

HEROIC  
HONORABLE  
DEDICATED  
DUTY  
SERVICE  
BRAVE  
READY  
COMMITMENT  
COURAGEOUS  
SELFLESS  
INTEGRITY  
VALIANT

MISSION  
PATRIOTIC  
RESPECT  
ALWAYS  
COUNTRY  
SEMPER  
DEFEND

# Cohen Veterans Network



# America's Mental Health 2018

October 10, 2018

# OVERVIEW & METHODOLOGY

To help Cohen Veterans Network and the National Council for Behavioral Health gain a better understanding of Americans' current access to and attitudes towards mental health services, Ketchum Analytics conducted a multi-phased research program to understand the landscape of mental health care access.

To achieve this we conducted the following:

An online survey among 5,000 Americans, representative of the US population based on age, gender, region, household income, and race/ethnicity. The survey was conducted between July 31 – August 12, 2018, with a margin of error of +/- 1.38 at the 95% confidence level. Through the survey, we also identified the following groups:

- Veterans and those with a secondary relationship with a veteran
- Those who have sought mental health treatment (Mental Health Treatment Seekers)

A custom index ranking each state according to its mental health service access. Third-party data was gathered to determine access based on four pillars:

- Providers
- Facilities
- Funding
- Satisfaction

Data was aggregated and averaged to each state, resulting in a score between 0 and 100, where 100 indicates the greatest access.

# KEY QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

What is the current state of access to mental health services in America?



What is keeping Americans from seeking treatment to mental health issues?

How do Americans perceive both mental health services and mental health in general?



What do we need to do to improve both access to and overall quality of mental health services?

# THE BIG PICTURE

**Mental health services in the US are insufficient**  
despite high demand. The root of the problem is getting an appointment, not quality of care.



**Over half** of American adults have sought or considered mental health treatment for themselves or others



A **lack of access** to mental health services for all Americans may dissuade people from seeking help in the first place



Once people receive the mental health services, their experience is positive



Barriers to access affect everyone: cost, limited resources & funding, and social stigma



**Americans need a strong voice educating and advocating for them**



Americans don't know who to turn to, what their options are, or what others will think of them



Those who have received treatment are more aware of the access challenges—activate them to share their stories and experiences to bring the positives to light



# STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE

## Large numbers of Americans are seeking mental health services

Nearly **six in ten Americans** have sought or wanted to seek mental health treatment either for themselves or a loved one—and veterans have sought help at the same rate

## Awareness of and support for mental health care services is strong

Americans are **highly supportive of mental health in general**, regarding it as just as **essential** to discuss and treat as physical health

## Getting an appointment is the biggest hurdle to meeting patients' mental health needs

Many have a **poor outlook of Americans' ability to get mental health services and perceive that lack of funding and insufficient facilities** drag down mental health service availability

# Demand for mental health services is strong

## Estimating the Demand for Mental Health Care

**141 million**  
or **56% of American adults**  
have sought or wanted to seek  
treatment for themselves or  
others

# In spite of this, barriers to getting mental health care exist—though stigma may be on the decline

46%

Of those who have never sought treatment would not know where to go if they needed to seek mental health services for themselves or a family member/friend

53 million

American adults have wanted to see a mental health care professional for themselves at some point but were unable to for reasons outside their control (21%)



Over half of Americans believed depression was a sign of emotional or mental weakness in 1996, but just 15% believed that therapy was a sign of character weakness in 2004, according to the Roper Center\*

\*[The Roper Center](#), "Public Attitudes about Mental Health"

Q4. If you needed to seek treatment for a mental health issue for yourself or a family member or friend, would you know where to go? Base: Have never sought mental health treatment (n=2,645); Q3. Have you ever wanted to seek treatment for a mental health issue for yourself for a family member or friend? Base: Those who have not sought treatment for themselves or others (n=4,972); Q13. Have you ever wanted to see a mental health care professional but were unable to for reasons outside your control? Base: Total (n=5,024); Note rough approximations based on US population of adults aged 18+ in the US in 2017 (N=252,063,800)

# Mental health care is a priority for Americans; however, not everyone is getting the care and support they need

**Mental health is taken seriously by the majority of Americans**

**BUT...**

**More must be done to make mental health services both accessible and understood**

**76%** Mental health is just as important as physical health

**55%** There has to be a fundamental shift in society that makes mental health a priority

**3 in 4**



Say that physical wellness (72%, e.g. healthy eating) and emotional wellness (71%, e.g. self-esteem) are most important to defining wellness overall\*

*And according to the Kennedy Center for Mental Health Policy and Research\*\*...*

**74%** The current health care system treats physical health with greater importance than mental health

*Strongly agree only*

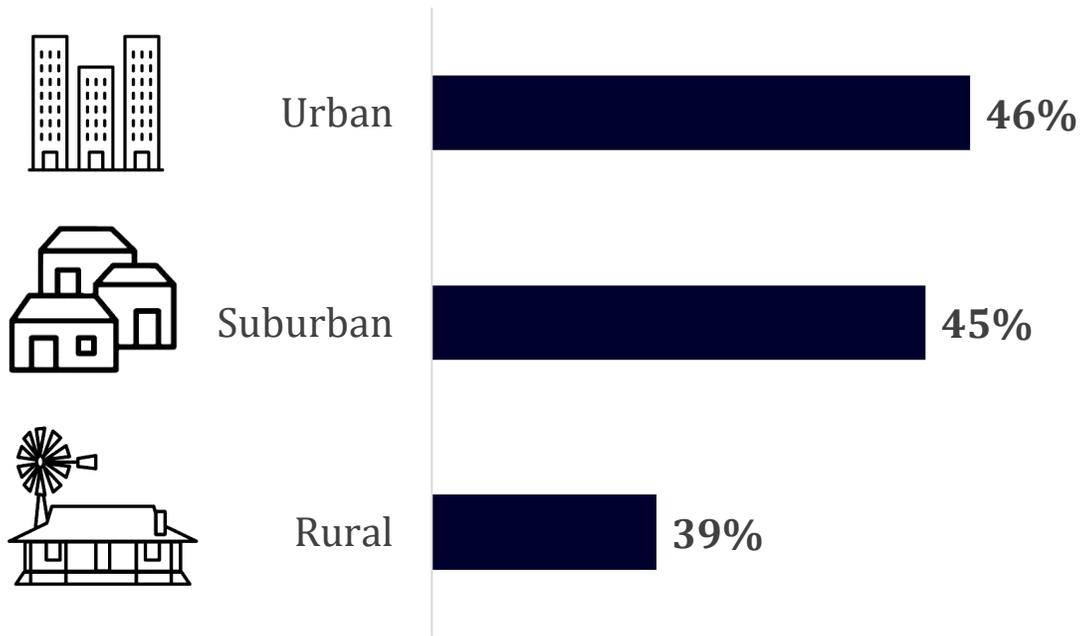
\*Ketchum: [The Influence of Wellness](#)

\*\*[Treatment Advocacy Center](#), "Nearly All Americans Say mental Health Issues Are a 'Serious' Problem"

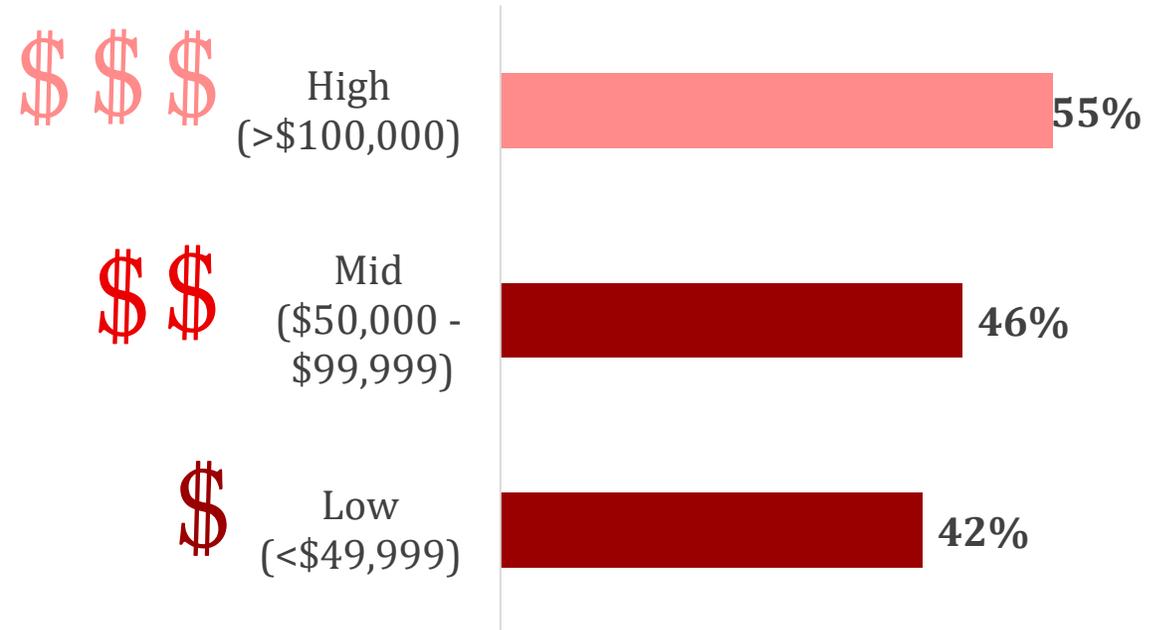
Q28. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about mental health overall? Base: Total (n=5,024)

# This disparity in experience—both in terms of getting seen and its perception—may contribute to lower perceived levels of access among both low income and rural Americans

Americans in rural areas are less likely to say that mental health services are extremely accessible—though they report the same adequacy of treatment



The same can be said for low- and mid-income households when compared to their high-income counterparts



# There is a need for better ability to get care everywhere: people who seek mental health treatment are not far off from the average American

## Mental Health Treatment Seekers are...

**Skew  
slightly  
younger**

Among people who have sought out mental health care treatment for themselves or others, 37% are **Millennial** (while 27% of non mental health treatment seekers are Millennials)

**Slightly  
more likely  
to be low  
income**

53% of people in a lower income household (under \$50,000 annually) have sought out mental health care treatment (while 47% of non mental health treatment seekers live in a lower income household)

**More likely to  
be involved  
with the  
military**

66% of mental health treatment seekers are involved with the **military either directly or through a secondary relationship** (while 53% of non mental health treatment seekers are involved with the military)



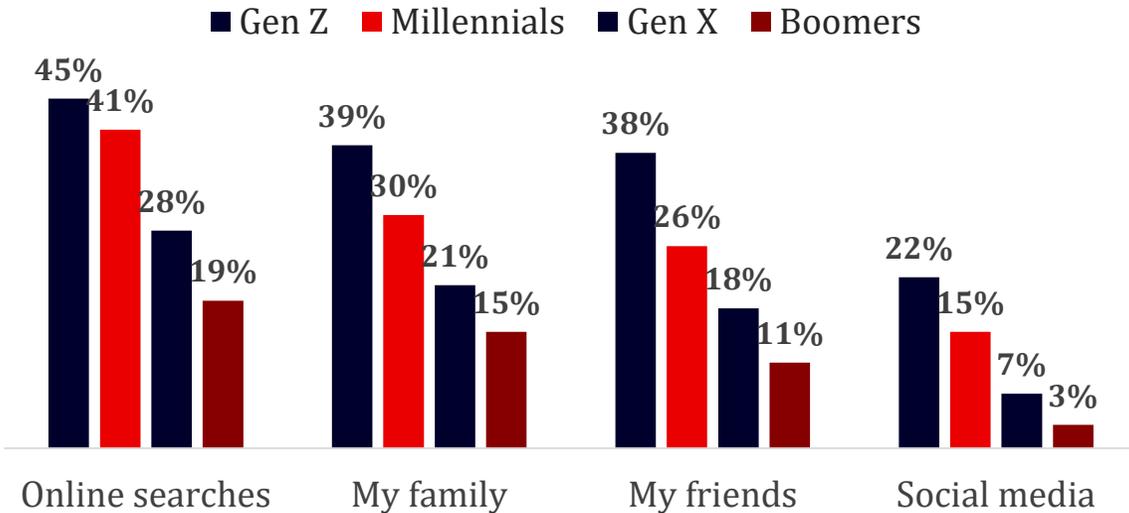
S1. What is your age?; S5. Please indicate your household income before taxes; S6. Which, if any, of the following is true for you? Base: Total (n=5,024)



# Despite having some of the more critical needs, younger Americans are unsure of resources and more impacted by the stigma of mental health care

**87%** of both Gen Z and Millennials have **ever sought information on mental health**, compared to 78% of Gen X and 66% of Boomers

Sources turned to most for mental health information



## Better resources for suicide prevention and self-harm are necessary

Gen Z is **most likely to have sought mental health treatment for being suicidal** (38%), followed by Millennials (26%), Gen X (20%), and Boomers (12%). Gen Z is also most likely to say that **their mental health was harming their physical health** (45% vs. 31% Millennials and 29% Gen X)

## Younger generations need a better education of the resources available to them

Gen Z (31%) and Millennials (32%) are more likely than Gen X (20%) and Boomers (13%) to have **tried to seek out mental health services but found it too hard to figure out where to go for help**

## Despite better visibility of mental health issues, Gen Z and Millennials are still crippled by stigma

Younger Americans are more likely to have **worried about others judging them when they've sought mental health services** (49% Gen Z vs. 40% Millennials vs. 30% Gen X vs. 20% Boomers)

# Those who seek out mental health treatment most often do so for generic symptoms – not specific distinguishing symptoms

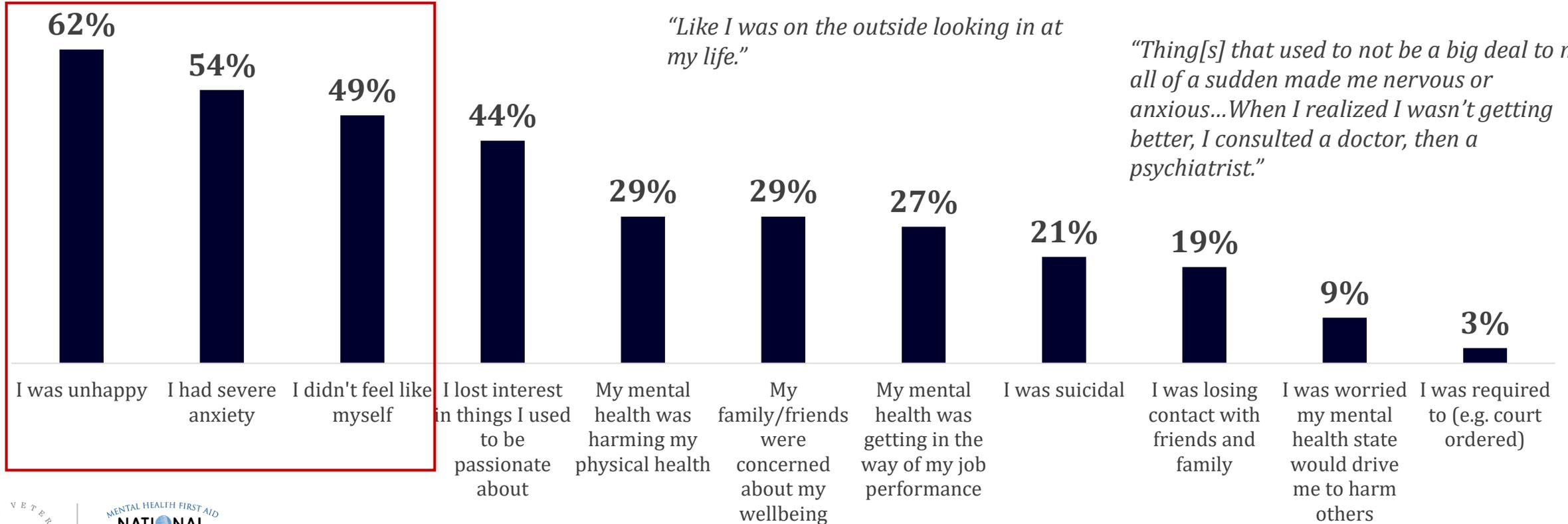
## Reasons Americans have sought treatment for mental health care

*"I didn't recognize my behavior."*

*"I could not eat, sleep, or function properly."*

*"Like I was on the outside looking in at my life."*

*"Thing[s] that used to not be a big deal to me all of a sudden made me nervous or anxious...When I realized I wasn't getting better, I consulted a doctor, then a psychiatrist."*



# How prominent is the issue of getting seen?

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# THE ISSUE OF GETTING SEEN

**Ability to get mental health services is the number one challenge to mental health care**

Only **one in four** Americans believe that mental health services are extremely accessible to Americans in general

**Once they've received treatment, Americans recognize mental health services' benefits**

Americans report **better accessibility** to services for themselves than for the general public, especially among **those who have already sought mental health treatment**

**Issues with getting seen go beyond basic availability of services—proximity, cost, and wait times are all part of the problem**

Even when Americans have services available to them, **other factors keep them from seeking treatment**, particularly those that prevent **timely treatment**

# This perception of limited ability to get seen may be influenced in part by unacceptable wait times to receive mental health services

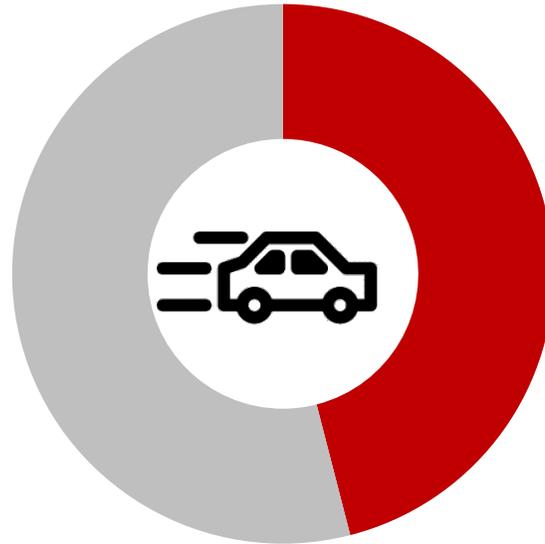
**96 million**  
American adults, or  
**38%** have had to wait  
longer than one week for  
mental health services

**81%**  
agree that patients  
should not have to wait  
longer than a week to  
receive treatment

Q.10 Based on your most recent experience, how long after seeking treatment did it take to actually receive mental health services (e.g. go to a doctor's appointment, check into a rehabilitation facility, see a therapist, etc.)? Base: Those who have sought mental health treatment for themselves (n=1,739); Q20. How long is it okay for patients to have to wait between scheduling an (non-emergency) appointment with a mental health professional and actually receiving treatment? Base: Total (n=5,024); Note rough approximations based on US population of adults aged 18+ in the US in 2017 (N=252,063,800)

# Patients aren't only losing time waiting for treatment—they're also spending significant time traveling to their appointment

**Nearly half (46%) of American adults** have had to or know someone who has had to travel **more than 1 hour roundtrip** to get to their most recent mental health care appointment



- Despite these travel times, very few Americans use telehealth services, which just 4% of those who have sought mental health treatment for themselves have tried.

# BARRIERS TO GETTING SEEN

**Cost is the primary barrier to getting mental health services**

**Cost is the most significant barrier** to mental health services in America, in terms of out of pocket funds, insufficient insurance coverage, and lack of government funding

**Limited options and lack of awareness cause people to seek out support from less reliable sources**

Many Americans not only **lack an accessible mental health treatment facility**, but also general knowledge of where to even find one. When they can't get access to the care they need, they'll search for it from **less trustworthy sources**.

**Social stigma is keeping many from seeking help or sharing their experiences**

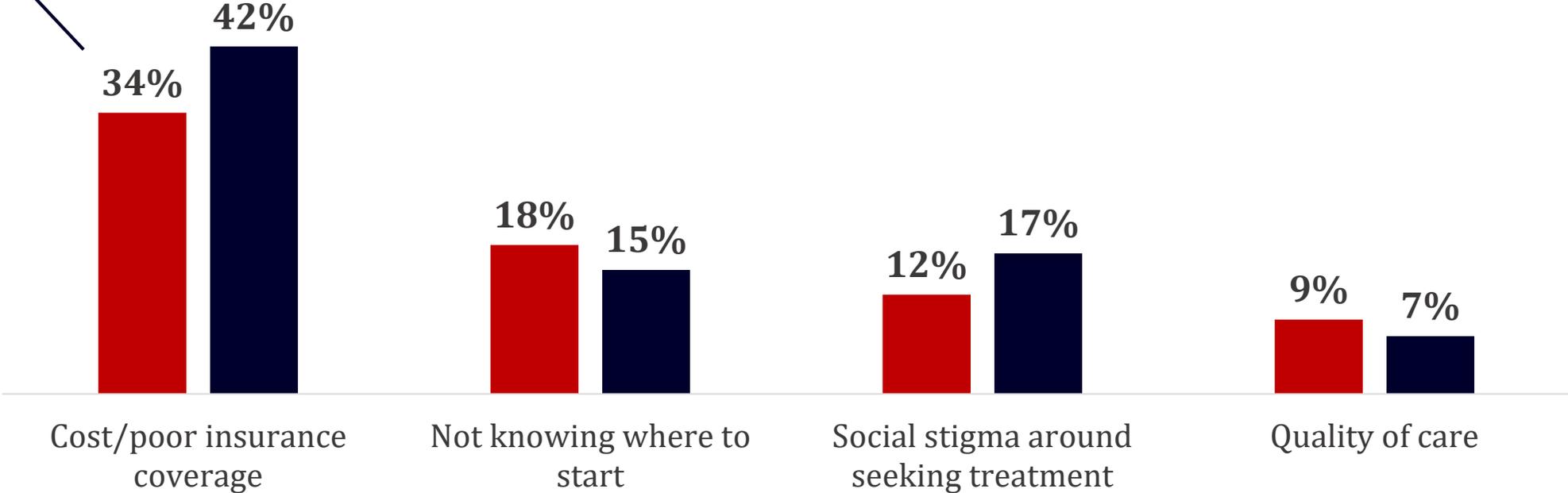
Despite strong acceptance of mental health among Americans, many are **paralyzed by social stigmas attached to seeking mental health treatment**, especially in lower income areas

# Cost and lack of information are the biggest hurdles to getting seen

Cost, specifically, is a bigger barrier among lower income Americans (26% vs. 18% of higher income Americans say it is their primary barrier)

## Top barriers to seeking effective mental health services

■ For themselves ■ For Americans in general



Q.25 Thinking about your experience in seeking out a mental health care provider, what do you feel is the top barrier to seeking effective mental health services?; Q.26 Now thinking about Americans overall, what do you feel is the top barrier to seeking effective mental health services? Base: Total (n=5,024)



# Cost is not only the primary barrier to mental health services for all Americans, but also the key to getting more people seen

Cost is the **#1 barrier** to seeking mental health services for...



**Individuals**  
(24%)



**Americans in general**  
(28%)

**1 in 4**

Have had to choose between getting mental health treatment and paying for daily necessities

**1 in 5**

Have had to choose between getting treatment for a physical health condition and a mental health condition due to cost



But it's also the **#1 solution**...

Making mental health services **more affordable** is what Americans think will most improve access to and quality of mental health services (60% extremely effective)

# Although mental health care treatment is accepted, many also feel overwhelmed or ashamed when seeking treatment

52%

Have tried to **“grin and bear it”** instead of **seeing a doctor** when feeling depressed or mentally unstable

22%

Have tried to seek out mental health services, but it was **too hard to figure out where to go** for help

31%

Have **worried about others judging** them when they told them they have sought mental health services

21%

Have **lied to avoid telling people** that they’ve sought mental health services

# When cost and stigma are barriers, people are more likely to take mental health care into their own hands and seek out their own solutions

Without having received professional help, people are turning to more accessible and anonymous but less trustworthy information sources

*Of those who have wanted to seek mental health treatment for themselves/others...*

1

More likely to turn to **online searches** (40% vs. 30% of Americans) and **health information websites** (36% vs. 28%) for information on mental health services—though **they report similar, low levels of trust**

2

More likely to **wish that their insurance plan covered appointments with a mental health specialist** (40% vs. 32% of Americans)

3

More likely to **worry that others judge them when they say they've sought mental health services** (47% vs. 31% of Americans) and **lie about having sought them** (34% vs. 21%)

# SOLUTIONS TO GETTING SEEN

Solutions that are needed center around lack of visibility and information

Americans lack a strong voice to educate them on mental health and related services. With greater awareness, **more will seek out care and speak up about improvements needed**

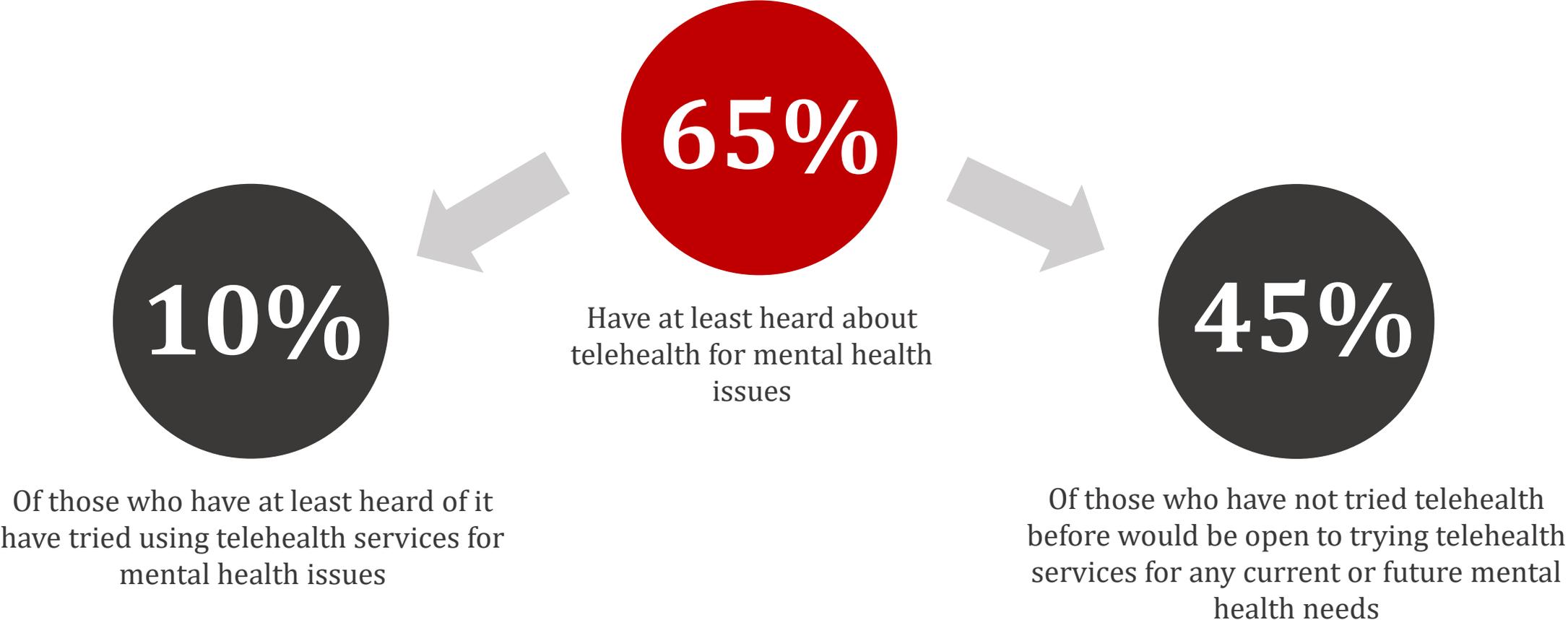
Having a strong network of support is critical to providing patients with the treatment they need

Health care providers, insurers, patients, and others **must work together** and hold each other accountable to ensure high quality, accessible **treatment for all who need it**

Telehealth is a viable alternative to face-to-face services for those who cannot get seen

Americans place **face-to-face services as top priority in care**, and while few have used telehealth services, those that have rate it as a good alternative to traditional in-person care

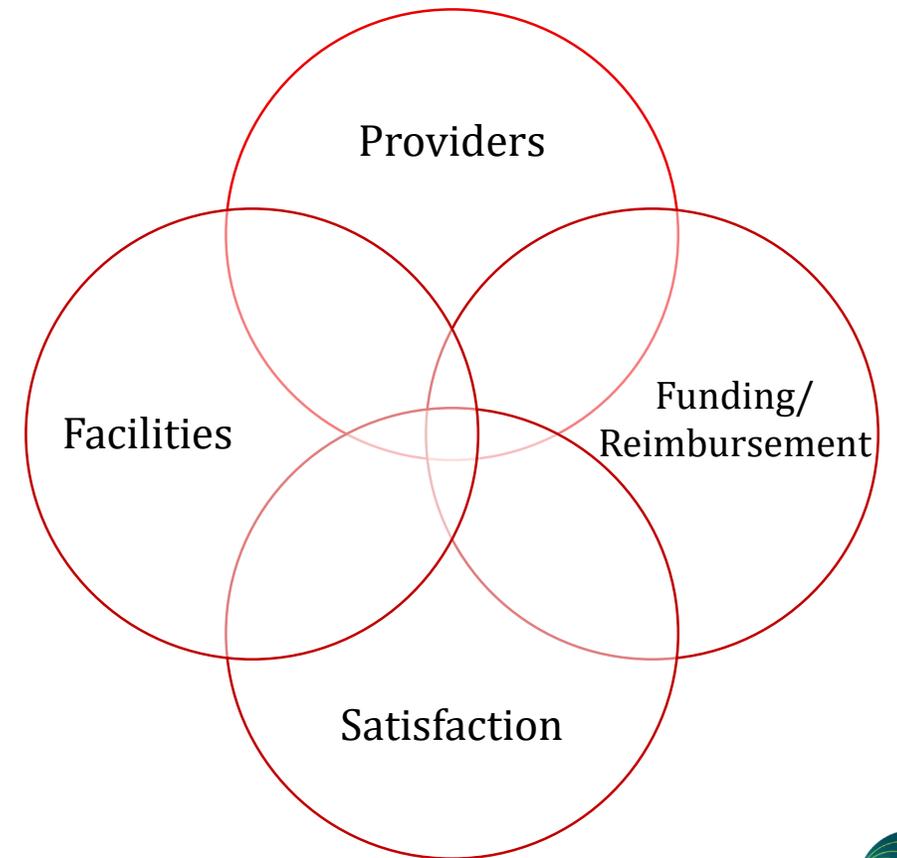
# Telehealth can be a solution to fill the gap in getting seen



# INDEX OVERVIEW

- **America's Mental Health 2018**, commissioned by Cohen Veterans Network and the National Council for Behavioral Health, provides current and comprehensive coverage of mental health service access in each state.
- The mental health index measures patients' access to services in terms of four pillars – providers, facilities, funding, and perceived satisfaction among patients – were aggregated and averaged to rank each state.

This index was designed by leveraging existing secondary data to provide a true measure of the current state of access to mental health services in America.



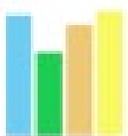
# WHERE DOES THE DATA COME FROM?



AMERICA'S  
**HEALTH  
RANKINGS**<sup>®</sup>  
UNITED HEALTH FOUNDATION

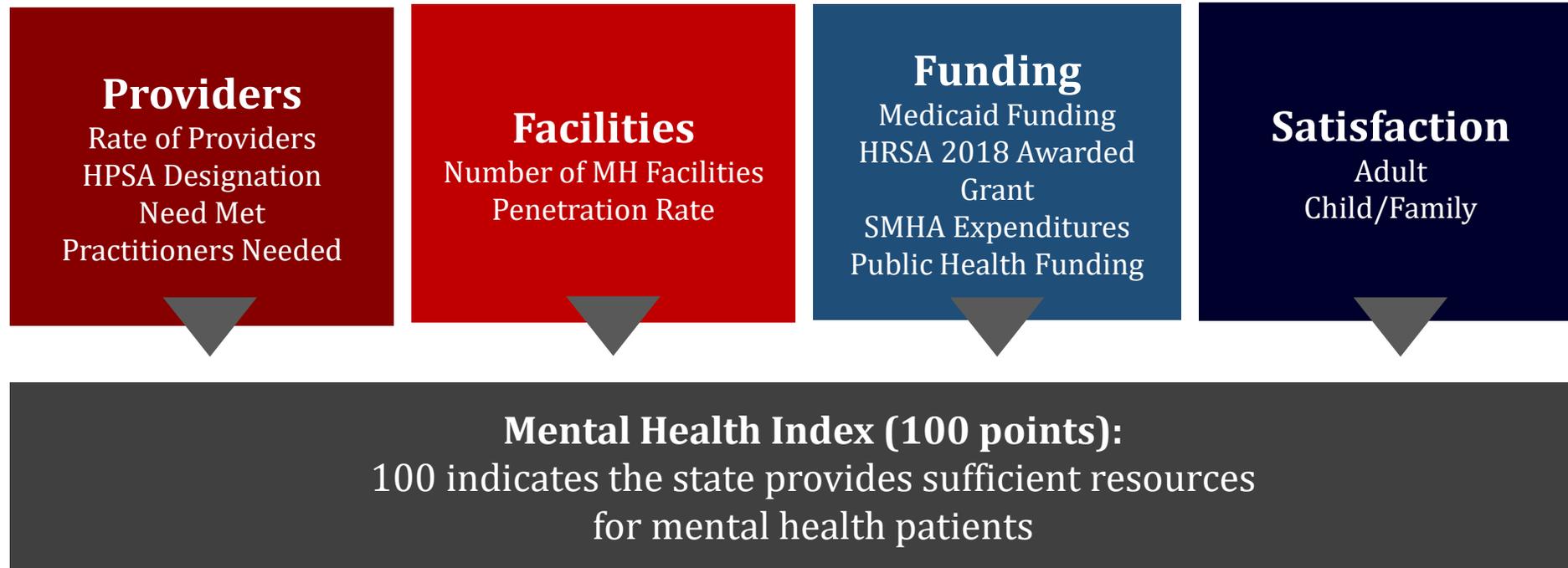
**statista** 

***SAMHSA***  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

 **HRSA** Health Resources & Services Administration  
**Data Warehouse**



# WHAT DATA COMPRISES THE INDEX?



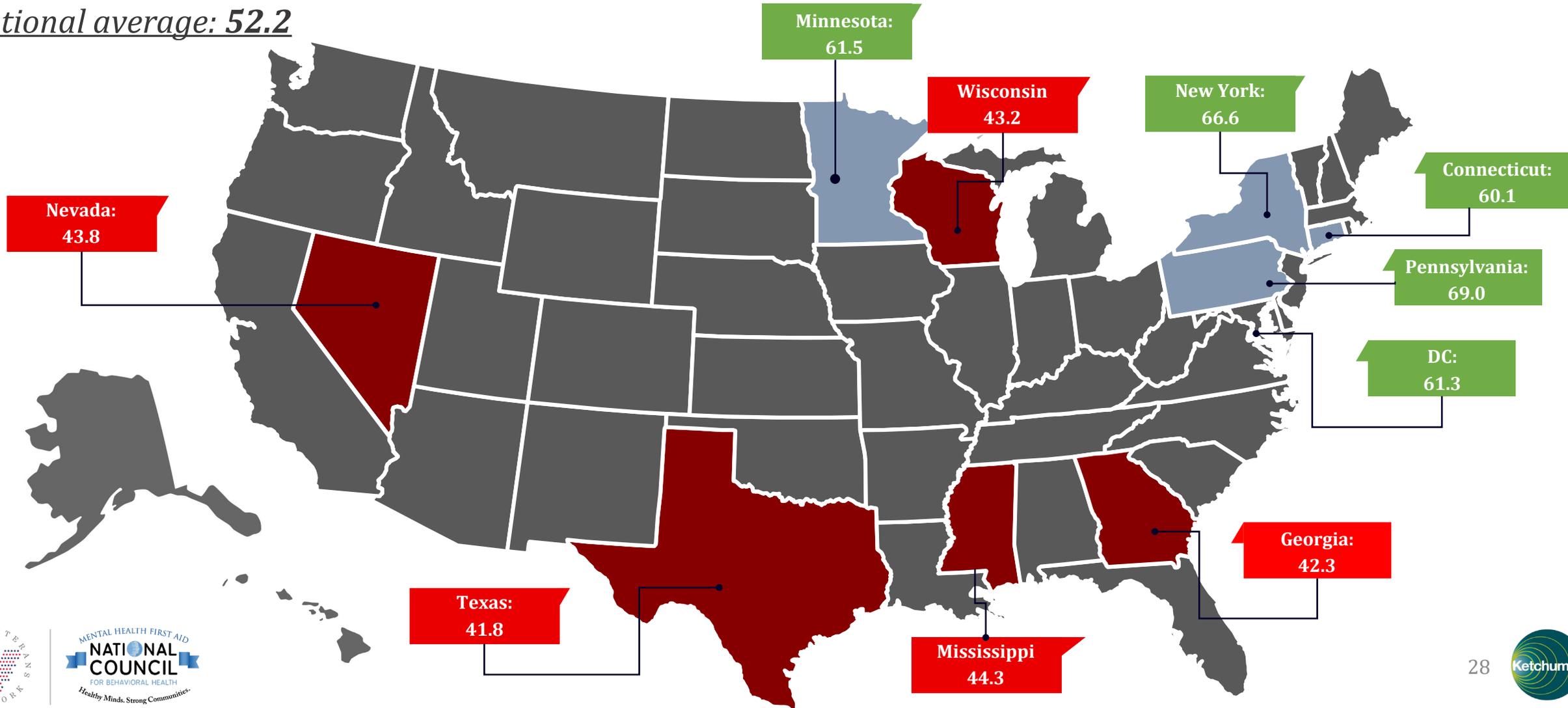
# INDEX DETAILS – COMPLETE RANKINGS

State name	RANK	Index Score (Average)	Providers	Facilities	Funding	Satisfaction
Pennsylvania	1	69.0	64.3	63.8	56.5	91.2
New York	2	66.6	62.3	78.6	34.9	90.5
Minnesota	3	61.5	67.5	51.1	45.0	82.2
District of Columbia	4	61.3	66.6	31.3	73.5	74.0
Connecticut	5	60.1	69.0	33.5	46.9	90.9
Ohio	6	60.0	61.7	64.0	37.0	77.4
New Jersey	7	59.9	80.1	51.0	23.0	85.5
Maryland	8	59.0	70.7	42.6	47.0	75.7
New Mexico	9	58.6	59.6	53.0	38.1	83.9
California	10	58.2	57.6	62.6	28.6	84.1
Maine	11	57.2	67.6	40.0	41.0	80.3
Iowa	12	57.1	62.5	37.8	46.1	81.8
Kansas	13	56.7	66.1	46.1	25.9	88.5
Montana	14	56.4	49.0	42.7	54.4	79.7
Oregon	15	56.1	67.7	31.4	51.4	73.7
Rhode Island	16	55.7	82.6	25.2	30.2	84.9
Vermont	17	55.2	68.3	33.3	40.5	78.8
Tennessee	18	55.0	42.4	56.2	35.5	85.9
Alaska	19	54.7	48.3	22.9	70.5	77.2
Colorado	20	54.5	65.8	28.4	33.3	90.7
Hawaii	21	54.2	78.8	7.7	43.9	86.2
Kentucky	22	53.9	61.9	37.1	27.5	89.2
Washington	23	53.9	56.8	35.7	42.7	80.4
Massachusetts	24	53.8	77.2	19.8	37.6	80.4
Indiana	25	51.2	57.6	30.1	34.4	82.7

State name	RANK	Index Score (Average)	Providers	Facilities	Funding	Satisfaction
North Carolina	26	50.9	59.7	24.3	33.6	85.7
Michigan	27	50.8	55.4	37.5	27.5	82.6
Utah	28	50.7	73.0	20.4	27.6	81.9
Arkansas	29	50.2	69.7	30.2	25.0	76.1
South Carolina	30	49.9	67.7	19.7	28.7	83.7
Oklahoma	31	49.7	62.3	26.2	24.7	85.5
Florida	32	49.1	51.8	35.1	18.5	91.0
Illinois	33	48.9	55.7	28.5	32.1	79.4
New Hampshire	34	48.9	74.5	28.3	20.8	72.0
Virginia	35	48.7	61.7	24.7	31.0	77.4
Missouri	36	48.5	57.9	21.6	29.6	84.8
Delaware	37	47.7	63.4	8.5	36.6	82.2
Wyoming	38	47.5	64.3	26.0	19.2	80.3
West Virginia	39	47.4	42.7	26.0	39.3	81.8
Arizona	40	47.4	32.9	43.5	29.7	83.5
Alabama	41	45.5	45.2	26.4	29.7	80.8
North Dakota	42	45.3	52.0	17.5	33.0	78.5
Idaho	43	45.2	61.8	14.0	24.1	81.1
Louisiana	44	45.2	52.1	14.6	26.6	87.3
Nebraska	45	44.9	59.2	15.4	26.3	78.8
South Dakota	46	44.4	44.4	18.1	26.6	88.4
Mississippi	47	44.3	39.3	32.6	16.5	88.6
Nevada	48	43.8	60.1	9.1	20.7	85.4
Wisconsin	49	43.2	48.9	33.1	14.4	76.4
Georgia	50	42.3	53.9	21.4	20.7	73.1
Texas	51	41.8	36.0	31.9	19.5	79.7

# Northeastern states tend to over-index in ability to get mental health care

National average: 52.2



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