

IOWA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

CONTINUING THE SUPPORT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

DEVELOP CRITICAL AND COST-EFFECTIVE SERVICES AND SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

Hospitals see the need for behavioral health services daily in their communities. From emergency rooms to inpatient psychiatric units, hospitals often cannot find appropriate care for patients needing transitional care. Iowans across the lifespan need access to behavioral health resources.

Iowa's General Assembly has taken significant steps over the last several years to pass legislation that created and grew a continuum of services and support for those of any age in need of help. These services are vital to ensuring access to needed services and support, and legislators must continue to back these services. This includes ensuring accurate and timely payment from Iowa's managed care organizations and providing flexibilities to reduce administrative burdens, such as removing prior-authorization requirements for services with a high approval rate.

Develop Long-term placement options

A lack of placement for patients in need of complex care and the downsizing of residential care facilities have created a significant service gap for patients with acute and long-term behavioral health care needs. The development and growth of long-term placement options must be supported and bolstered through statewide coordination efforts and adequate reimbursement. These services include:

- Intensive residential service homes.
- Assertive community treatment teams.
- Subacute care.

Increase community-based services

The availability of community-based behavioral health services should be consistently available statewide. Growth and funding of these services should be explored to ensure access. These services include access centers and mobile crisis response teams.

The General Assembly should ensure the development and growth of long-term services and community-based support for Iowans in need of behavioral health care.

ENSURE ACCESS TO ADEQUATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

BACKGROUND

Iowa ranks 44th nationally for behavioral health workforce availability. This directly affects access to care. Workforce concerns in behavioral health include all positions working in the field and do not apply only to psychiatrist-level positions.

Behavioral health workforce recruitment and retention could be helped in a variety of ways, including supporting and expanding loan repayment or loan forgiveness programs and investing in more funding for graduate medical education and residency programs specific to behavioral health. These are tools hospitals and other providers use to incentivize medical professionals to stay and practice in Iowa.

The General Assembly should pass legislation that ensures statewide access to all positions in the behavioral health workforce with a focus on recruitment and retention.