



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 20, 2026

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**STATEMENT FROM LAURI COLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NYS COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE ON GOVERNOR HOCHUL FAILING TO ADDRESS MEDICAID MANAGED
CARE IN EXECUTIVE BUDGET**

It's disappointing to see Governor Hochul's Executive Budget ignore the needs of millions of New Yorkers with mental health and/or substance use disorder conditions enrolled in New York's Medicaid managed care program by failing to include a carve out of most behavioral healthcare services from Medicaid managed care. Through this inaction, the state is putting the financial interest of health insurance plans over the needs of New Yorkers who are clamoring for the state to transform our behavioral health care delivery system and carve behavioral health outpatient, residential, and rehabilitation services out of Medicaid managed care. That's the only way to finally cut waitlists, reduce and remove red tape, improve access to care, enhance program quality, and save New York more than \$400 million annually by taking largely for-profit managed care plans out of the equation.

Thankfully, we've already been working diligently with state lawmakers to directly address this issue. S8309/A8055 would amend the Social Services Law and eliminate insurance middlemen. We will continue to passionately advocate for this legislation to be included in the final state budget. We and our partners won't stop fighting until these New Yorkers receive the quality healthcare they deserve.

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