

**NOW** is the time for Congress to act.  
Make comprehensive mental health reform meaningful.

OVERDUE

MENTAL  
HEALTH  
REFORM

Too many lives lost  
...too little action

## Invest in mental health and substance use reform.

Mental illnesses are the leading cause of disability and contribute to premature death. But many Americans in major crisis who need hospitalization to keep them safe face barriers to life-saving treatment.

It's time to fix the Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion that prohibits adult Medicaid beneficiaries (ages 21–64) from accessing short-term, acute care in psychiatric hospitals.

*For less than 40 cents a day,<sup>1</sup> Congress can give poor and disabled Americans with mental and addictive disorders access to the same hospital treatment that their Medicaid insurance card covers for all other conditions. This will improve access, alleviate backlogs in emergency departments, and increase productivity as people receive help (rather than a jail sentence).*

Addressing mental and addictive disorders is the way to save lives, communities, and money.

Congress is on the right track as both Republicans and Democrats continue to move toward passage of comprehensive mental health reform legislation. Now it's time to finish the job and invest.

1. There are 35 million non-elderly adult and blind/disabled beneficiaries within Medicaid. They account for \$2.31 trillion in the federal share of Medicaid spending over 10 years (or 63% of the federal share of Medicaid spending). The Congressional Budget Office's (CBO's) preliminary estimate of the cost of modifying the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion would add approximately \$50 billion in new spending over 10 years. This fix would represent only 1.8% of the federal share (\$2.81 trillion) of total Medicaid spending on adults over 10 years (or just 39 cents per day for each of the 35 million non-elderly adult and blind/disabled Medicaid enrollees in the United States).

Lives are at stake.

**CONGRESS SHOULD:**

**Pass and invest in meaningful mental health reform NOW!**