

## Behavioral Health Providers



*Of American Hospital Association's (AHA) nearly 5,000 member hospitals and health systems – **1,660 member executives** lead general hospitals and freestanding specialty hospitals that provide **behavioral health services**. AHA supports the integration of behavioral and physical health and helps hospitals play a key*

*role in establishing partnerships to ensure access to a full continuum of behavioral health care.*

### Working for Behavioral Health Providers

**AHA at Top for Influence ...** The AHA ranked first of 50 trade associations on six of 15 measures of advocacy effectiveness, the most of any association. The six areas are member representation, bipartisanship, industry reputation steward, information resource, self-regulation and local impact. It is from this position of strength that AHA advocates on behalf of behavioral health providers, for high quality, affordable and accessible behavioral health care for all Americans.

- **Influencing Legislation and Regulations.** Over the past two years, AHA has influenced changes in legislative & regulatory arenas including the application of mental health parity standards to Medicaid Managed Care and CHIP; advocacy to eliminate Medicare's 190-day lifetime limit, as well as eliminate/restrict the scope of Medicaid's Institute for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion; and significantly revise 42 CFR. Supporting improved access to behavioral health services is one of the top three AHA *Strategic Member Priorities*.
- **Reforming the Mental Health System.** The AHA-supported 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act includes reforms to the mental health system, including provisions related to mental health parity, integration with physical health services, workforce development, and privacy provisions. It also includes adjustments to the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program to account for socioeconomic status and \$ 1 billion in grants to states to help address the opioid epidemic..
- **Combating the Opioid Epidemic.** The AHA collaborated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to create and issue a new patient education resource on prescription opioids and actively advocates for bills to increase funding for prevention and treatment. *Stem the Tide: Addressing the Opioid Epidemic*, is a new AHA toolkit provides guidance, information and case examples to help hospitals and health systems tackle the problem.
- **Fighting for Regulatory Relief ...** An AHA report found hospitals, health systems and post-acute care providers spend nearly \$39 billion a year on administrative activities related to regulatory compliance diverting providers and resources away from patient care. AHA President and CEO Rick Pollack participated in a stakeholder listening session hosted by CMS Administrator Seema Verma to launch CMS's regulatory relief effort, and shared AHA's priorities with the agency. We also worked with The Joint Commission to encourage the issuance of guidance to help hospitals and surveyors determine what constitutes adequate environmental safeguards to protect patients with suicidal ideation from self-harm, aka "ligature risk".

## Engaging Behavioral Health Leaders

*AHA engages member executives in shaping health policy and care delivery in America. Our policy boards, councils, committees, other engagement opportunities are influencing payment and delivery system reform and other important areas. AHA also provides multiple opportunities for members to engage in knowledge exchange and benefit from innovative thought leadership opportunities.*

- **AHA Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Services Council** leads the [Section for Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Services](#) by providing forums linking members with shared interests and missions to advise AHA on policy and advocacy activities and to discuss issues of great importance to behavioral health providers and the field as a whole.
- **Webinars/Conference Calls** for small groups of executives to discuss best practices to improve behavioral health care quality and outcomes. In addition, AHA's behavioral health CEOs are individually contacted to share their views several times a year.
- **AHA's Advocacy Alliances**, including the [Advocacy Alliance for Coordinated Care](#) and the [Advocacy Alliance for the 340B Drug Pricing Program](#) coordinate member advocacy on key policy issues.
- **Collaborating with Behavioral Health Organizations.** AHA works closely with the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the American Psychiatric Association, the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and more.

## Providing Resources for Behavioral Health Providers

*Based on member input, AHA, often in partnership with others, develops and offers resources to support behavioral health providers. Examples include:*

- **Improving Care for High-Need, High-Cost Patients:** AHA's [new guide](#) shares leading interventions hospitals and health systems are using to address the needs of high-need, high-cost patients. These patients are often adults who have three or more chronic diseases, such as psychiatric and addiction disorders and functional limitations in their ability to care for themselves.
- **Hospitals Focus on Behavioral Health, Enhance Value ...** AHA's [2018 Environmental Scan](#) has insights to help hospital leaders navigate and shape changes in the year ahead.
- **Resources on Building a Culture of Health:** How do we create a society that gives all individuals an equal opportunity to live the healthiest life they can, whatever their ethnic, geographic, racial, socioeconomic or physical circumstances are? With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the AHA's has developed a [playbook](#) and case examples tools and strategies to help.
- **Work on behavioral health is evident across the AHA ...** [Click here](#) for information about the overall value of membership at AHA. [Click here](#) for more information on AHA's behavioral health initiatives.