, payment, and regulation of behavioral healthcare organizations.
Healthcare Reform – National Council Priorities

- The integration of primary care services in behavioral health settings
- Cost-based-plus financing that supports service excellence
- Federal mental health funding stream dedicated to mental health and integrated treatment services for the uninsured
- Eligibility for social security disability for people with addiction disorders
- Funds to support investments by behavioral healthcare organizations in information technology
- Expansion of research-based education and prevention practices
Next Steps

- Inform Congress about the impact of the economic crisis on behavioral healthcare provider organizations:
  - Increased need for services
  - County and state budget cuts
  - Provider organization layoffs, service cuts, etc.

- National Council will be sending out action alert to all participants on this call, ask that you help us educate Congress.

- Keep us informed, share local news stories.

- Participate in our Medicaid reimbursement study
Get Involved!

- Sign up to receive the Public Policy Update:
  http://www.nccbh.net/profiles/enteremail_sub.htm

- Know a Member of Congress? Join our Key Contacts Club! Email Chuck Ingoglia:
  chucki@thenationalcouncil.org

- Sign up to receive Action Alerts from the National Council:
  http://capwiz.com/thenationalcouncil/mlm/signup/
Stay in Touch

- The National Council’s policy staff is a resource to you. Be in touch – ask us questions, send us information, be part of our network.

- Policy@thenationalcouncil.org
“Political action is the highest responsibility of a citizen.”

John F. Kennedy

Hill Day: June 9 and 10