



MHAMD Public Policy Values and Goals

MHAMD advocacy and public policy efforts are rooted in the following values

Access – Everyone should have access to a full range of high-quality, trauma-responsive, culturally and linguistically competent mental health and substance use services and supports when and where needed, regardless of age or insurance status.

Equity – Everyone should have the opportunity to achieve their full health potential, regardless of social position or other socially determined circumstances.

Quality – Service improvement and quality oversight should be driven by quantitative and qualitative patient-centered outcome measurement embedded across health care sectors at both the system and service delivery levels.

Responsiveness to Individual Needs – Maryland’s system of care should be responsive to the unique behavioral health needs of specific populations, including children and youth, families, older adults, veterans, LGBTQ individuals, and justice-involved individuals.

Consumer Empowerment – Recovery from mental health and substance use disorders should be self-directed and person-centered and the voices of people with lived experience should play a central role in the development and implementation of behavioral health policies, practices and procedures.

Community Input – Behavioral health needs and priorities vary across jurisdictions and input from diverse communities is essential to ensuring policies are relevant to and appropriately addressing the needs of those most impacted.

Coordination – Recovery often requires attention to non-medical factors contributing to or resulting from a mental health or substance use disorder, and resources and supports should be coordinated accordingly and appropriately at the service delivery level and across state systems.

Accountability – Transparency and stakeholder input are critical to ensuring a system that meets the needs of the public it serves, and feedback from consumers, families, advocates and other interested parties should be solicited prior to major behavioral health systems changes and policy decisions.

Public Education – Knowledge is power and increased public education and awareness about mental health and substance use disorders is a key to eliminating a stigma that discourages individuals from accessing behavioral health services and supports.

MHAMD will uphold and further these values by advocating for the following

- Service delivery models that allow flexibility in the delivery of care, improve health equity and promote early intervention, recovery and resiliency
- Broad investment in a comprehensive and coordinated community behavioral health system, including a robust network of community mental health and substance use providers and a statewide 24/7 crisis response system
- Policies to expand and diversify the behavioral health workforce
- Equitable insurance coverage that complies with federal and state parity laws
- Reimbursement models that improve health equity and the delivery of behavioral health care in primary and specialty care settings
- Policies and programs that divert individuals with behavioral health needs from justice systems and emergency departments
- Fully staffed and functional state agencies and the efficient administration of vital public support systems
- Expanded access to evidence-based digital therapeutics and other treatment innovations
- Increased public education and awareness programs
- Elimination of systemic and structural inequities that limit access to care and result in a range of negative social determinants of health falling disproportionately on historically underserved communities
- Violence- and coercion-free treatment systems
- Policies that support families in providing their loved ones with consumer-focused and person-centered services
- A system of care that is equitably available, culturally relevant, and responsive to the specific needs of unique populations, including children and youth, older adults, veterans, LGBTQ individuals, and justice-involved individuals