



Sustaining Ohio's Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Services

The community behavioral health investments in HB 33 are historic, intended to fulfill promises of the past to build accessible and effective community behavioral health services, and will lay a foundation for a future that supports the health and economic wellbeing of Ohio's children, families, and communities so they have the tools to succeed and ability to thrive.

Today, more Ohioans of all ages need mental health and substance use services – yet most have difficulty accessing care due to the lack of available providers. Waiting times have become weeks and months rather than days and weeks. In 2021, 41% of Americans reported mental health or substance use need. New data from the CDC found that 57% of high school girls and 29% of high school boys experience symptoms consistent with major depression. A 2021 survey of parents conducted by Nationwide Children's Hospital, found 53% of working parents have missed at least one day per month of work to deal with their child's mental health and that their work performance was impacted by their child's needs. And tragically, Ohio remains a top state for opioid overdose deaths.

Fortunately, the Department of Medicaid's budget proposal includes historic investments aimed at addressing these significant challenges. The targeted investments over the biennium for the community behavioral health services embedded in the ODM 525 Line Item include:

- A 10% rate increase for community behavioral health services totaling \$220 million;
- \$30 million for Mental Health Peer recovery support services; and
- A 6% (all funds) rate increase for inpatient services in free standing psychiatric hospitals and acute psychiatric units of hospitals totaling \$130.1 million.

This is an appreciated and notable investment in community behavioral health. In fact, the provider rate increases proposed by Medicaid for the various home and community-based provider groups (BH, DD, Aging) are encouraging steps in the right direction during this challenging and volatile labor market.

However, the labor market challenges since the COVID-19 pandemic have only worsened – placing even greater wage pressures on community behavioral health care positions. This is resulting in salaries for similar positions that are well below those in other healthcare or service job sectors. In fact, current job openings offer 20% higher wages compared to the 2022 median salaries of a cross section of community behavioral health positions posted on Indeed.com. Turnover rates increased to almost 40% in 2022 across the community behavioral health industry and are above 50% for larger organizations and those in urban settings. Residential treatment providers report operating at 50%-75% capacity because they are unable to recruit sufficient staff to expand care. In short, Ohio's community behavioral health organizations are unable to keep pace with the demand for care. More investment is needed to stabilize, attract, and retain the workforce in today's labor market while building the workforce needed for the future.

ASK: We respectfully ask for your support of amendment HC0294 to increase funding for Medicaid payment rates for community behavioral health services by an additional 10% (\$220 million) to stabilize and strengthen the behavioral health workforce.

As you deliberate, we urge equity in sustaining and growing these proposed Medicaid investments consistently across all home and community-based provider groups so we can care for all Ohioans in need.

_____ moved to amend as follows:

1 In line 124791, delete "\$5,303,860,397 \$5,920,730,724" and
2 insert "\$5,334,275,397 \$5,952,124,724"

3 In line 124792, delete "\$14,219,027,179 \$15,172,082,581"
4 and insert "\$14,298,612,179 \$15,250,688,581"

5 In line 124793, delete "\$19,522,887,576 \$21,092,813,305"
6 and insert "\$19,632,887,576 \$21,202,813,305"

7 In line 124796, add \$30,415,000 to fiscal year 2024 and
8 \$31,394,000 to fiscal year 2025

9 In line 124797, add \$79,585,000 to fiscal year 2024 and
10 \$78,606,000 to fiscal year 2025

11 In line 124798, add \$110,000,000 to each fiscal year

12 In line 124824, add \$110,000,000 to each fiscal year

13 After line 125049, insert:

14 "(D) Of the foregoing appropriation item 651525, Medicaid
15 Health Care Services, \$110,000,000 in each fiscal year shall be
16 used for the purposes of establishing payment rates in
17 accordance with this section."

18 The motion was _____ agreed to.

19

SYNOPSIS

20

Department of Medicaid

21

Sections 333.10 and 333.140

22

Increases GRF line item 651525, Medicaid Health Care

23

Services, by \$110,000,000 in each fiscal year (\$30,415,000 state

24

share in FY 2024 and \$31,394,000 state share in FY 2025).

25

Earmarks the increase to fund Medicaid payment rates for

26

community behavioral health services.