

The Mental Health Safety Net Coalition



**Alliance of Community
Service Providers**

**Aspire Child & Family
Services**

**Bedford-Somerset
Developmental & Behavioral
Health Services**

Bell Socialization Services

The Bradley Center

**Brooke Glen Behavioral
Hospital**

**Chester County Department
of MH/IDD**

Children First

**Children's Home of Reading
(CHOR)**

**Children's Service Center of
Wyoming Valley, Inc.**

Clarion Psychiatric Center

Community Services Group

**County Commissioner's
Association of Pennsylvania**

Eleos Health

**Family Services of Northwest
Pennsylvania**

**Chestnut Ridge Counseling,
Inc.**

**Institute for Behavioral
Change (IBC)**

Intercommunity Action, Inc.

**Fairmont Behavioral Health
Systems**

Friends Hospital

**Foundations Behavioral
Health**

**Haven Behavioral Hospital of
Eastern Pennsylvania**

**Haven Behavioral Hospital of
Philadelphia**

**Haven Behavioral Hospital of
Philadelphia**

Horsham Clinic

**Lancaster Behavioral Health
Hospital**

MAX Association

Meadows Psychiatric Center

It Is Time: Invest in Behavioral Health Services and Pennsylvania's Future

Dear Members of the General Assembly,

Community mental health services are in crisis. The signs are all around us, including increases in suicides, boarding in emergency departments, wait times for mental health and SUD recovery-related services, and incarceration rates for those suffering from mental illnesses. Our behavioral health system faces an unprecedented constellation of challenges addressing the growing needs of mentally ill and other vulnerable Pennsylvanians. Now, with the budget impasse entering its second month, providers are faced with the prospect of meeting these critical needs with no payment at all.

It is time to act. We urge the General Assembly to pass a budget that upholds the responsibility of the Commonwealth to take care of its own.

It is time to appropriately fund the HealthChoices Behavioral Health Capitation payments to ensure individuals, children, and families get the services they need.

It is time to invest \$100 million to help rebuild our county-based mental health system.

It is time to fully fund the SUD Recovery System and Peer-Related Services to continue efforts to combat the opioid and addiction crisis.

It is time to fund the proposed Early intervention/Early Learning Services for our 0-5-year-old population. This sector has little voice but some of the greatest needs. It's an investment in our future.

It is time to invest \$100 million for school-based mental health services in a way that ensures coordination and builds the existing infrastructure of the school districts and community-based providers.

It is time to provide \$15 million in ongoing development of Crisis Walk-in Centers and support the implementation of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline across the Commonwealth.

It is time to appropriate \$15 million to support the 21 freestanding psychiatric hospitals.

Merakey
PA Council of Children Youth
& Family Services (PCCYFS)
PA Clubhouse Coalition
Philadelphia Mental Health
Care Corporation (PMHCC)
Rehabilitation and
Community Providers
Association (RCPA)
Renewal, Inc.
Roxbury Treatment Center
Stairways Behavioral Health
Step by Step, Inc.
Strawberry Fields Inc.
True North Wellness
UPMC
Westmoreland
Casemanagement and
Supports, Inc.

During the extended budget impasse in 2022, providers were forced to take out loans to meet payroll and ensure the people were served in the absence of state funding. In most cases, the interest and other costs associated with these lines of credit were never fully recouped. Providers are in no position to absorb these additional costs.

The status quo is not sustainable. The failure to act on the budget and invest in behavioral health services continues to lead to both higher overall costs for the Commonwealth and less favorable outcomes for individual Pennsylvanians and their families. We respectfully urge the General Assembly to pass the state budget for FY 2025/26 as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact RCPA COO [Jim Sharp](#) or Policy Associate [Emma Sharp](#).

Sincerely,
The Mental Health Safety Net Coalition