

Allowing Psychologists to Bill Medicaid Will Help Address a Major Mental Health Workforce Shortage in Illinois

Illinois' Mental Health Workforce is Insufficient to Meet the Need

- ❖ More than 2.5 million Illinoisans are in need of mental health treatment.
- ❖ A shortage of psychiatrists means long waits – often months – for treatment.
- ❖ Illinois has the 6th largest number of mental health professional shortage areas among states.
- ❖ 123 areas in Illinois, many in rural areas, have less than 1 psychiatrist per 30,000/people.

Mental Health Workforce Shortage Means Treatment Lag and High Costs

- ❖ Suicide (often due to a mental health condition) is the 3rd leading cause of death for Illinois youth age 15-25.
- ❖ It takes, on average, 10 years for a young person with a serious mental illness to access the right treatment, leading to multiple psychiatric hospitalizations, disability, homelessness, criminal justice involvement and institutionalization.
- ❖ US Government Accountability Office Report: 57% of the most expensive 5% of Medicaid enrollees in Illinois have a mental illness. They are so costly because many lack access to the right treatment.

Allowing Psychologists to Bill Medicaid Makes Treatment and Fiscal Sense

- ❖ 41 states allow psychologists to bill Medicaid independently.
- ❖ Allowing Illinois psychologists to bill Medicaid independently will improve access to mental health care statewide.
- ❖ Medicaid managed care limits the fiscal impact to the state.