strenghten behavioral health safety net

MISSOURI COALITION FOR COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

Behavioral Health Safety Net Problem

When mental illness and substance use are not treated, the problems get shifted to emergency rooms, law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Taxpayers end up paying avoidable costs. If eligibility could be extended to Missouri's most vulnerable it would allow them to receive behavioral health services through DMH-certified community treatment and support programs. Currently, Missouri's public mental health system does not serve this population well because they are generally uninsured and have no means to pay for their treatment.

- Many impacted will be young adults with developing mental illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder who are experiencing their first psychotic break.

- We would never wait years to treat cancer, heart disease, or diabetes. We begin with early interventions. This is also what we should be doing when people have serious mental illnesses. It typically takes ten years from the time they first appear in treatment until someone gets a correct diagnosis and proper treatment.

- Young adults with serious mental illness who do not have access to coverage could lose ten years during which we could intervene to change lives for the better and save money. During these years most individuals still have supports that allow them to succeed: home, family, friends, school, and work. Therefore, individuals can often recover more quickly, live full and productive lives and save money.

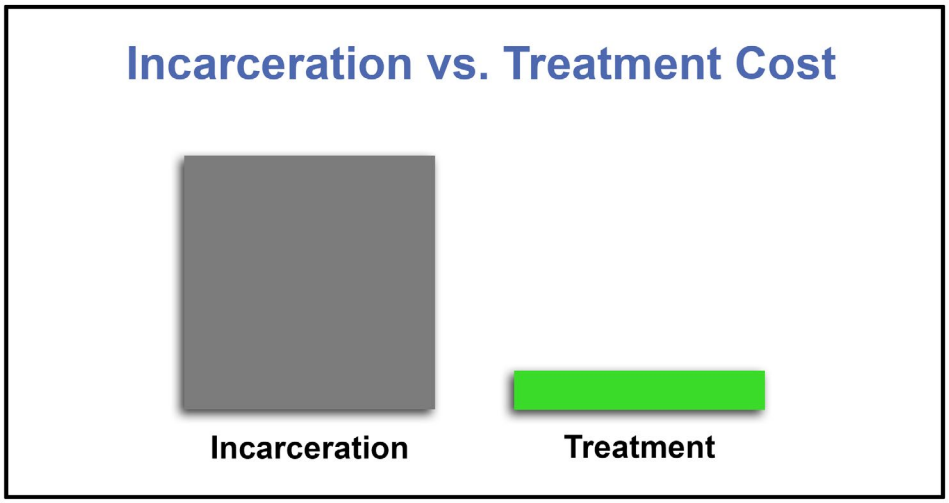
Solution

Develop a 1115 Medicaid Waiver and develop a Missouri solution that would utilize current state and local resources to match federal funds, thereby increasing capacity to serve each of these vulnerable populations. Those with serious mental illness (SMI) or engaged with the drug courts would have access to behavioral and primary health care services under a coordinated model to enhance treatment and significantly improve clinical outcomes.

Throughout the course of the demonstration, Missouri will utilize behavioral health homes for care coordination and the integration of primary care with this population - uninsured individuals with SMI. Missouri's behavioral health homes have a proven track record of improving clinical health outcomes, improving quality of life, and have demonstrated the ability to reduce significant costs in both the short and long-term.

This waiver is NOT connected in any way to the Affordable Care Act. Instead, similar to the Partnership for Hope Waiver for those with developmental disabilities, this waiver will use established, longstanding authority to improve lives in a cost-effective manner to the state.

- We can more effectively leverage current resources. **No new general revenue would be required** and at a minimum it would have to be budget neutral.
- We would **place a cap on the amount of funding** to ensure that General Assembly can control the rate of spend based upon savings, accountability, and program outcomes.
- Research shows **earlier intervention after first psychotic break** allows the brain to recover and heal much more than after allowing multiple psychotic breaks to go untreated over a long period of time.
- Opportunity to move the public mental health system from a crisis-driven treatment model to one focused on **early interventions**.
- Keeping individuals diverted from correctional settings through the use of court-operated treatment courts **saves state resources by avoiding jail and prison terms**.
- **Earlier interventions** would reduce the number of individuals with serious mental illness from ever having to go on disability.
- **Reduce unnecessary emergency room visits and hospitalizations** by investing in, and providing access to treatment.
- Improve health outcomes, resulting in **significant cost savings to the state of Missouri** and provide care coordination to Missourians with serious mental illness.



- Fewer disability determinations
- Reduced costs
- Fewer emergency room visits
- Fewer hospitalizations
- Reduced incarceration rates