

Advocacy Successes – 2019

The American Psychiatric Association works to provide legislators with guidance on legislation and regulation impacting mental health and substance use disorders to support patients, families and APA members. Despite considerable polarization in the current political environment, APA has worked across party lines to ensure that psychiatry has a strong advocacy voice at the national and state levels. In 2019, APA was successful in advocating for the below priorities (and more):

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY

- APA has provided a roadmap for insurers and regulators to comply with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (federal parity law) through the development of **model mental health parity legislation**.
- APA's mental health parity legislation has been **signed into law** in Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, New Jersey, and Tennessee.
- APA led the effort to have bipartisan parity legislation **introduced in Congress** in both the House and Senate. The legislation enhances the transparency and accountability of a health plan's compliance with the federal parity law to ensure appropriate coverage of mental health and substance use disorder services under the law.

REIMBURSEMENT

APA's advocacy resulted in Medicare increasing payments by 7% to psychiatrists for evaluation & management (E/M) outpatient services in 2021.

COLLABORATIVE CARE MODEL

Illinois became the first state to sign into law APA drafted state model legislation requiring private insurance coverage of Collaborative Care codes; other states are planning to introduce similar legislation soon. Also, successful advocacy to several state Medicaid agencies on acceptance of the codes.

FEDERAL FUNDING

Secured increased funding for mental health and substance use disorder programs through NIH, CDC, and SAMHSA including; minority fellowship program, workforce grants and block grants for prevention and treatment.

MEDICARE PART D

APA successfully advocated against a proposal to weaken Medicare's six protected classes, which would have undermined patient access to the full range of medications.

For more information and ways to get involved please visit [psychiatry.org/advocacy](https://www.psychiatry.org/advocacy) or contact advocacy@psych.org.