



Press Release for Immediate Distribution
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Governor's Budget Proposal Breaks Down Barriers to Care for New Yorkers with Commercial Insurance

The 150 community-based provider agencies of the NYS Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare celebrate the Governor's executive budget proposal that will address a longstanding barrier for New Yorkers with commercial health insurance who need to access mental health and/or addiction care in their local communities.

The Governor's proposal requires commercial insurers to reimburse providers of these services at or above the State's Medicaid rate. This will increase access to essential behavioral health services for New Yorkers with commercial insurance.

Currently, Medicaid rates for mental health and addiction services are set by the State within standard actuarial requirements. However, commercial insurer plans often pay providers for exactly the same services at an average of 50% less than the Medicaid rate.

This long-standing problem has closed the door to care for too many New Yorkers, simply due to the insurance card in their pockets. The NYS Council is deeply appreciative of the Governor for recognizing and understanding this problem through the lens of New Yorkers in need of mental health and/or addiction care, especially at this time of both an opioid epidemic and unprecedented rates of serious mental health issues, including a disturbing increase in death by suicide rates.

We strongly encourage the Legislature's support for this critical policy and its inclusion in the final State Budget to meaningfully increase access to essential mental health and addiction services for New Yorkers with commercial insurance.