

New National Report Documents Increased Behavioral Health Disparities In Employer Sponsored Health Plans

A new study conducted by Milliman, Inc. covering 37 million employees and their families, commissioned by The Bowman Family Foundation, reflects dramatically worsened access to behavioral health care since a similar study was published two years ago.

- Behavioral health access disparities escalated from 2013 to 2017 in all three categories of care examined: outpatient visits, inpatient facilities, and outpatient facilities. Disparities nearly doubled for inpatient and outpatient facilities, rising from almost 3 to nearly 6 times more likely, when compared to medical/surgical facility use.
- Children were 10 times more likely to receive outpatient mental health care out of network compared to primary care visits, twice the disparity faced by adults.
- Despite the national opioid and suicide crises, mental health and substance use treatment* together accounted for less than 3.5% of total health care spend, with substance use treatment ranging from 0.7 to 1% of that total over the 5 year period.

OFFICE VISIT ACCESS

Higher out-of-network for behavioral health office visits compared to primary care.

	2013	2015	2017
NATIONAL	5.04 x	5.09 x	5.41 x
MARYLAND	7.95 x	9.02 x	10.00 x
PARITY WOULD BE	1 x	1 x	1 x

Maryland out-of-network office visit use is **4th WORST** in the nation—10 times more likely and nearly twice the national average.

INPATIENT FACILITY ACCESS

Higher out-of-network for behavioral health inpatient compared to medical/surgical.

	2013	2015	2017
NATIONAL	2.83 x	3.85x	5.24 x
MARYLAND	5.50 x	5.60 x	9.35 x
PARITY WOULD BE	1 x	1 x	1 x

Maryland out-of-network inpatient use rose from **5.5 to 9.3 times more likely**—nearly twice the national average.

OUTPATIENT FACILITY ACCESS

Higher out-of-network for behavioral health outpatient facility compared to medical/surgical.

	2013	2015	2017
NATIONAL	2.97 x	5.09 x	5.72 x
MARYLAND	1.96 x	3.55 x	3.66 x
PARITY WOULD BE	1 x	1 x	1 x

Maryland out-of-network outpatient facility use rose from **2 to 3.6 times more likely**.

OFFICE VISIT REIMBURSEMENT

Higher reimbursement for primary care compared to behavioral health relative to Medicare allowed amount.

	2013	2015	2017
NATIONAL	20.70%	20.80%	23.80%
MARYLAND	23.20%	27.20%	18.20%

Maryland behavioral health providers **received 18% less than other doctors** for similar billing codes.

* Excludes behavioral health prescription drugs, which were 2% of total healthcare spending in 2017.