



*The mission of NAMI North Carolina is to provide support, education, advocacy, and public awareness so that all affected by mental illness can build better lives.*

## **2018-2022 Policy & Legislative Priorities**

All North Carolinians living with mental illness should have access to an array of services that enhance their quality of life and that will be available to them in a crisis situation. NAMI NC advocates across the lifespan, for children, adolescents, adults and older adults, affected by mental illness.

**1. Develop an informed, grassroots, state-wide network of people living with mental illness and family members to advocate for NAMI NC's public policy platform.**

- *Provide timely information, trainings and tools for NAMI members to help educate and organize local and state-wide advocacy efforts.*

**2. Ensure those who need mental health services receive timely, appropriate, affordable, and high quality care.**

- *Monitor state laws and implementation guidance as Medicaid system changes are made and advocate for policies that are expected to improve care for people living with mental illness.*
- *Advocate for funding and approaches to minimize disruption to people living with mental illness and to educate people living with mental illness and their families/support systems about the new system and choices they will need to make.*
- *Advocate for additional state funding for mental health including restoring cuts to single stream funding.*
- *Monitor Medicaid Expansion Bills and support provisions that improve access to quality mental health care.*
- *Monitor work of NC DHHS task force on Dual Eligibles (Medicare and Medicaid)*
- *Create a behavioral health caucus in the NC General Assembly*

**3. Expand access to crisis care**

- *Promote and expand the use of Psychiatric Advance Directives (PADs) to improve care in crisis situations.*
- *Advocate for CMS Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) "in lieu of" rule to extend permissible community hospital stays under Medicaid for mental illness and to allow Medicaid payment for inpatient care for substance use disorders.*
- *Support EMS and Mobile Crisis programs*
- *Support Child and Adult Facility Based Crisis Centers*
- *Support Behavioral Health Urgent Care Clinics*
- *Advocate for transitional housing and case management for those who are hospitalized, homeless, and mentally ill.*

**4. Advocate for Quality Care and Adequate Resources at State Psychiatric Hospitals**

- *Advocate for funding to open new beds at Broughton State Psychiatric Hospital*
- *Monitor recommendations from NC DHHS study of state psychiatric hospitals.*

**5. Advocate for humane treatment of those with mental illness in the criminal justice system, with emphasis on access to appropriate, recovery-focused mental health treatment along the criminal justice continuum.**

- *Expand mental health services within the prison system, such as the Therapeutic Diversion Units (TDUs).*
- *Advocate for policies that decrease the use of solitary confinement of both youth and adults.*
- *Support policies that strengthen and expand CIT partnerships across the state.*
- *Identify barriers for people with a mental illness re-entering society after being incarcerated and work to reduce.*
- *Advocate for state funding to provide case management for those leaving jail and prison who are at greatest risk of re-entry*
- *Advocate for changes in jail rules to better screen, identify and treat mental illness across county jails.*
- *Advocate for state funding within the budget for mental health services in prisons, detention centers, and probation and parole programs.*

**6. Increase availability for a continuum of stable and affordable housing including supportive housing, respite housing, and quality group homes**

- *Support legislation to provide funding and laws improve the quality of care in group homes.*
- *Support efforts through the DOJ settlement agreement to create and increase availability of affordable supportive housing.*
- *Provide education about the importance of housing in recovery to NAMI members, the general public, and legal guardians.*
- *Advocate for eliminating barriers to housing, including mandatory criminal record and credit reports.*

**7. Improve the quality of life for people living with mental illness through competitive employment and employment supports**

- *Support and expand competitive employment options that are based on the individual's desires and preferences.*