

Budget Platform

As Ohio's mental health system crumbles, it is consumers and families who pay the price. We must provide sufficient funding for community-based care for Ohioans with severe and persistent mental illness. Not only is this the compassionate thing to do, it will save money by reducing the use of expensive and inappropriate institutionalization such as hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and jails. Recognizing that there will be fewer resources available to meet the needs of those with mental health disorders in the upcoming budget, **NAMI Ohio calls on Ohio's Governor and Lawmakers to prioritize basic services for those with severe and persistent mental illness. Join us – be a voice for change.**



PROBLEM: Ohio's Medicaid Program **discriminates** against people with mental health disorders because it does not pay for mental health services the way that it pays for physical health services.

SOLUTION: Move the responsibility for paying Medicaid to the State where it belongs so that local communities can concentrate their resources on those in greatest need.

PROBLEM: Ohio is in **violation** of the Mental Health Act of 1988. When Lawmakers made the decision to move individuals with mental illness from the State's hospitals back to the community, they promised to use the dollars that were saved to support them in the community. Unfortunately, that is not what is happening.

SOLUTION: Do not cut the current level of funding in the State's budget for the purchase of community mental health services.





PROBLEM: Adults with severe and persistent mental illness **cannot participate** in their recovery if they don't have a roof over their heads, food in their stomachs, and someone who cares that they get well. Children with serious emotional disturbance cannot get well if they are **torn apart** from their families and placed into institutional care because there are no services or supports available to their families in the community.

SOLUTION: Include language in the state statute directing local Boards to provide critical services and supports for adults and children with chronic mental illness before they can spend state or local dollars on less critical services.

PROBLEM: Access to medication for those with severe and persistent mental illness often means the difference between **life and death**.

SOLUTION: Prohibit limits being placed on access to mental health medications for those with severe and persistent mental illness.



PROBLEM: Psychiatric hospitalization in Ohio is **not adequate** because there are not enough beds; patients are released before they are stabilized; and patients are not linked to community services and supports upon release.

SOLUTION: Offer incentives to hospitals that accept Medicaid patients to provide more psychiatric beds. Prohibit state hospitals from releasing patients until they are stabilized. Require that patients are linked to services and supports in the community, including appropriate housing, prior to being released.