

2019-2020 Legislative Priorities

NAMI (the National Alliance on Mental Illness) is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization providing advocacy, education, support and public awareness. NAMI Wisconsin is the state affiliate of NAMI and supports over 30 local chapters. Together, our mission is to improve the quality of life of people affected by mental illness and to promote recovery.

At the forefront of our advocacy is the recognition that stigma and discrimination directly affect people with mental illness and their families. NAMI Wisconsin asserts a conscious effort to reduce stigma and discrimination in all areas of policy including healthcare, employment, housing and education.

Provide access to affordable, community based mental health treatment services

- Accept federal funds for BadgerCare in order to provide Wisconsinites up to 138% of the federal poverty level with access to affordable mental health care and services.
- Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates so providers can afford to deliver services to those who need it.
- Enact legislation with a range of incentives for mental health practitioners who agree to accept Medicaid enrollees and practice in underserved communities.
- Enforce mental health insurance parity by ensuring that public and private health plans afford people access to needed mental health services on the same basis as physical health care.
- Allocate additional state funds to be pooled with county dollars for transportation services so people can live actively in the community. Support full implementation of the federal Medicaid provision for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation.

Prevent people from entering and returning to jail and prison

- Invest in Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) programs, especially for low risk offenders.
- Increase the number of crisis stabilization units around the state providing a safe, short-term inpatient setting.
- Support Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), Crisis Intervention Partner (CIP), and de-escalation programs for first responders to ensure effective response to mental health crises

Support youth mental health initiatives

- Provide funding and education on early identification and First Episode Psychosis Programs.
- Support training for educators in Youth Mental Health First Aid.
- Invest in school-based mental health initiatives that allow children and youth to access treatment, increase awareness and expand mental health education within the school.

Promote avenues to recovery in the community through employment, peer services and support

- Fund the statewide expansion and implementation of the Individual Placement and Support Program (IPS), an evidence-based model of supported employment.
- Support increased Medicaid reimbursement rates for Certified Peer Specialists in order to expand employment opportunities in this field.
- Ensure access to community-based services such as the Community Support Program (CSP), Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) and peer-run respite centers.