



16

Christine  
McElroy

National Alliance on Mental Illness

## Massachusetts

### ***INCREASE REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR MASSHEALTH***

#### **What we want**

- \$13 million increase to reimbursement rates to close the gap in hospital payments versus hospital costs.
- Without adequate reimbursement rates, and an increasing demand for acute inpatient stays, hospitals are struggling to remain afloat financially and psychiatric units are diminishing.

#### **Background**

- In FY14 the House added \$1.0 million to address the issue of reimbursement rates, though this is not nearly enough to remedy this issue.
- In January 2014 North Adams Hospital closed their inpatient psychiatric unit due to financial distress. This is happening throughout the state all too frequently and must come to an end.
- NAMI believes strongly that every individual should have adequate access to care. Without appropriate funding, this care is disappearing. Individuals are travelling longer distances, wait times are increasing, and hospitals are suffering to maintain adequate level of care.
- Funding reimbursement rates would increase accessibility, decrease wait times, and overall, appropriately care for the 25% of families of loved ones with mental illness.

#### **Specifics**

- NAMI is seeking to raise MassHealth's proposed FY2015 budget in FY 2015 by \$13 million for line item 4000-0500.

#### **The Bottom Line**

- Demand for inpatient acute psychiatric care is high, but the resources available to meet this need are minimal. Patients are waiting hours, if not days, for inpatient beds to be found, as psychiatric units throughout the state are being forced to shut their doors due to lack of funding. In order to meet the need of this population, it is crucial that rates increase to allow for these critical services to remain intact.

National Alliance on Mental Illness of Massachusetts  
The Schrafft's Center  
529 Main St Suite 1M17  
Boston, MA 02129  
617-580-8541  
[www.NAMIMass.org](http://www.NAMIMass.org)