

Addiction and Mental Health Policy Update

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Behavioral Health Policy Challenges and Opportunities

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Community Catalyst

Community Catalyst is a national non-profit advocacy organization working to build the consumer and community leadership required to transform the American health system.

Our experienced policy analysts, attorneys, community organizers, and communications specialists work with local and state organizations in 40 states. We have helped these groups achieve reforms in areas including Medicaid policy, substance use disorders and prescription drug pricing.

Community Catalyst's contributions range from policy analysis and technical assistance to managing national campaigns.

Community Catalyst



**COMMUNITY CATALYST
SYSTEM OF ADVOCACY**

LAC is a 44-year old national law and policy organization that works to fight discrimination against people with histories of addiction, HIV/AIDS, or criminal records

- Staff and co-chair the Coalition for Whole Health
- The National HIRE Network

AGENDA

1. The federal landscape

- Threats to ACA and Medicaid
- Access to addiction care, opioid specific funds
- What's needed for defense & offense

2. State and local opportunities

- Building on our gains
- What's needed for defense & offense

Fighting off ACA Repeal

- Repeal would have devastated SUD/MH coverage
 - Ending coverage for single adults
 - Returning to discriminatory or skimpy policies
 - Disproportionately harming people of color
 - Setting back alternatives to incarceration
- Intersectional coalitions mobilized in support of ACA; SUD critical issue
- Broader public support for ACA and Medicaid
- Full repeal seems unlikely but ...

Continuing Threats from Trump Administration

- Reducing insurance subsidies
- Slowing enrollment
- Squeezing Medicaid through bad waivers
- Weakening Essential Health Benefits

Possible Upcoming Congressional Action

- ACA “fixes” proposed
 - Hearings on stabilizing private insurance
 - Graham-Cassidy block grant proposal
 - Problem Solver Caucus
- Vehicles for possible Medicaid cuts
 - Budgets and appropriations
 - Tax cuts
 - CHIP reauthorization
 - Lifting debt ceiling

Federal Decisions on Access to Addiction Care

- The administration
 - Work to examine and address the opioid crisis
 - White House Opioid Commission's interim recommendations and potential next steps
 - Decision-making at CMS
 - Work at the Department of Justice

Federal Decisions on Access to Addiction Care (*cont'd*)

- Congress
 - The FY 2018 appropriations and FY 2019 budget process
 - Safety net funding through SAMHSA; new monies through 21st Century CURES and CARA
 - Legislation related to the opioid crisis

Federal Defense and Offense: What's Needed

- Reinforce value of ACA and Medicaid
- Use interest in opioid crisis to advance broader SUD/MH agenda, including parity and diversion
- Expand advocacy capacity, stakeholder engagement, public education
- Support state advocacy for innovation and to fill gaps

Federal Defense and Offense: What's Needed

- Continued need to emphasize a public health, not punitive response, to addiction
- Broadening and deepening our base of support
- Using data to more specifically identify needs and opportunities
- Supporting alliances at the local level between advocates who work to promote health and justice

State/Local Opportunities: Building on Gains

- Leveraging the requirements of the ACA and the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act to improve access to care
 - Coverage of the full continuum of SUD care in all public and private insurance
 - Ensuring meaningful access by eliminating discriminatory restrictions to care
- Improving care access to people involved in the criminal justice system
 - Developing systems that promote seamless coverage and access to care

More State and Local Opportunities

- Health system transformation through managed care, ACOs, waivers
 - increase access
 - address social determinants
 - integrate BH, strengthen quality
- Community alternatives to incarceration, particularly pre-arrest
- Prevention in clinics and in schools
- Strengthen parity

State Defense and Offense: What's Needed

Many policy avenues to pursue but all rely on strong public education and multi-disciplinary advocacy

- Strengthen the voices for progress
- Support broad coalitions and boost policy and strategy expertise
- Help state and local groups connect with leading national organizations working at the ground level
- Promote national organizations working together

State Defense and Offense: What's Needed

- Strengthening the field's ability to advocate effectively
- Fostering partnerships between national and state/local organizations
- Supporting technical assistance
- Addressing short- and longer-term advocacy needs
- Building state and local infrastructure and capacity

QUESTIONS?

Thank You



Question?

Please type your question into the Chat Box or press
*6 to unmute your phone line and ask a question