



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness Responds to Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act Final Rule

Washington, D.C. — The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 200 million people, issued the following statement in response to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and U.S. Department of Treasury's (collectively the "Tri-Department") final mental health and substance use disorder parity rule released today.

Since its inception, ABHW has been at the forefront of and an advocate for mental health and substance use disorder parity. ABHW was instrumental in drafting the legislation for the initial Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) of 2008, and our members have worked tirelessly over the past 16 years to implement parity for behavioral health services.

ABHW appreciates that the Tri-Departments listened to stakeholders and in particular, did not adopt the proposed cumbersome mathematical tests to determine whether or not health plans were providing parity for nonquantitative treatment limits (NQTLs).

"We are concerned that provisions in the final rule, such as the material difference standard and meaningful benefits provisions, go beyond the law's intent and will create costly compliance hurdles that may negatively impact affordability and access to mental health and substance use disorder care," said ABHW President and CEO Pamela Greenberg.

We are currently evaluating the new NQTL parity requirements and the final rule's impact on health outcomes, quality, and cost of care.

For more on ABHW's efforts and advocacy related to MHPAEA, please visit <https://abhw.org/parity>.

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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 that care for more than 200 million people. Together, we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and substance use disorder care. ABHW member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, Centene Corporation/Magellan Health, Elevance Health, Evernorth, a Cigna company, Kaiser Permanente, Lucet, Molina Healthcare, Optum, and PerformCare, a subsidiary of AmeriHealth Caritas. To learn more, visit www.abhw.org and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).