

FY 2020 Mental Health and Substance Use Appropriations

REQUEST

Support funding for:

- **SAMHSA: Promoting Integration of Primary and Behavioral Health Care (PIPBHC)**
- **SAMHSA: Mental Health First Aid**
- **SAMHSA: SUD Workforce Loan Repayment Act**
- **SAMHSA: Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant**
- **SAMHSA: Community Mental Health Services Block Grant**
- **SAMHSA: Practice Improvement and Training**
- **SAMHSA: Minority Fellowship Program**
- **NIH: Mental Health and Substance Use Research**
- **HHS Administration for Families and Children: Social Services Block Grant**
- **HUD: Supportive Housing to Promote Recovery and Integration**
- **DOJ: Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Integration**

A robust mental health and addiction care system is essential to helping all Americans lead healthy, productive and independent lives. Federal investments in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies support desperately needed mental health and substance use prevention, treatment and recovery services nationwide and foster new research and clinical innovations.

In light of the nation’s opioid crisis and huge treatment gaps for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, we are grateful that Congress and the Trump Administration have agreed to the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019, increasing non-defense discretionary levels by \$27 billion for FY 2020 and \$29 billion for FY 2021. It is critical that Congress invest these increases to expand access to research and treatment, prevention and recovery services for those living with mental illness and addiction.

Why do we need increased investments in substance use and mental health programs and research?

Cuts in funding for behavioral health programs in FY 2020 would jeopardize health care services that play a crucial role in both keeping Americans healthy and reducing the spillover costs of untreated mental health and substance use conditions. In February 2019, the FY 2019 omnibus package was signed into law and provided billions of dollars

in new federal investments in mental health and addiction programs to address the fact that millions of Americans cannot access mental health or addiction care.



With the newly approved FY2020 budget deal, advocates urge Congress to build on its previous work to continue expanding access to mental health and addiction care. As members of Congress continue work on FY 2020 appropriations, the Hill Day partners support maintaining current investment in behavioral health care and equity between defense and non-defense spending caps.

Among the many important programs that fund mental health and addiction services, the National Council and Hill Day Partners urge lawmakers to support funding of the following:

SAMHSA: Promoting Integration of Primary and Behavioral Health Care (PIPBHC)

The PIPBHC program supports community behavioral health and primary care organizations in partnering to provide essential primary care services to adults with serious mental illness. Because of this program, more than 100,000 people with serious mental health and addiction disorders have been screened and treated for diabetes, heart disease and other common and deadly illnesses at more than 210 grantee sites in 40 states to help stem the alarming early death rate from these health conditions in this population. Essential to the success of PIPBHC is the technical assistance offered by the Center of Excellence for Integrated Health Solutions, funded by SAMHSA as “Center for Integrated Health Solutions Training and Technical Assistance (TTA).” We urge House and Senate appropriators to continue their long, bipartisan support of this important program.

- **PIPBHC request for FY 2020:** \$50 million (level funding to FY 2019)
- **TTA Center request for FY 2020:** \$2 million (level funding to FY 2019)

SAMHSA: Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is a public education program that helps participants identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance abuse. The course teaches a five-step action plan to reach out to a person in crisis and connect them with help. Mental Health First Aid funding has been used to support training activities for school personnel including classroom teachers, counselors and principals, as well as local law enforcement agencies, fire departments and emergency medical units, equipping these first responders with the skills to constructively intervene when someone is experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis. Most recently, the agency has maintained the program’s youth focus, but expanded the eligible grantees to include Catholic Charities, YWCA, YMCA, Boy Scout and Girl Scout leaders and community colleges. Congress approved a \$1 million increase in funding for Mental Health First Aid for FY 2019, bringing contributions to this important public education and training program to a total of \$20.9 million. We thank members of the House and Senate for their support of this important program.

- **Mental Health First Aid request for FY 2020:** \$21.963 million (\$1.0 million above FY 2019)

SAMHSA: Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act

Enacted as a part of the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act of 2018, funding has not yet been appropriated by Congress for this critical program that creates incentives for students to pursue addiction treatment careers, increasing timely access to treatment for individuals living with addiction. To date, there are simply too few clinicians with the requisite knowledge to meet the needs of the estimated 20.1 million Americans suffering from untreated substance use disorders. To make a meaningful and sustainable impact on the current opioid overdose epidemic, it is imperative that America make strategic investments to incentivize clinicians to work in programs and practices that specialize in the treatment of substance use disorder and addiction.

- **Request for FY 2020:** \$25.0 million (\$25.0 million above FY2019)

SAMHSA: Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant

The SAPT Block Grant remains the foundation of the publicly supported substance use prevention, treatment and recovery systems. Stronger federal support through the SAPT Block Grant is critically

important given that the block grant has lost 29 percent of its purchasing power over the last 10 years by not keeping up with health care inflation. The SAPT Block Grant includes a set-aside amount reserved specifically for prevention services which makes up 65 percent of primary prevention funding in the states and territories. SAPT Block Grant funding is essential to effectively preventing youth alcohol and drug use, treating addiction and providing recovery supports to help people stay well over their lifetime. Congress funded the SAPT Block Grant at \$1.858 billion in FY 2019 (level funding from FY 2018). We urge House and Senate appropriators to support increased funding for this critical source of substance use prevention and treatment service, including services for opioid use disorder.

- **SAPT Block Grant request for FY 2020:** \$2.279 billion (\$500 million above FY 2019)

SAMHSA: Community Mental Health Services Block Grant

Services funded by the Mental Health Block Grant include supported employment, supported housing, rehabilitation, crisis stabilization, case management, family-run programs, peer specialist and consumer-directed care, wrap-around services for children and families, jail diversion programs and services for special populations like people who are homeless, live in rural and frontier areas and military families. The majority of these services are currently not broadly covered under private and public insurance. The Block Grant also maintains a 10 percent set-aside to focus on evidence-based practices for early intervention in psychosis. Congress maintained funding for the Mental Health Block Grant at \$722.5 million for FY 2019. We urge Congress to support an increase in funding so states can continue to make progress addressing unmet mental health needs in their communities.

- **Mental Health Block Grant request for FY 2020:** \$1.202 billion (\$500 million above FY 2019)

SAMHSA: Practice Improvement and Training

Practice Improvement and Training Grants research and disseminate effective health care practices for transitioning individuals with serious mental health conditions from an expectation of lifelong disability toward productive employment and participation in community life. In particular, these grants seek to reduce the provision of medically unnecessary high-cost, long-term services and instead supports and focuses on promoting independent living and competitive employment with health care services and supports provided only as required to achieve these goals. As America seeks to bend the health care cost curve, dissemination of effective practices for improving outcomes for high-cost populations is crucial. Congress funded the Practice Improvement and Training Grants at \$7.8 million in FYs 2017-2019. Similar levels of funding in FY 2020 would further promote the goals of the program.

- **Practice Improvement and Training request for FY 2020:** \$7.8 million (level funding to FY 2019)

SAMHSA: Minority Fellowship Program

The Minority Fellowship Program provides scholarships to minority mental health graduate students in several mental health fields. The program was created in 1974 with the goal of increasing the cultural competency of America's mental health workforce and is the only federal program focused on cultural competency. As the population of the United States continues to become more diverse, cultural stigmas will become even larger barriers for minority populations seeking care.

- **Minority Fellowship Program request for FY 2020:** \$15.2 million (\$2.0 million above FY2019)

NIH: Mental Health and Substance Use Research

Scientific advances have led to astounding discoveries about the mental health and substance use disorders. Continued investments in research will aid in developing rapid, effective treatments for behavioral health disorders and facilitate early identification and intervention. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) must have sufficient funding to realize their ambitious vision of finding cures to these disabling illnesses. For FY 2019, Congress boosted NIH funding by \$2 billion to \$39 billion, including increases for NIDA (up to \$1.419 billion), NIAAA (up to \$525.6 million) and NIMH (up to \$1.812 billion). Given that mental health and substance use conditions frequently co-occur, all three institutes

are key to addressing behavioral health issues holistically. Despite this fact, the President's FY 2020 budget is proposing deep cuts for all three Institutes. We urge Congress to reject any cuts to NIH and support a 5 percent increase for the NIH — equal to the cost of biomedical research inflation — to ensure that NIH-funded research can continue to improve our nation's health.

- **Overall NIH request for FY 2020:** \$41.5 billion (\$2 billion above FY 2019)

HHS Administration for Families and Children (AFC): Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)

Addiction and mental illness impact the entire family. Often, when parents are unable to care for their children due to an active addiction or serious mental illness, child welfare services are required. The Social Services Block Grant is a flexible fund through which states finance efforts to support foster care, address family poverty and prevent child abuse and neglect. The President's budget request would end this critical source of support for families. We urge Congress to continue the SSBG's current funding level in FY 2020.

- **SSBG request for FY 2020:** \$1.7 billion (level funding to FY 2019)

HUD: Supportive Housing to Promote Recovery and Integration

Access to safe, affordable housing and supportive services is vital for recovery from addiction and mental illness. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs such as the Section 811 Project Based Rental Assistance (PRA) Demonstration and the McKinney Vento permanent supportive housing programs are proven, effective models that promote recovery and cost savings. In FY 2019, the Section 811 program was funded at \$184 million, an amount sufficient to renew all existing Project Based Rental Assistance Contracts (PRACs). For FY 2020, \$225 million will be needed to renew existing Section 811 "Mainstream" tenant-based vouchers. Given the high prevalence of chronic homelessness experienced by people living with behavioral health conditions, we urge Congress to support \$3 billion for programs under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (\$364 million above FY 2019). This would end chronic homelessness for an additional 70,000 people living with a mental illness and/or a substance use disorder. HR 3163 takes an important step toward this goal by boosting funding for McKinney-Vento programs by \$164 million, up to \$2.8 billion.

- **HUD request for FY 2020:** Ensure adequate funding to renew all existing tenant-based and project-based units across Section 8, Section 811 and McKinney-Vento programs.

DOJ: Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Integration

The criminal justice system has become the largest de facto mental health and addiction treatment provider in the United States due to an underfunded and overburdened safety-net. Communities are often ill-equipped to support justice-involved individuals living with serious mental illness or substance use disorder. The Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA) ensures criminal justice and mental health systems have the resources necessary to serve one of the nation's most vulnerable patient populations. MIOTCRA funds mental health courts, mental health and substance use disorders treatment for justice-involved persons, community re-entry services and local law enforcement training to help officers identify and improve their responses to people experiencing crisis. The Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI), is a data-driven approach that helps states reduce criminal justice spending and reinvest the savings in strategies to improve public safety. Since 2010, more than 30 states have deployed the justice reinvestment approach to develop policies to slow overall prison growth and, for some states, reduce the total prison population. States have reported cumulative savings and averted more than \$1.1 billion in costs while also investing millions in effective supervision and treatment programs to make communities safer, including improving community supervision, expanding community-based treatment and services, creating grants to support local law enforcement and more.

- **DOJ request for FY 2020:** Ensure adequate funding for these DOJ initiatives that serve justice-involved Americans living with a mental illness or addiction.
 - o MIOTCRA: \$35 million (\$4 million above FY2019)
 - o Justice Reinvestment Initiative: \$35 million (\$8 million above FY2019)