

## California Coalition for Behavioral Health - Agenda for Fairness

The California Coalition for Behavioral Health (CCBH) *Agenda for Fairness* identifies three interrelated public policy priorities that support fair and just treatment for all Californians living with mental illness or substance use disorder.

**ACCESS:** Every person living in California should have access to behavioral health care in the least restrictive and most culturally and linguistically appropriate setting, regardless of age, race, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, family living situation, or immigration status. Behavioral health disparities must be specifically acknowledged and addressed in order to be reduced. Comprehensive behavioral health treatment includes recovery oriented clinical, rehabilitative, and social approaches with linkage to primary care, community services and social support services. Awareness education is integral to access and should include: anti-stigma campaigns and education regarding behavioral health for schools, primary care physicians, and the general public.

**SUSTAINABLE FUNDING:** CCBH is dedicated to assuring full, fair, and adequate funding of the public behavioral health services.

Insurance: CCBH is committed to ensuring comprehensive, flexible behavioral health coverage provided on par with physical health coverage and in a manner that assures continuity and coordination of care. CCBH advocates for parity and health care reform legislation to facilitate interdisciplinary and wrap-around care, to ensure prevention of mental illness or substance use disorder, access to behavioral health care and continuity in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness or substance use disorder.

Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA)/ Mental Health Services Act (MHSA): CCBH supported the passage of the MHSA, worked to inform the BHSA, and continues to track and support implementation to ensure the Act fosters the goal of transforming the public behavioral health system.

Workforce: Sustainable services are also hampered by an ever-increasing shortage of behavioral health professionals in the public behavioral health system and adequate funding for training and placement of service providers is strongly supported.

**SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH:** CCBH supports efforts to ensure that community support levels are provided in a manner that is receptive and welcoming to all individuals and that nobody is discriminated against on the basis of their behavioral health needs or other demographic status. Social issues impact behavioral well-being; understanding the implications of these social issues and addressing them appropriately with trauma informed care principles is essential in understanding and addressing the physical, cognitive, emotional and psychological effects of trauma.

Employment: Individuals with behavioral health and substance use conditions, who have the desire and need to work, must have access to employment resources that provide needed supports in order to seek, obtain and maintain employment in their communities.

Education: Children living with a serious emotional disturbance or substance use disorder must have free and appropriate education, offered in the least restrictive setting. Education offered should be based on the same academic standards as is provided for their peers with appropriate support and accommodations for their behavioral health conditions.

Housing: CCBH supports the availability of safe, clean, affordable and accessible housing for individuals and families living with behavioral health and substance use conditions. Housing should provide a recovery oriented atmosphere and should be integrated into the rich and varied communities of California.

Criminal justice system: CCBH supports efforts to reduce the incarceration of persons living with mental illness or substance use disorder and seeks to assure that while incarcerated and upon release, individuals receive appropriate and necessary medical and behavioral health treatment.