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NCOIL Presentation: Improving Mental Health & Addiction Care By Aligning Providers & Payers Around Generally Accepted Standards of Care

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Mental Health & Addiction Coverage Failing To Meet Americans' Needs

Mental Health Care Access in the U.S. Falls Short

1 in 5 adults had a mental health condition in the past year, yet **MORE THAN 2/3 did not receive treatment.**

Nearly 3 in 4 insured adults who received mental health treatment in the past year **had a problem with their insurance.**

Coverage decisions are often made in a manner inconsistent with generally accepted standards of care.

Mental health and substance use conditions are frequently chronic, requiring treatment of the underlying condition.

Recent Polling Demonstrates Widespread Concern / Support for Increasing Access:

9 in 10 adults believe there is a **growing mental health crisis** in our country.

9 in 10 adults also say that **expanding access to mental health care should be an important priority for elected officials**, including 60% who say it should be a very important priority.

9 in 10 adults support prohibiting insurers from **cutting a patient's mental health care short or imposing arbitrary limits on their care**.



Alignment on Standards Protects Patients, Providers & Payers

“Not Medically Necessary” – Coverage Determinations Often Don’t Follow Generally Standards of Mental Health & Addiction Care

Eight Key Generally Accepted Standards of Care. Effective Treatment Requires:

Treatment of the underlying condition and is not limited to alleviation of the individual’s current symptoms.

Treatment of co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders and/or medical conditions in a coordinated manner.

Treatment at the least intensive and restrictive level of care that is safe and effective.

When there is ambiguity as to the appropriate level of care, the practitioner should err on the side of caution by placing the patient in a higher level of care.

Treatment includes services needed to maintain functioning or prevent deterioration.

The appropriate duration of treatment is based on the individual’s needs; there is no specific limit on the duration of such treatment.

The unique needs of children and adolescents must be taken into account when making decisions regarding the appropriate level of care.

The determination of the appropriate level of care for patients should be made on the basis of a multidimensional assessment that takes into account a wide variety of information about the patient.

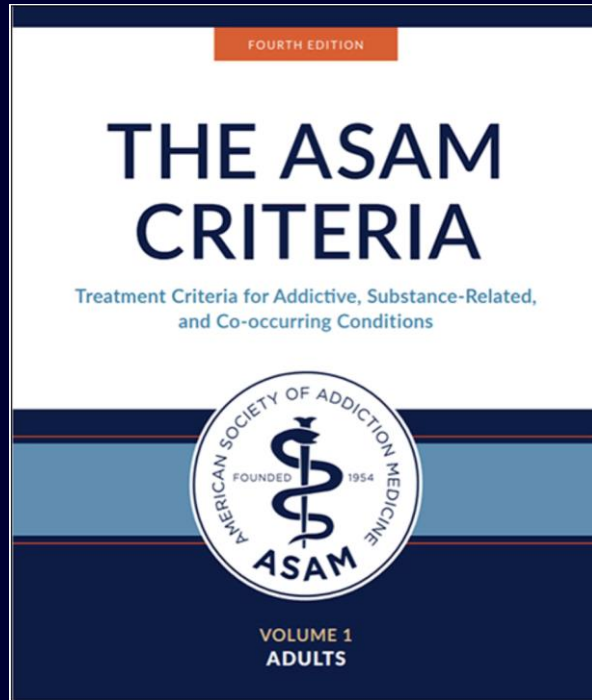
Mental Health & Addiction Treatment Underutilized → Higher Physical Health Care + Social Costs

McKinsey: Approximately **15% of total disease burden** is associated with mental health and substance use disorders.

Milliman: MH/SUD reimbursement is only about **5% of total**. Individuals with mental health and substance use disorders have **2.8 - 6.2 times higher physical health care costs**, yet $\frac{1}{2}$ of these individuals received **less than \$95 of MH/SUD treatment** a year.

Moody's Investors Service: Total healthcare costs for patients with MH/SUD are **over \$12,000 annually**, but just **7.9% of spending is for MH/SUD**. Moody's recommends that insurers invest in MH/SUD treatment to **reduce total healthcare costs and improve competitiveness**.

States Increasingly Aligning Providers and Payers Around High-Quality Standards from Non-Profit Clinical Specialty Associations



For example: The ASAM Criteria.

More than half of states have some requirements that it be used in commercial and/or Medicaid determinations.

If followed, ensures patient receives **appropriate treatment** for the **correct duration of time**.

Improves quality, while protecting protects patients, providers, and payers

For mental health conditions: The Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS) family of criteria from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the American Association of Community Psychiatry.

Resources:

[Prioritizing brain health: Scaling what works to add years to life and life to years](#) (McKinsey Health Institute)

[Access across America: State-by-state insights into the accessibility of care for mental health and substance use disorders](#) (Milliman)

[Improving Mental Health Care: The Access Report](#) (Inseparable)

[Addiction and mental health vs. physical health: Widening disparities in network use and provider reimbursement](#) (Milliman)

[How do individuals with behavioral health conditions contribute to physical and total healthcare spending](#) (Milliman)

[Moody's: Why focusing on behavioral health could give insurers a leg up on the competition](#) (Fierce Healthcare)

[Toward A National Standard for Service Intensity Assessment and Planning for Mental Health Care](#) (National Council for Mental Wellbeing)

[Nationwide Mental Health Poll, November 2023](#) (Impact Research)

Thank You

