



## 2020 Mental Health Budget Priorities

*We call on the General Assembly to support the following budget amendments:*

### 1. STEP-VA: Fully Fund Outpatient Mental Health Services, Peer and Family Support, Mobile Crisis teams & Veterans Services

*Included in the Governor's introduced budget: \$19.7 million FY21 & \$30.1 million FY22*

- STEP-VA is a roadmap for how Virginia is transforming its public behavioral health system. The overarching goal of STEP-VA is to ensure timely access to appropriate, quality mental health services no matter where you live in Virginia.
- Building off progress and investments in STEP-VA since 2017, the Governor's budget this year includes funding to building out the following services: Outpatient mental health services for children and adults, mobile crisis teams, peer and family supports services and veteran services.

### 2. Support Efforts That Address Behavioral Health Workforce Challenges

It is well documented that there is a critical shortage of qualified behavioral health providers in Virginia that directly impacts access to evidence-based mental health services. As Virginia takes steps to improve our community-based behavioral health services, it is also important to implement strategies that will address critical workforce shortages that exist in the Commonwealth.

#### ❖ Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program

*Item 295 #1s (Barker) & Item 295 #1h (Hope): \$2.25 million GF per yr.*

- This amendment establishes the Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program to increase the number of behavioral health practitioners by way of an educational loan repayment incentive that coordinates with existing efforts to recruit and retain providers in the Commonwealth.
- This program would allow for behavioral health providers to receive a student loan repayment award for up to 25% of student loan debt in exchange for each year of service in underserved communities.
- Provides behavioral health providers the opportunity to pay off their student loan debt while providing four years of service to the Commonwealth.

#### ❖ Increase Mental Health Provider Rates

*Included in the Governor's Introduced Budget: \$2.37 million FY21 & \$2.46 million FY22*

- This amendment raises rates for psychiatric services by 14.7 percent. This action increases rates to the equivalent of 110 percent of the 2019 Medicare rates for these services.
- Current Medicaid reimbursement rates for mental health services provided by a licensed mental health professional (LMHP) are significantly lower than Medicare and commercial insurers.

- Given the critical shortage of licensed mental health providers (LMHP) in Virginia, increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates may incentivize providers to accept additional Medicaid patients and ensure access to specialized mental health services.

### **3. Increase Rate for Early Intervention Case Management Services**

*Item 313 #55h (Robinson) & Item 313 #46s (Ruff): \$3.5 Million GF per yr.*

- Targeted case management (also referred as EI Service Coordination) is a service that assists the child and family in gaining access to needed and appropriate medical, social, educational and other services.
- The demand for Early Intervention services has increased by 78 percent over 10 years, creating higher caseloads but not enough funding to manage those caseloads.
- This amendment provides \$3.5 million from the general fund and \$3.5 million from federal Medicaid matching funds each year to increase the early intervention case management rate from \$132 to \$242.73. The current reimbursement rate does not cover the cost of providing these services.

### **4. Transportation for Individuals from State Hospitals**

*Item 321 #4s (Deeds): \$1.1 million FY21 & \$781,494 FY22*

- Oftentimes, individuals under a Temporary Detention order (TDO) are transported to a state facility that is hours away from the individual's home location and therefore upon discharge may have difficulty getting transportation back to their home location.
- This amendment funds the transportation costs of patients discharged from state hospitals that were admitted under a Temporary Detention Order (TDO).
- This funding request covers the cost of 100 percent of transports of all individuals admitted to a state hospital under a TDO.

### **5. Substance Use Disorder Funding and Services**

- We ask that you support funding, services, and resources, including recovery housing, that assist people in reaching and maintaining recovery from substance use disorder.