

Public Mental Health Service Population

...Is a Michigan Constitutional obligation. Also, per the Michigan Mental Health Code Act 258 of 1974, Community Mental Health Organizations are required to serve individuals with a severe mental illness or disability *regardless of their ability to pay*.

An individual cannot be denied a service that is medically necessary because of an inability to pay or lack of insurance.

Uninsured Needs are Rising in Michigan

The national and statewide economic crisis is causing many environmental stressors and increasing dependence on public assistance.

Michigan has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. The unemployment rate in Oakland County is 15.5% (July 2009); up from 6.6% in January 2008.

Job loss results in more uninsured persons, more cases of major depression and severe adjustment disorders. It's a huge misconception that the uninsured aren't as sick as those on Medicaid; they have just as severe illnesses and disabilities. And most often, the uninsured seek out public mental health services when their illness is most severe.

General Fund dollars are used to serve the immediate need of the uninsured and link them to benefits, such as Medicaid, community collaborations, and community resources.

Community Mental Health: A Public Service for Those Most in Need

How Are CMH's Being Affected?

From 2004 to the end of fiscal year 2008 Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority has seen an increase of 36% in persons served overall; and an increase of 61% for children with serious emotional disturbances.

In fiscal year 2009 a:

19% increase overall in requests for services

32% increase in number of children seeking services.

20% increase of underinsured or uninsured persons who are being supported by General Fund dollars

Impact of Budget Cut to the General Fund

Current Budget Cuts

- Received \$2.2 million General Fund cut; the highest percentage cut of all CMHs.
- Eliminated all new General Fund dental authorization effective May 2009.
- Elimination of General Fund Recreational Funding for Fiscal Year 09.

Proposed FY10 Budget Cuts

When the FY09 \$2.2 million General Fund cut is annualizing the reductions for 2010 could reach or exceed \$10 million in Oakland County.

- 1,300 persons would no longer receive services.
- 1,100 potential new persons would be denied request for services.
- Future cuts would limit our ability to provide the more cost-effective preventative services when the illness is in its earlier, more treatable stage versus high-cost reactive services when the consumer is at their highest risk and with less successful outcomes.
- Places community collaboration activity in jeopardy.
- A larger cut targeted to Oakland County citizens should not be an option even considered by our legislators.

What We Need Our Oakland County Legislators To Do:

- Not allow a larger of cuts targeted to Oakland County Citizens.
- No General Fund or Medicaid reductions.
- Support the effort to reduce the liability of non profit providers in using volunteer transportation for those in need.
- Understand that budget cuts to DHS impacts persons served through community mental health.

Jeffrey L. Brown, Executive Director
2011 Executive Blvd., Auburn Hills, MI 48326
(248) 858-1210

