



2020 Legislative Action Agenda

Ensuring Appropriate Access to Medications and Services

NAMI-NYS firmly believes in a person centered approach to treating psychiatric disorders. **Integral to the goal of person centered care is the ability of people living with a mental illness to access the most appropriate treatments to advance their specific recovery.** Too many people are facing a myriad of obstacles to accessing services and medications.

NAMI-NYS is deeply concerned about how the Governor's proposed 1% cut to Medicaid spending will impact programs delivered through the New York State Department of Health. This cut can have a drastic impact on health homes and managed care services that have benefitted many people living with a mental illness as well as prescriber prevails. This can also reduce the utilization of Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams. The availability of ACT Teams is an integral part of successful community treatment and crisis response services.

Though medication is not needed for everyone living with a psychiatric disorder, for those who do require medication, it is of the utmost importance that they receive the medication their psychiatric provider determines to be most appropriate for their individual recovery. This is called **Prescriber prevails and is especially important in treating psychiatric disorders.** Specific mental illnesses can impact each person differently. Each case must be viewed and handled uniquely with doctors reviewing specific symptoms and other medications that person is taking. **Prescriber prevails language in Medicaid was not included in the Governor's budget proposal and NAMI-NYS is calling for that language to be reinstated in the final budget.**

It is also crucial that we continue to **invest in early-intervention programs such as the NYS-OMH's innovative On Track NY.**

The failure of insurance providers to adhere to mental health parity is a major barrier to care for too many people. This is why NAMI-NYS supports the elements of the Governor's budget proposal which **strengthen the Behavioral Health Parity Compliance Fund** for the collection of penalties imposed on insurance carriers who violate New York's Behavioral Health Parity laws, which will be used to support the Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Ombudsman program.

NAMI-NYS is calling for the advancement of the following legislation:

- **A.3830**, which would allow a pharmacy to administer injectable psychiatric medications
- **A.3074/S3834**-Allowing camps to employ mental health professionals.
- **A.4383**-Providing mental health practitioners authority to give diagnosis.
- **A.8563**-Providing excused absence of a public employee for mental health purposes
- **A.8543/S.6687**- Providing an excused absence from school for the mental or behavioral health of a minor