

2020

DAY AT THE CAPITOL GUIDE





Behavioral Health Services Coalition

LEAD ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network
 www.gmhcnc.org
 Sherry Jenkins Tucker, Executive Director,
 sjtucker@gmhcnc.org, 404-421-5683

Mental Health America of Georgia
 www.mhageorgia.org
 Jewell Gooding, Executive Director,
 jewell@mhageorgia.org, 770-741-1495

Georgia Parent Support Network
 www.gpsn.org
 Sue Smith, Chief Executive Officer,
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NAMI Georgia
 www.namiga.org
 Kim Jones, Executive Director,
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2020 MENTAL HEALTH DAY AT THE CAPITOL SPONSORS

Diamond



Platinum



Gold



Silver



Bronze



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YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT:

Kim H. Jones – NAMI Georgia, Inc. – GMHPP Co-Chair • (770) 234-0855 or executive@namiga.org
Sherry Jenkins Tucker, GMHCN – BHSC Chair • (404) 421-5683 or sltucker@gmhcn.org

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020

5:30 – 8:30PM NAMI GEORGIA – Dinner and Advocacy Training

Sponsored by Janssen/Johnson & Johnson

For details, email advocacy@namiga.org

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2020

Behavioral Health Services Coalition (BHSC) Mental Health Day at the Capitol

The event begins at The GA Freight Depot located at 65 MLK Jr. Dr., Atlanta, GA 30334 (see map on page 6) then we will head to the Capitol

7:30 AM Volunteers arrive for event set-up

8:00 AM Behavioral Health Services Coalition (BHSC) Mental Health Day at the Capitol
A light breakfast will be served on a limited first-come, first-served basis.
Please plan to arrive early if you desire to eat.
Local mental health leaders will then address group on key topics.

10:45 PM Head to the Capitol to meet with legislators

TIPS FOR MEETING WITH YOUR GA GENERAL ASSEMBLY



KNOW BHSC'S KEY POINTS

- » Review the talking points on Georgia PEACH Act and parity for mental health and on Georgia's mental health issues.
- » Decide as a group on the 1-2 other issues that you want to talk about in your meetings.
- » Learn about your members of the Georgia General Assembly



BE FLEXIBLE

- » Legislator offices' schedules can shift rapidly, so you may have to meet with a different person or have less (or more) time than planned.
- » If asked about topics outside of BHSC's key asks, bring the conversation back to your key points or say "I do not know" and offer to connect with BHSC staff for follow up.



KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- » FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR: https://openstates.org/find_your_legislator
- » Review information on your Senators and Representative by visiting www.senate.ga.gov/senators/en-US/SenateMembersList.aspx or www.house.ga.gov/Representatives/en-US/HouseMembersList.aspx.
- » Look for common points of interest or connection between you and the member to help spur conversation.



KEEP POLITICS OUT OF IT

- » Mental health does not discriminate based on political party. BHSC is a nonpartisan organization looking for bipartisan solutions.
- » Respect your Legislator's political views, even if they differ from your own.
- » Do not get angry or raise your voice.



PLAN MEETING ROLES

- » Meetings may be brief, and not everyone will have a chance to speak at length.
- » Plan who will take the lead, who will make certain points, and who might share a story.
- » If your group is large, expect that your role may be to introduce yourself, then observe or tweet.
- » Remember that facts support and stories move people—but keep your story to 90 seconds or less.



BUILD A CONNECTION

- » You may be meeting with the Legislator or their staff; treat both with equal respect.
- » Invite your Legislator to a local mental health program or other event.
- » All politics are local: ask for a contact to send a formal invitation or to schedule a future meeting.



BE AWARE OF TIME

- » Legislators' schedules are tight, so be on time for your appointments.
- » Divide up your group (if possible) if you think you have appointments timed too closely together to stay on schedule.
- » The Georgia State Capitol is big, and it may take 10-15 minutes to walk between appointments.



END ON A POSITIVE NOTE

- » Thank the Legislator or their staff for their time and support (if applicable).
- » Leave BHSC's legislative issue briefs and mental health facts with Legislative office staff
- » Ask for a picture with the Legislator and share on social media. Use the hashtag #Act4MentalHealth and #GOOD4GA.

INFORMATION & DIRECTIONS

STREET ADDRESS

The Office of the Governor
State of Georgia
203 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

MAILING ADDRESS

206 Washington Street
Suite 203, State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
Phone: 404-656-1776
Fax: 404-657-7332

FROM THE SOUTH: Take I-75/85 North to Exit 245 (Capitol Avenue). At the end of the exit ramp, continue straight through the stop sign. At the first traffic light, turn left onto Hank Aaron Drive. (The name will change to Capitol Avenue). The State Capitol is on your left.

FROM THE NORTH: Take I-75/85 South to Exit 248A (MLK, Jr. Drive) and veer right onto MLK, Jr. Drive. The Capitol will be on your left. For parking, turn right at second light onto Capitol Avenue and parking will be on your right at the Sloppy Floyd/Twin Towers complex.

FROM THE EAST: Take I-20 West to Exit 58A (Capitol Avenue). Turn right and continue on Capitol Avenue. The Capitol will be approximately one mile down on the left.

FROM THE WEST: Take I-20 to Exit 56B (Windsor Street/Spring Street/Stadium). At the third light, turn left onto Central Avenue. Go to Mitchell Street and turn right. Go one block and the capitol will be on the left.

WAYS TO GET TO & FROM THE CAPITOL



MARTA

- › The Georgia State Capitol building is only one block away from the Georgia State MARTA Station on the blue/green rail line. If you are coming from the red or gold rail line, exit at the Five Points Station and follow the signs to the Eastbound platform. Get on the first eastbound train and ride one stop to the Georgia State Station. Take the Piedmont Avenue exit out of the station and turn left on Piedmont Avenue. The Capitol is located one block south of the MARTA station. MARTA has eight (8) bus routes that serve Capitol Hill. For more information and route planning, contact MARTA at 404-848-5000 or visit www.martaguide.com/2010/04/18/marta-to-the-georgia-capitol.
- › MARTA maps and trip planner tools are available at www.itsmarta.com.



RIDESHARE

- › Uber or Lyft ridesharing services are available throughout Atlanta via their respective phone apps.



PARKING

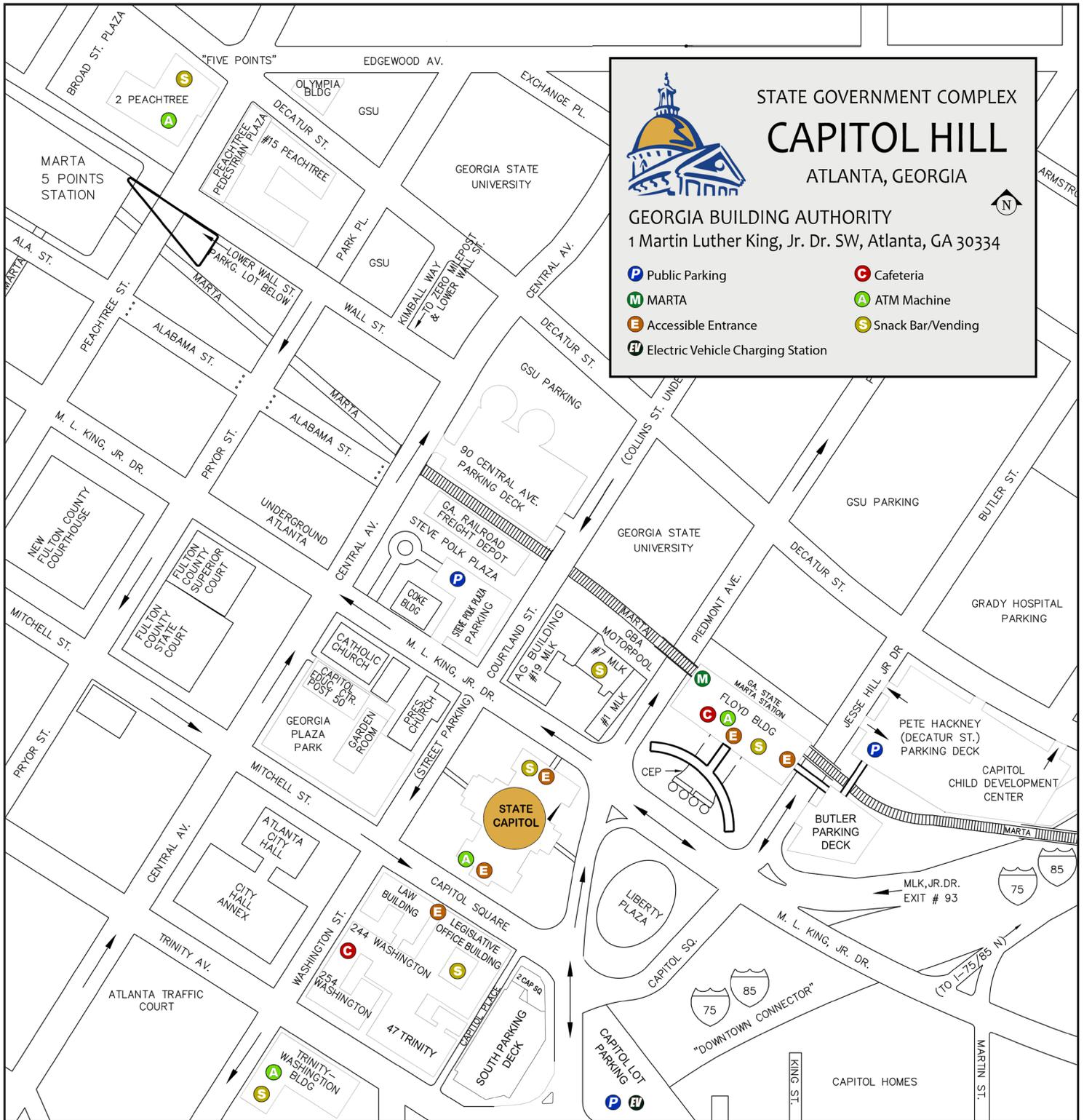
- › Buses and 15-passenger or larger vans are allowed to park on the west side of Washington Street in front of the Capitol on most weekdays. Capitol events or security threats may make this space unavailable. In those cases, buses will be rerouted by Capitol security.
- › Public parking is available in several locations surrounding the Capitol. Parking fees vary by lot. Certain lots may be closed due to the legislative session. The following lots are always open to the public if spaces are available:
 - Steve Polk Plaza Parking is located on M.L. King, Jr., Drive, one block from the Capitol.
 - A surface lot is located on Memorial Drive, one block from the Capitol.
 - Underground Parking: A parking garage is located on the north side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, two blocks from the Capitol.



ADDITIONAL ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

- › The Georgia Building Authority and the state ADA Coordinator's Office guide for all accessibility information can be found at gov.georgia.gov/accessibility-guide-visitors-disabilities.

CAPITOL HILL MAP



PLACES TO EAT NEAR THE CAPITOL



There are limited places to get lunch or refreshments at The Georgia State Capitol. Those available include:

1. There is a very small coffee shop with limited drinks and snacks located in the bottom floor of the capitol.
2. **Capitol Commons Café in the James "Sloppy" Floyd Veterans Memorial Building:** located across MLK Jr. Drive from the Capitol, one level below the main entry in the Twin Towers.
Hours of Operation: 6:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
3. **Café 244:** located in the 244 Washington St Building, across Capitol Square SW from the Capitol, on the first floor. Hours of Operation: Breakfast 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
4. **Waffle House**, 100 Piedmont Ave. SE
5. **Willy's Mexicana Grill**, 100 Piedmont Ave. SE
6. **Big Daddy's Southern Cuisine**, 121 MLK, Jr Dr. SW
7. **Jamrock**, 111 MLK, Jr Dr. SW
8. **Fred's Country Kitchen**, 132 Mitchell St. SW
9. **Subway**, 221 Central Ave SW

Hospitality Room

11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Room 230 in the Capitol • Light snacks provided



LEGISLATORS' OFFICES

Find your legislators' office number by finding them here: https://openstates.org/find_your_legislator/.

Then click on each name for contact information.

Offices in the Capitol Building are listed as "CAP"
Offices located in the Paul D. Coverdell Legislative Office Building (18 Capitol Square SW), across the street from the Capitol, are listed as "CLOB."

INTRODUCING YOURSELF TO YOUR LEGISLATOR

- › Thank your legislator and/or staff for meeting with you and for any past or current support, if applicable.
- › Share that the Behavioral Health Services Coalition is a statewide group of behavioral health advocates that has been delivering the strong message that mental health is an essential component of health for over 34 years. There are thousands of individual members and more than 20 organizational members aligned to present a united voice for behavioral health in Georgia.
- › Discuss the mental health crisis in Georgia and in our communities:
 - 1 in 5 Georgians are affected by a mental concern in a given year.¹
 - The suicide rate is the highest it has been in decades especially among Georgia's children.²
 - Georgia is ranked 49th out of 50 states for access to mental health care resources and insurances.³ We must increase the availability of treatment and supports.
 - More than half of adults and children with a mental health concern do not receive treatment.⁴
- › Express that we need more access to quality, affordable mental health services for Georgians, not less.
- › Share that when we do not have adequate mental health care coverage, we keep people from getting the treatment they need and push people with mental health concerns into emergency rooms, jails, and the streets.

After the above, you/your group's appointed storyteller should briefly share their personal story. The meeting lead and other appointed messengers should then discuss BHSC's key issues and asks.

TALKING POINTS & ASKS



PROTECT BUDGETARY FUNDING OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

TALKING POINTS

- > In Georgia, more than 2.3 million children, adolescents, and adults live with a mental health disorder. As this number continues to rise each year, it is critical that behavioral health funding not be reduced.
- > In the past 10 years the state has increased funding related to crisis and deeper system services as required by the DOJ settlement. During that same time period funding aimed at CORE and lower levels of care services has not increased by

much. These lower levels of care offer supports that can prevent individuals from needing higher cost services.

- > The past legislative session \$10.5 M was added to DBHDD monies for those CORE services.
- > The Governor's office has asked all state agencies for a 4% cut this fiscal year and a 6% cut next fiscal year. If approved, these cuts would include newly budgeted funds for core services within Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). This funding represents critical resources and is the primary means for how the state provides behavioral healthcare support to communities. The proposed funding reductions include: Core service enhancements, supported employment services, peer training, residential services, and the Children's Mental Health Commission Initiatives.

In addition, DBHDD will need to eliminate 15 Adult Forensics positions and 10 Adult Mental Health positions from the state's five regional hospitals.

OUR ASK

- > Protect the following funding in the FY 2020 Budget
 - \$10.5M for Core Enhancement Dollars that represent Safety Net (CSB) services to ensure that CSBs can meet increased demand from the behavioral health population.
 - \$1.129M for Residential Services that develop skills training, daily living skills and community integration activities for individuals to live and thrive in the community
- > Over the next 5 years increase funding for CORE and preventative services to match increased need in the state.



ACHIEVE MENTAL HEALTH PARITY IN GEORGIA

TALKING POINTS

- > There is currently no mechanism in Georgia to measure or enforce the the federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008.
- > The Office of the Insurance and Fire Safety Commissioner should measure compliance and hold insurance companies accountable for parity.
- > Parity is grounded in ensuring equal coverage of treatment services under both the behavioral health and medical benefits offered by a health plan. Thus, parity law requires that a health plan's coverage for behavioral health services (mental health and substance use disorders) be no more restrictive than its coverage for medical or surgical services.

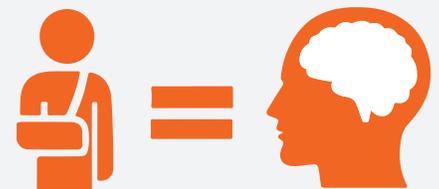
EXAMPLES OF PARITY VIOLATIONS CAN INCLUDE:

- > Denials of authorization for mental health and substance abuse care.

- > "Fail-first" requirements - refusal to pay for higher cost therapies until the patient fails at a lower cost treatment.
- > A limited number of in-network behavioral health care providers or failure of those providers to take new patients.
- > Exclusion of coverage for certain types of treatment without any medical necessity analysis.
- > Prior authorization requirements and re-authorization for mental health concerns or substance use disorders (e.g., inpatient mental health care coverage re-authorization required every 5 days).
- > Geographic restrictions (e.g., no coverage for out-of-state treatment).
- > Failure of the formulary (medications covered by insurance) to include psychiatric medications (e.g., anti-psychotic medications).
- > High out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs that discourage people from participating in both mental health and other medical treatment.
- > Failure to cover medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for persons with substance abuse disorders.

OUR ASK

- > Support the Georgia Parity PEACH Act #PassThePeach.
- > Ask the Insurance and Fire Safety Commissioner's Office or an oversight committee to conduct regular, random market audits for parity compliance on all commercial health insurance and Medicaid managed care plans.



Mental health parity means that insurance benefits for mental health and substance use conditions are equal to coverage for other types of health care.

So if your plan offers unlimited doctor visits for a chronic condition like diabetes, then it must also offer unlimited visits for a mental health condition such as depression or schizophrenia.

TALKING POINTS AND ASKS



MAXIMIZE FEDERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE THE INSURED POPULATION OF GEORGIA

TALKING POINTS

- > Over 1.3 million Georgians are affected by a mental illness, yet 61 percent of adults in Georgia with mental health conditions go without treatment.⁵
- > Twenty percent of adults with a mental illness in Georgia are uninsured.⁶
- > Nearly 1 in 3 people covered under Medicaid have a mental health or substance use condition.⁷

DECREASING THE UNINSURED POPULATION IN GEORGIA

- > Additional Medicaid programs cover those not eligible for traditional Medicaid.

- > People enrolled in new Medicaid access mental health care more and use costly emergency care less.
- > New Medicaid allows people to qualify based on income rather than a disability determination.
- > Qualification changes help people get mental health services and allows for a path to work and self-sufficiency.

OUR ASK

- > Maintain funding for existing mental health Medicaid codes.
- > Add and expand Medicaid mental health codes to address the growing needs in Georgia.
- > Oppose any legislation that:
 - Caps or limits Medicaid mental health services.
 - Reduces insurance protections for people with mental health conditions or leaves fewer Georgians with coverage.



END UNNECESSARY INCARCERATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

TALKING POINTS

- > A person who is having a mental health crisis is often more likely to land in jail than in a hospital. That's wrong.
- > Tragically, about 2 million people with mental health concerns are booked into jails every year, most on minor, non-violent charges.⁸
- > About 1 in 5 jail inmates in the U.S. have a serious mental illness.⁹
- > When in jail, people with mental health concerns stay almost twice as long as others facing similar charges.¹⁰
- > Disproportionate numbers of people with mental health concerns are in our criminal justice systems, often as a result of untreated or undertreated disorders.
- > Jails have become the de facto mental health institutions of our day.

- > People with serious mental illness are incarcerated at four times the rate of the general population.¹¹

OUR ASK

- > Increase the number of accountability courts in Georgia.
- > Divert non-violent offenders with mental health concerns into treatment.
- > Invest in mental health services that keep people out of jail in the first place.
- > Continue Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training of police, corrections and other first responders on safely and effectively responding to people with mental health concerns.
- > Request the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) be exempt from state budget cuts
- > Encourage and fund mental health training for all first responders, such as Emergency Medical Services, and family members so police are not engaged during a mental health crisis.
- > Encourage and fund placement of a mental health professional trained by the Georgia Crisis and Access line to be on call in all 911 units.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

TALKING POINTS

- > Nationally, there are workforce shortages of mental health providers including psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and advanced nurse practitioners who are specializing in mental health care.
- > Georgia is ranked 48th among all states in the adequate availability of mental health workforce.¹²
- > There are 10.9 Psychiatrists per 100,000 people and only 5.9 child and adolescent psychiatrists per 100,000 youth in the state.¹³
- > It is more likely for first responders and other medical professionals to encounter someone with a mental health concern than someone who is having a heart attack.

OUR ASK

- > Increase the number of professionals in the state specializing in mental health by setting standards for education that offer trauma and suicide courses earlier.
- > Offer loan forgiveness for those who work in rural areas impacted by workforce shortages.
- > Increase the Medicaid reimbursement rate for mental health services.
- > Fund a tax credit for Mental Health providers willing to serve as preceptors (mentor to medical student), particularly in underserved/low health access areas of Georgia.



THERE ARE
10.9 PSYCHIATRISTS
PER 100,000 PEOPLE



AND ONLY
5.9 CHILD AND ADOLESCENT
PSYCHIATRISTS
PER 100,000 YOUTH

IN GEORGIA

TALKING POINTS AND ASKS



INVEST IN MILITARY AND VETERANS

TALKING POINTS

- > Georgia's military service members and veterans struggle to get mental health treatment, have high rates of mental health concerns and suicide, and experience unique barriers to care.
- > In 2015, 12 percent of Georgia's homeless population were veterans,

while veterans make up only 7 percent of Georgia's overall population.¹⁴

- > Veterans in Georgia often wait far too long for their disability claims to be approved.
- > According to a 2016 VA report, 20 veterans per day die by suicide.¹⁵ In Georgia alone nearly 4 veterans die each week by suicide.¹⁶

OUR ASK

- > Improve the claims process by hiring more claims specialists at VA clinics or

by partnering with non-profit veterans advocacy groups.

- > Provide food or housing assistance to veterans who are awaiting the results of disability claims.
- > Support PTSD treatment research through partnerships with universities.
- > Reduce barriers to care by funding telemedicine and by incentivizing mental health providers to practice in rural areas of the state.
- > Expand Georgia Crisis and Access Line.



INVEST IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS, AND FAMILIES

TALKING POINTS

- > Half of mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75 percent by age 24.¹⁷
- > Schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders are serious mental illnesses, and typically strike in youth.
- > Without early treatment, the consequences can be tragic. Youth with psychosis are dying at a rate 24 times higher than their peers.¹⁸
- > Fortunately, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) research shows that Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) services in early psychosis programs are changing the trajectory of mental health concerns and helping young people get their lives on track.

COORDINATED SPECIALTY CARE (CSC) SERVICES INCLUDE:

- > Case management,
- > Medications and primary care coordination,
- > Cognitive behavioral therapy,
- > Supported education and employment, and
- > Family education and support.

OUR ASK

- > Supplement the 10% of Georgia's federal mental health block grant set aside for Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) with state funds to support the expansion of early psychosis programs.
- > Implement the following findings and recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Children's Mental Health released on December 12, 2017:
 - Fund supported education and employment programs for youth and emerging adults with serious mental illness.
 - Increase access to behavioral health care for children through Georgia's APEX program which funds community mental health providers throughout Georgia to build infrastructure for school-based mental health services.
 - Support the development of telemedicine services for underserved areas of the state.



ADDRESS THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

TALKING POINTS

- > Substance addiction is a brain disorder.
- > About a third of all people experiencing mental health concerns and about half of people living with severe mental illness also experience substance abuse.¹⁹
- > From 2012 to 2017, the number of drug overdose deaths in Georgia increased by 55 percent.²⁰
- > In 2017, there were 1,014 overdose deaths involving opioids in Georgia.²¹

OUR ASK

- > Support opioid antidotes like Narcan being made available over the counter.
- > Fund opioid therapeutic addiction treatment centers across the state to address the epidemic.
- > Fund additional Behavioral Health Crisis Centers across the state.



50%
OF MENTAL
HEALTH
CONDITIONS
BEGIN BY
AGE 14



75%
OF MENTAL
HEALTH
CONDITIONS
DEVELOP BY
AGE 24

TALKING POINTS AND ASKS



INVEST IN APPROPRIATE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

TALKING POINTS

- > Lack of safe and affordable housing is one of the most significant barriers to independent living for people with serious mental illness. Without housing, too many cycle in and out of homelessness, incarceration, shelters, emergency departments, and hospitalization—or remain institutionalized.
- > Georgia's Department of Justice Settlement continues to focus on the importance of housing for recovery.
- > Georgia must plan for the future and work to ensure that all people with mental health concerns living in the state have access to appropriate, affordable housing.

OUR ASK

- > Protect the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and oppose any cuts to HUD program.
- > Support the following findings of the Georgia State Senate 2017 Homeless Committee:
 - Leverage state funds by accessing federal Medicaid funds to support individuals who are currently or at risk of homelessness.
 - Increase state funding to the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homelessness (SHTF) in order to enable the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to expand existing homelessness programs as well as to explore additional options and opportunities to maximize federal funds to address homelessness in Georgia.
 - Allocate funding for DCA's expansion of the Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Demonstration Program and mixed income properties in high density counties.

- Increase funding for supported housing placements for Georgia Housing Voucher Program participants.
- Allocate funding to expand the Georgia Housing Voucher and Bridge Program to include non-settlement criteria individuals with a substance use diagnosis.
- Allocate funding to PATH, ACT, CST, and ICM services to support the provision of replacement state-issued identification for enrolled individuals transitioning from correctional facilities.
- Create a statewide public-private partnership to serve as a clearinghouse of best practices, information, and resources that supports developing and sustaining local re-entry case planning collaboratives in every county.
- Increase state funding for private and/or nonprofit homeless shelters to provide increased educational and psychosocial supports for homeless youth.



SUPPORT FAMILY CAREGIVERS OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

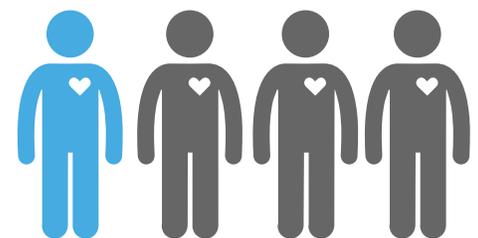
TALKING POINTS

- > More than 8.4 million Americans, including family members of veterans, provide care to an adult relative living with mental health concerns.²²
- > With national shortages of mental health services, the role of caregiver often falls on families—with little or no support or training.
- > Almost 75 percent of caregivers experience a high level of emotional stress and 2-in-3 are in poor or fair health.²³

- > Among military family caregivers, nearly 40 percent have major depression, more than 4 times the general population.²⁴
- > Family caregivers typically provide financial and emotional support, manage medications, search for mental health services, make appointments, prepare meals, shop, arrange transportation, complete paperwork, and respond to crises.
- > Mental health family caregivers devote an average of 32 hours a week to caregiving,²⁵ about 8 hours a week more than caregivers of people with other chronic conditions.
- > 1 in 4 family caregivers of adults with a mental health concern reports financial strain.²⁶

OUR ASK

- > Protect DBHDD funding of organizations whose volunteers educate and support Georgians affected by mental health conditions and their families.
- > Continue funding the education of teachers across the state of Georgia to recognize the signs of mental illness through the innovative program, SIGNALS.



1 IN 4 FAMILY CAREGIVERS OF ADULTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS REPORT FINANCIAL STRAIN.



FOLLOW UP TO HAVE A GREATER IMPACT



SEND A THANK YOU

- › Send a short follow-up email within a few days of your Legislative meetings.
- › Attach any photos that you may have taken with the legislator or staff.
- › Thank the office for their time and reiterate the importance of quality, affordable mental healthcare.



COMPLETE FEEDBACK FORMS

- › The meeting lead should fill out one Mental Health Day at the Capitol feedback form for each meeting. These forms can be found at the Mental Health Day debrief table in the Capitol.
- › These forms help BHSC staff learn about your visit, and follow up appropriately with legislative offices.



TWEET & POST

- › Members of Congress pay close attention to social media, so tweet at them or post on their Facebook wall and let them know that mental health is important to you.
- › See the last page for tips and sample tweets and posts.



KEEP IT GOING

- › If you aren't getting BHSC's advocacy alerts, email Lisa Pace at lisa.pace@gpsn.org to request.
- › Follow or like your legislators on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
- › Sign up for your legislators' email lists by visiting their websites, which you can find by going to their page at www.senate.ga.gov/senators/en-US/SenateMembersList.aspx or www.house.ga.gov/Representatives/en-US/HouseMembersList.aspx.
- › Invite your legislators to local mental health programs.
- › Attend legislators' events in your district to further build your relationship, like office hours and public forums.

ENDNOTES

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USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO #ACT4MENTALHEALTH

Social media is an important tool for legislators and their staff to learn about constituents' opinions, and your posts will help reinforce the messages we share in our meetings.

Here are some tips on how to use social media during (and after) Mental Health Day at the Capitol:

1. Amplify #Act4MentalHealth and #GOOD4GA on social media: Use #Act4MentalHealth and #GOOD4GA for your Mental Health Day at the Capitol posts.
2. Use photos and videos: Take pictures in front of the Georgia State Capitol, outside of your legislator's office and with your legislator, if possible.
3. Make it personal: As with your meetings, it is helpful to briefly share your personal story on social media.
4. Thank your legislators: Thank your legislator or their staff by tagging them and sharing pictures. Keep your posts positive, regardless of your meeting outcome.

– SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS –

Please add your photos and personal stories for even more impact.

#Act4MentalHealth #GOOD4GA



TWITTER/INSTAGRAM

- > Thank you @[Legislator] for meeting with us to discuss protecting how to #Act4MentalHealth and #GOOD4GA
- > 1 in 5 are affected by a #mentalhealth condition in their life. Thank you @[Legislator] for all you do to #Act4MentalHealth #GOOD4GA



- > Meeting today with @[Legislator] to discuss how to protect mental health care coverage #Act4MentalHealth #GOOD4GA
- > @[Legislator] – Thank you for standing up for #mentalhealth. #Act4MentalHealth #GOOD4GA
- > We need MORE mental health coverage, not LESS. Thank you @[Legislator] for discussing ways to #Act4MentalHealth today #GOOD4GA



FACEBOOK

- > Today, I went to the Georgia State Capitol to meet with [Legislator] to discuss how to protect mental health coverage. Thank you for your support of the 1 in 5 Georgians affected by mental illness. #Act4MentalHealth #GOOD4GA
- > Thank you [Legislator] for meeting with us to discuss ways to protect mental health coverage. #Act4MentalHealth #GOOD4GA

SAVE THE DATE!

Children's Mental Health Day at the Capitol May 7, 2020

Thursday, 5/7/2020 beginning at 8 AM
Georgia Railroad Freight Depot
55 Martin Luther King Jr Drive SW, Atlanta, GA 30303



**BRINGING CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
INTO FOCUS**

Perfect Vision in 20/20

**Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
May 3 - 9, 2020**



**COMING SOON: Registration Link at
www.gpsn.org/events**

CONTACT: Lisa Pace (770) 545-4298 for more information.

#ACT4MENTALHEALTH
#GOOD4GA

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