



February 18, 2025

The Mental Health Legislative Network (MHLN), a coalition of over 40 organizations, is very concerned with the lack of investments and the reductions in the DHS budget at a time when Minnesota is experiencing a mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) crisis. There has been an increase in the mental health and SUD needs of Minnesotans, especially our children.

We are extremely disappointed with the lack of investments to address these crises. There is no additional funding for Medicaid rate increases for mental health and SUD providers. There are no new investments to fund the building blocks of our children's mental health system. There is no additional funding to stave off the funding cliffs faced by mental health crisis teams or school-linked mental health programs. There is no fix to the low rate attached to room and board for children in residential treatment, so their families don't have to go through the child protection doors. The addition of 50 beds for Direct Care and Treatment to address the people waiting in jail was not included and could lead to more litigation and potential fines as has been experienced in other states. And there is no new funding to address the myriad of other issues facing our system.

Much of the savings - about \$1.3 billion over the next four years - is from capping inflation and making changes to the Medicaid Waivers. Many people with mental illnesses use CADI Medicaid Waivers. While it was stated that the waiting list would not grow, people cannot find service providers to do the work because the wages are so low. MHLN is concerned with the additional limitations being proposed for waived services and its impact on children and adults with mental illnesses.

We urge the legislature to fund mental health services that we desperately need to serve Minnesotans with mental illnesses and their families.

Sincerely,

Sue Abderholden, MPH
Executive Director
NAMI Minnesota
Co-Chair MHLN

Shannah Mulvihill, MA, CFRE
Executive Director
Mental Health Minnesota
Co-Chair MHLN