



Advancing Health Care Policy
for Mental Health and Addiction

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ABHW Submits Comments to E&C Committee on SUD Treatments

Washington, DC (November 5, 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 Committee on Energy and Commerce’s request for information on substance use disorder (SUD) treatment.

ABHW appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the Committee as ABHW members have witnessed firsthand the fraud in some SUD treatment facilities in the areas of licensure, accreditation, administrative and billing practices, quality, and enrollment. These fraudulent activities usually occur in out-of-network SUD facilities and the inappropriate care they provide can have dire, and sometimes fatal outcomes.

ABHW supports the following recommendations, among others:

- Recovery housing should have a clear operational definition that accurately delineates the type of services offered. While recently released guidelines by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) encourage this, additional oversight needs to be identified to truly hold unethical treatment centers accountable.
- Aligning 42 CFR Part 2 (Part 2) with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) for the purposes of treatment, payment and health care operations (TPO) to allow appropriate access to patient information that is essential for providing whole-person care while protecting patient privacy.

ABHW and its member companies are committed to addressing SUDs and ensuring access to high quality care and treatment. We look forward to exploring legislative and regulatory proposals that provide transparency and oversight to ensure quality, evidence-based SUD treatment.

ABHW’s full comment letter may be accessed [HERE](#).

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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, Kaiser Permanente, Magellan Health, New Directions Behavioral Health, and Optum.