



2019-2020 Legislative Priorities

Parity & Access

An Act Relative to Mental Health Parity Implementation

H.910 (Representative Balser) & S.588 (Senator Friedman)

Insurance coverage for behavioral health conditions must be the same as coverage for physical health conditions. Despite significant legislative efforts at both the state and federal levels, true parity has yet to be achieved. This bill advances parity implementation and enforcement in the Commonwealth.

An Act to Require Health Care Coverage for the Emergency Psychiatric Services (ESP)

H.909 (Representative Balser) & S.590 (Senator Friedman)

Emergency psychiatric services provide community-based crisis assessment, intervention, and stabilization services. Individuals and families enrolled in MassHealth have coverage for, and, therefore, access to these services, but all too often, emergency psychiatric services aren't covered by commercial insurers. Access to emergency psychiatric services should not be dependent upon one's health insurance carrier.

An Act Increasing Consumer Transparency about Insurance Provider Networks

H.913 (Representative Barber) & S.610 (Senator Lewis)

Health insurers' provider directories are often inaccurate and out-of-date, complicating the already difficult process of accessing behavioral health care. This bill represents compromise language between consumer advocates, health plans, and providers to improve the quality of health plan's provider directories.

Education & Mental Health

An Act Relative to the Promotion of Mental Health Education – H.482 (Representative Higgins)

An Act Relative to Mental Health Education – S.244 (Senator Collins)

Addressing the behavioral health needs of students is one of the greatest challenges within schools. Consistent with current efforts to integrate physical and mental health, this bill requires mental health education in all schools (public and private) in grades K-12.

An Act Supporting Healthy Development Among Preschoolers

H.401 (Representative Balser) & S.264 (Senator DiDomenico)

This bill requires the Department of Early Education and Care to issue performance specifications to help put an end to preschool suspensions and expulsions. A young child who is suspended or expelled is 10 times more likely to drop out of school, experience academic failure, and face incarceration.

Self-Determination

An Act Relative to Supported Decision-Making Agreements for Certain Adults with Disabilities

H.172 (Reps. Tucker and Vega) & S.64 (Senator Lovely)

This bill establishes the legal framework for supported decision-making in Massachusetts. Too many people with behavioral health conditions are unnecessarily placed under restrictive guardianships. Supported decision-making allows individuals to make their own decisions with assistance from people they trust and is critical to helping people retain their legal rights and dignity.

For more information, contact:

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