

***NOW IS
THE TIME!***

2024 Behavioral Health Legislative Update



April 2024

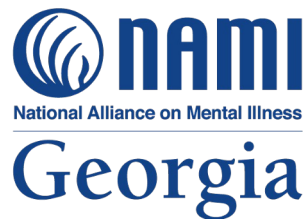




Kim H. Jones

Executive Director, NAMI Georgia
Founding Partner, GMHPP

Founding Member, BH Services Coalition
Member, BH Reform and Innovation Committee



Georgia Mental Health Policy Partnership (GMHPP)

A coalition representing the largest constituency of Georgia's peer and recovery communities to reform and advance Georgia's Behavioral Health system, to improve outcomes and lives of peers.



In 2024, 90 organizations signed on:

ACCG
Advocates of the South
AFSP
AmeriHealth Caritas GA
Balanced Living
Beal Wellness
BHSC
Black Butterfly queens
Bridge Health
Carelon
Carter Center
Center for Victims
Chatham County Safety Net
Chris 180
Cigna
Cobb Collaborative
Community Friendship Inc
Coweta FORCE
CPACS
DBHDD
DPI Decatur
DPI Rockdale
El Doctor Mancini

Fayette Factor
Forsyth County Drug Awareness Council
GA Addiction Counselors Association
GA Appleseed
GA Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
GA Commission on Women
GA Council for Recovery
GA CSB
GA First
GA MHCN
GA Mountains Health
GA National Guard Counterdrug Task Force
GA Prevention Project
GA Psychiatric Physicians Assoc
GA PTA
GA Recovers
GA Society for Clinical Social Workers
GA Supportive Housing Association
GAAAP
GAPA
GBPI
GEEARS
Georgians for Healthy Futures

Georgians for Responsible Marijuana Policy
GMHPP
GPA
GPSN
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies
Highland Rivers Behavioral Health
Kerry
Langston & Langston LLC
Let's Be Clear
LPCA Georgia
MH Support Network
MHA Georgia
Multicultural Development Institute
NAMI GA
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Nichols Center
One Johns Creek
Pathways2Life
Postpartum Support Network
Power Up
Presbyterians for a Better GA
Public Policy Club
Reboot Jackson

Refined Lives
Reliant
Resilient Coastal GA
Resilient GA
Riverwoods Behavioral Health
Rockdale Drug Free Community Coalition
Rubberband Mentality
Sage Therapeutics
Shekinah Counseling
Silence the Shame
SilverCare - UPSON RMC
Skyland Trail
The COuncil on Alcohol and Drugs
The Mancini Method
The Never ALone Clubhouse
The Temple
UAPRN Gwinnett-Forsyth
UGA Extension Service
Viewpoint Health
Voices for GA's Children
Youth MOVE GA

GMHPP 2024 Priorities:



1. Increasing Behavioral Healthcare Workforce

1. Improve Maternal Mental Health

1. Enable and Fund EmPATH Units

1. Increase Forensic Services and Decriminalize Mental Illness

Historical Investment into Mental Health



- State funds *increased* from \$1.498B to **\$1.653B**.
- **Total funds** with Federal dollars are **\$2.067B**.
 - *An increase of \$255M in State dollars.*
 - Full funding for the DBHDD and DCH rate studies.
 - Some DCH rate increases affect mental health providers.

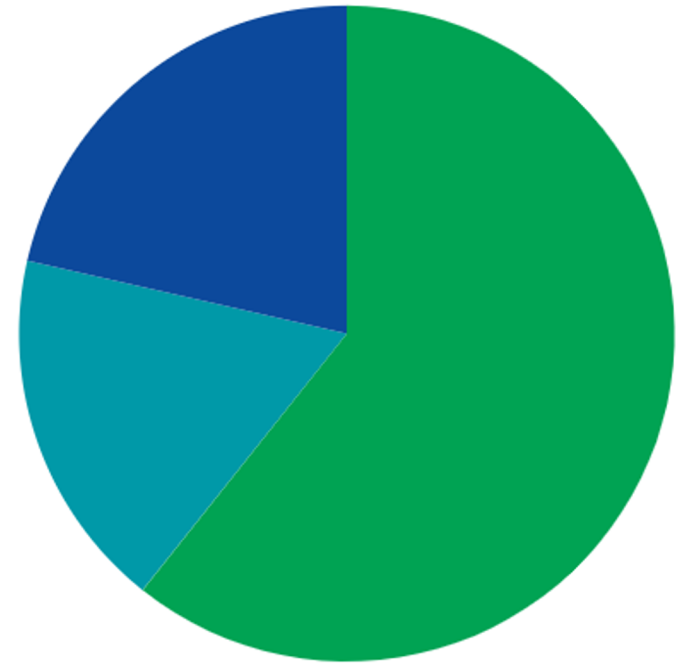
2024 - A Record Year for Mental Health

■ Bills dropped ■ Crossed over ■ Passed

Bills related to Mental Health: 84+

MH Bills crossed over: 33

MH Bills Passed: 18



1. Increasing BH Workforce & Access

BILLS PASSED:

SB 195

Social Work Licensure Compact

HB 991

Extend sunset provision in Medicaid Financing for Hospitals (from 2025 to 2030)

SB 373

Expedited licensure of a marriage and family therapist

SB 377

licensing of residential treatment program

SB 480

student loan repayment (**HB 520**)

HB 557

authority to certain nurses and physician assistants to prescribe Schedule II controlled substances;

HB 451

supplemental, illness-specific insurance for first responders with occupational PTSD

HB 1083

adult residential mental health services licensing; extend grace periods

2. Improve Maternal Mental Health

BILLS PASSED:

HB 1046

create the Georgia Commission on
Maternal and Infant Health;

HB 1010

Paid parental leave for state employees

PROPOSED BUT NOT PASSED:

HB 1302

Maternal Mental Health Screenings

3. Enable and Fund EmPATH Units

BILLS PASSED:

HB 1344

Allow delegates for the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council; allow waiver of certain requirements for mental health licensed in other jurisdictions; repeal DBHDD annual report requirement (**HB 520**)

PROPOSED BUT NOT PASSED:

HB 913

The EmPATH Georgia Act

4. Increase Forensic Services and Decriminalize Mental Illness

BILLS PASSED:

SB 533

jail-based competency restoration services

(HB 520)

HB 181

List mitragynine and hydroxymitragynine as Schedule I controlled substances and remove certain Kratom regulations

HB 1165

replace chairperson of the Governor's Office of Children and Families with the commissioner of the DBHDD

HB 873

juvenile treatment court diversions

Other Behavioral Health Bills:

BILLS PASSED:

SB 375

Add the Commissioner of Veterans Services to the BHCC

SB 395

Narcan in Schools

HB 218

sexual assault hearsay for disabled adults and 17 year olds; provide

HB 1073

Repeal provision allowing 6-9 month extension of zoning determination period for substance use halfway houses

Increasing Access To Care - Closing the Coverage Gap

- Medicaid is the largest payer for mental health and substance use condition services, providing health coverage to more than one in four American adults with a serious mental illness or substance abuse.
- **Over 1.3 million** Georgians are affected by a mental illness, yet **61%** of adults in Georgia with mental health conditions **go without treatment.**
- **Medicaid coverage ensures children receive** mental health screenings, and reduces psychological distress and depression among low-income adults.



Closing the Coverage Gap:

BILL PASSED:

HB 1339

CON; tax credits for contributions to rural hospitals;
establish Comprehensive Health Coverage Commission

PROPOSED, BUT NOT PASSED:

HB 1077

Create the PeachCare Plus Program

SB 487

Medicaid Waiver Expansion

YOUR VOICE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Email:
advocacy@namiga.org



Have you or a family member been impacted by Medicaid Coverage ?

Share your story today !

email advocacy@namiga.org for more info



Those who participate have a chance to receive a \$75 gift card!

Educate and Advocate

Educate (Yourself)

Take the **NAMISmarts** class

Learn the issues

Stay current

Follow NAMI Georgia Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and visit the NAMI Georgia website's Advocacy page

Advocate

Meet your legislators

Help them put a face to a name

Call/email/text/tweet your legislators

Join us at the Capitol for crucial days

Mental Health Day , Committee

Hearings, Local Legislator Meetings

Respond to 📣 **ACT NOW** 📣 emails



📣 **ACT NOW** 📣 ; **Advocacy Alert will be the subject line** for every grassroots action email we send out. Advocates will receive emails about specific actions, pre-populated with advocacy messages to their legislators. All that's needed is an advocate's email and zip code. There is a pre-filled email templates addressed to the advocate's legislators. Simply hit send and you're done!

Questions?



Interested in having an Advocacy or Legislative update for your community or organization?

Scan here to fill out the request form:

