



Advancing Health Care Policy  
for Mental Health and Addiction

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact: Tiffany Huth**

**Phone: 202.487.8057**

**Email: [huth@abhw.org](mailto:huth@abhw.org)**

## **ABHW Submits Comments to Improve Coordinated Care Through HIPAA**

**Washington, DC (February 12, 2019)** – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 200 million people, responded to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Request for Information on Modifying HIPAA Rules to Improve Coordinated Care.

ABHW applauds HHS’ attention to improving coordinated care, particularly in regard to addressing the opioid crisis and serious mental illness. “While helpful, we do not believe that modifying the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is the answer for improving coordinated care. The true roadblock to integrating care for persons with opioid and other substance use disorders is an outdated 1970s federal regulations governing the confidentiality of drug and alcohol treatment records, 42 CFR Part 2 (Part 2),” stated Pamela Greenberg, MPP, President and CEO, ABHW.

ABHW recommends a separate rule making process for the antiquated Part 2 regulations that are not compatible with the way health care currently is delivered. In order to modernize these regulations, Part 2 needs to harmonize with HIPAA to allow for the transmission of SUD records for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations. Only then can we promote integrated care and enhance patient safety, while providing health care professionals with one federal privacy standard for all of medicine.

Read ABHW full comments: [HERE](#)

HHS request for information: [Request for Information on Modifying HIPAA Rules To Improve Coordinated Care](#)

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ABHW is the leading health plan association working to improve access and quality of care for mental health and substance use disorders. ABHW’s members include national and regional health plans who care for more than 200 million people. Together we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and addiction care. Member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, AmeriHealth Caritas, Anthem, Beacon Health Options, Centene Corporation, Cigna, Magellan Health, New Directions Behavioral Health, and Optum.