

“First Episode Treatment” Treats Serious Mental Illnesses *before* Disability

Illinois Waits until Disability to Treat Most Serious Mental Illnesses (SMIs)

- ❖ Over 100,000 Illinois youth will show early signs of a serious mental illness (schizophrenia, bi-polar or schizoaffective disorder), which typically begin to manifest before age 24.
- ❖ It can take, on average, 10 full years to get the right treatment to stabilize the illness.
- ❖ The long lag in treatment results in accumulating disability, preventable hospitalizations, poverty, homelessness and justice involvement (*the costs of which are borne by the state*).
- ❖ Neither Illinois’ Medicaid program nor private insurance cover First Episode Treatment.

First Episode Treatment for Psychosis Can Prevent Disability

- ❖ First Episode Treatment begins at the young person’s first episode of psychosis. Psychosis is when a person loses contact with reality due to the onset of an SMI.
- ❖ **Clinical Research:** In 2007, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) launched a research study of First Episode Treatment (early intervention) showing:
 - **Significantly reduced hospitalizations**
 - **Slower progression of the illness**
 - **Higher participation in school and work**
 - **Reduced healthcare costs**
- ❖ Half of all states now implement First Episode Treatment.ⁱ

Medicaid Coverage of First Episode Treatment Model Will Reduce Costs

- ❖ Assertive Outreach & Engagement
- ❖ Psychotherapy
- ❖ Family Psycho-education
- ❖ Peer Support
- ❖ Medication & Primary Care
- ❖ Case Management for Problem Solving (housing, criminal justice, etc.)
- ❖ Supported Education & Employment

ⁱ AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IA, KS, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, VT