



The Cutting Edge

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN NJ

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Carolyn Beauchamp, President and CEO

Volume 13 Issue 1

January 2015

Can't Find Treatment? Speak Up!

Getting help with finding behavioral health care may seem daunting. In order to improve access to care, consumers and those seeking treatment must speak up to have their concerns heard. The MHANJ has compiled an Insurance Resource Table to help consumers identify the right service with which to register a complaint if an insurer or managed care plan is unable to meet their behavioral health care needs. It is important to call when having difficulty finding a provider, and/or when coverage/care is denied.

[Click here for the Insurance Resource Table.](#)

[Speak Up! Important Tips to Remember](#)

**In-Network Exceptions
for Health Plans in
New Jersey**

MHANJ's Network Adequacy Study Indicates Need for Increased Access to Psychiatric Care

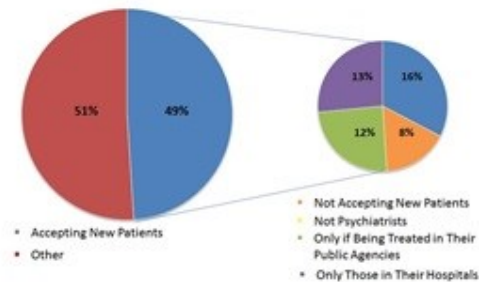
In September 2014 the Mental Health Association in New Jersey (MHANJ) launched a study on availability of psychiatric care through managed care networks.

MHANJ recognized there was a need to explore this issue further, as consumers reported having trouble finding a psychiatrist in the state that would accept their insurance, as well as difficulty getting an appointment within an appropriate time period. Through our statewide helpline, we identified long waits in getting psychiatric appointments in the public sector; often waiting as long as three-to-six months. Additionally, through our advocacy work, we have found increasing consumer reports indicating difficulty in finding psychiatrists that accept private insurance. In order to further investigate this disparity, the MHANJ completed a Network Adequacy Study on Participating/Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs) to assess the accuracy of provider lists published by each Managed Care Organization, to find out which providers are accepting new patients, as well as investigate the length of wait times for appointments.

[Click here to read more.](#)

[Click here to read MHANJ's Managed Care Network Adequacy Report.](#)

Acceptance of New Patients



When treatment is not available within the managed care network, some health plans offer in-network exceptions. The conditions for in-network exceptions vary by plan; [click here for details.](#)

Network Adequacy 101

To better understand Network Adequacy, and how to advocate to improve it, Community Catalyst, a national non-profit advocacy organization which works to improve health care nationally, created 'Network Adequacy: What Advocates Need to Know'. [Click here to read the full report.](#)



The MHANJ recently launched NJ Connect for Recovery, a call line dedicated to helping people who are coping with addiction to heroin and prescription painkillers and their family members.

Please help us raise awareness of this new resource!

[Click here to register your organization/](#)

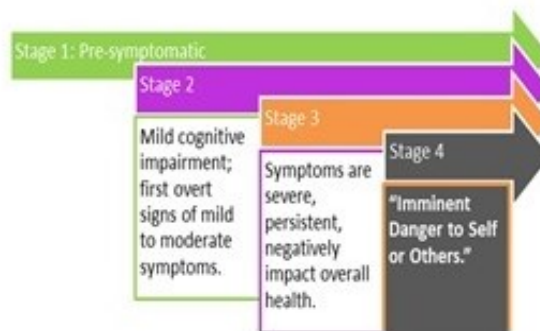
Mental Health America's Parity or Disparity Report

Mental Health America has recently released a report entitled *Parity or Disparity: The State of Mental Health in America*, to create a comprehensive baseline document of where the 50 states and the District of Columbia stand in relation to one another on various aspects of mental health wellness, level of need, ability to access appropriate mental health care and parity among health plans. This in-depth report looks at mental health indicators of both youths and adults, and intends to aid in distinguishing the progress of the recently implemented Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) as well as the Affordable Care Act (ACA)-both federally and on a state-by-state level. Additionally, the report stands as a compilation of data indicators for mental health in each state, and across the United States.

National Findings

Early intervention and treatment are key components in mental health outcomes. It is imperative that we stop waiting until a person's mental illness reaches "Stage 4" to access treatment.

MHA National B4Stage4 Model



New Jersey Findings-Adults

- Mental Health America's report includes a description of the Network Adequacy Study done by the Mental Health Association in New Jersey, highlighting the findings as important advocacy efforts toward raising awareness about barriers to accessing mental health care in New Jersey, educating consumers on how to access care, and what to do if an individual's needs go unmet.
- By comparison, adults in New Jersey have a lower incidence of Any Mental Illness (AMI) than the national average.
- Insurance does not guarantee access to care. While New Jersey has a high percentage of adults with AMI who are insured (97.8 percent), only 36.9 percent of New Jersey residents with AMI received treatment regardless of their insurance status.

[Click here to read more.](#)

[business or yourself in our "Tell 2 Friends" Campaign.](#) Once you sign up, we will email you an electronic tool kit with materials to help you spread the word. Groups that join will be recognized on our website and in our social media.

Would you like to help MHANJ continue its advocacy initiatives?



[Click here to read Mental Health America's full *Parity or Disparity: The State of Mental Health in America* report.](#)



Learn more about [MHANJ's Government Affairs](#) efforts.

President and CEO
Carolyn Beauchamp

Director of Policy and Advocacy
Barbara Johnston
bjohnston@mhanj.org

Community Advocate
Amanda Kolacy
akolacy@mhanj.org