

**February 13, 2020**

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned organizations are writing to **urge you to extend and expand the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) demonstration before the May 22, 2020 expiration deadline.** As our country continues to confront an addiction crisis, it is clear we have not built the necessary and sustainable addiction treatment capacity across our nation. Congress has shown leadership in extending the Excellence Act demonstration program, which is an important step in addressing this issue. However, **now is the time to make the long-term investment in expanding the program's addiction and mental health care services to the additional 11 states ready to participate in this demonstration.**

Since launching in 2017, CCBHCs dramatically improved access to community-based addiction and mental health care in the eight states where they operate, particularly in regard to increasing opioid addiction services. CCBHCs hired hundreds of new addiction-focused clinicians, expanded medication-assisted treatment (MAT), and reduced patient wait times. Since March 31, 2019, Congress has acted to extend the demonstration six times (HR 1839, S. 2047, HR 3253, HR 4378, HR 3055, HR 1865). In addition, the Grassley/Wyden bill, the *Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act of 2019* (S. 2543) continues the existing demonstration for two years and adds all 11 pending states. **However, with the CCBHC demonstration set to end in May 22, 2020, access to these lifesaving treatments could be lost.**

Results from a National Council for Behavioral Health report show that states face a looming crisis in access to care if the CCBHC demonstration ends on May 22, 2020. **Specifically, the end of the CCBHC program would result in 9,100 patients losing access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and 3,000 clinicians and staff would be laid off.** Patients would lose timely access to services with 77 percent of CCBHCs reporting that they would have to re-establish a waitlist for services, and over half of CCBHCs reporting that they will have to turn people away from care.

CCBHC certification requires coordinated care with partners in the criminal justice system and veteran's organizations. In communities with CCBHCs, sheriffs and police officers now have support from trained mental health and addiction professionals, alleviating the burden on front-line officers and helping people get access to the correct level of treatment.

Currently, California, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Texas are on the waitlist to participate in this important demonstration.

**If Congress does not allow the additional states to participate in the CCBHC program, clinics in those states will not have the opportunity to create this vital partnership with law enforcement that helps reduce recidivism and connect people to the right level of care.**

The Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act (S. 824/H.R. 1767) would ensure that states do not see their progress in expanding mental health and addiction care stripped away in the coming months. The bill extends the current CCBHCs' activities for two more years and expands the program to 11 more states that applied but were excluded from participation by the eight-state limit in the current law.

**We urge Congress to act swiftly to extend and expand the program before the May deadline.** Thank you for your leadership in addressing this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)

American Art Therapy Association

American Art Therapy Association

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Counseling Association

American Dance Therapy Association

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Group Psychotherapy Association

American Mental Health Counselors Association

American Occupational Therapy Association

American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

American Society of Addiction Medicine

Anxiety and Depression Association of America  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness  
California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals  
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  
Cities Thrive Mental Health Coalition  
Clinical Social Work Association  
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
Dil to Dil  
Eating Disorders Coalition  
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice International  
International Bipolar Foundation  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
The Kennedy Forum  
Mental Health America  
Mothers Against Prescription Drug Abuse  
MQ Foundation  
NAADAC, the Association of Addiction Professionals  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers  
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors  
National Coalition for Maternal Mental Health  
National Council for Behavioral Health

National Disability Rights Network  
National Eating Disorders Association  
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
National League for Nursing  
National Register of Health Service Psychologists  
National Safety Council  
No Health Without Mental Health  
OCD Foundation  
School Social Work Association of America  
SMART Recovery  
Steinberg Institute  
Treatment Advocacy Center  
Treatment Communities of America  
Trevor Project  
Trinity Health  
Trust for America's Health  
Youth MOVE National