

## **The American Health Care Act NAMI Talking Points**

Revised March 14, 2017

- One in five Americans experience a mental health condition, but only half get needed treatment.
- Coverage for mental health care helps people get treatment when they need it—helping them to stay in school, on the job and in recovery.
- But the American Health Care Act (AHCA), Congress’ bill to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, would reduce funding for health coverage—from insurance plans to Medicaid—and put mental health care at risk.
- 14 million fewer people would be covered by Medicaid over the next 10 years under the AHCA. In total, 24 million more Americans would be uninsured for mental health care.

### **Medicaid**

- Medicaid funding would be replaced with a “per capita cap,” which means states would get a fixed amount of federal funding per person. This would slash federal Medicaid support to states by \$880 billion by 2026, forcing states to make unacceptable cuts that would likely fall on the backs of children and adults with mental illness.

### **Medicaid Expansion**

- Nearly 1 out of 3 people covered by Medicaid expansion live with a mental health or substance use condition. The AHCA would freeze out new enrollees in 2020 by reducing federal funding for Medicaid expansion. This will leave millions of people with mental health conditions without the Medicaid coverage they need to get well and stay well.
- Medicaid expansion plans would no longer have to cover mental health and substance use care. In the middle of an opioid crisis and the highest suicide rate in 30 years, Congress shouldn’t desert its commitment to coverage for mental health and substance use treatment.

### **Individual and Small Group Health Insurance**

- Federal help to buy health insurance would be significantly reduced, leaving millions of people with mental illness unable to afford needed mental health care.
- Congress shouldn’t put millions of Americans with mental illness at risk. Cutting corners in health coverage will keep people from getting the treatment they need and will push people with mental illness into costly emergency rooms, hospitals and jails.
- Investing early in affordable, quality mental health care promotes recovery and saves taxpayer dollars in the long term by avoiding disability, criminal justice involvement and frequent hospital stays.