



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) Calls on the Incoming Trump Administration to Champion Behavioral Health

Washington D.C. – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) looks forward to working with the incoming Trump Administration and calls on them to focus on key policies that enhance access to quality mental health and substance use disorder care. As the Trump Administration sets priorities for its upcoming administration, ABHW [sent a letter](#) today, urging them to prioritize the following issues:

- Address Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Final Rule
- Expand the Use of Telehealth for Behavioral Health Services
- Ensure Access to Substance Use Disorder Treatment
- Strengthen and Expand the Behavioral Health Workforce
- Eliminate the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMD) Exclusion
- Preserve Enhanced Premium Tax Credits
- Advance Integrated Care
- Ensure Optimal Behavioral Health for Children and Youth
- Ensure Health Coverage for Individuals Released from Jails and Prisons

“We appreciated President Trump’s leadership during his first term to address the growing need for mental health and substance use disorder care and call on the incoming Administration to prioritize issues that will increase access to timely and quality behavioral health care,” said Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) President and CEO Debbie Withey. “This includes actions like delaying enforcement of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) final rule and ensuring that the application and enforcement are practical, effective, and

efficient; repealing the Medicare six-month in-person telehealth requirement and making the telehealth flexibilities permanent; waiving the in-person requirement for tele-prescribing for opioid use disorder patients; urging Congress to expand eligible Medicare providers to include certified peer support specialists; waiving the Institution for Mental Diseases (IMD) exclusion to Medicaid funding for inpatient behavioral health treatment, which would free up beds in local hospitals, allowing them to manage capacity in inpatient and emergency departments; and more.”

Access to comprehensive, evidence-based mental health and substance use disorder services is critical to enhancing patients’ health and overall wellbeing, whether covered by a commercial plan, Medicare, Medicaid, or another health benefit program. We are eager to work with the Trump Administration and the 119th Congress to ensure access to quality mental health and substance use disorder care.

To view ABHW’s letter to the incoming Trump Administration, please [click here](#) or visit: <https://www.abhw.org/press>.

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

ABHW is the nation’s only health plan association that is exclusively dedicated to improving 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, a CVS Health Company; CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Centene Corporation; Elevance Health; Evernorth; Kaiser Permanente; Lucet; Magellan Health; Molina Healthcare; Optum; and PerformCare, a subsidiary of AmeriHealth Caritas. To learn more, visit www.abhw.org and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).