

# The Mental Health Safety Net Coalition



Alliance of Community Service Providers

Brook Glen Behavioral Hospital

Clarion Psychiatric Center

Conference of Allegheny Providers (CAP)

Fairmount Behavioral Health System

Family Training and Advocacy Center (FTAC)

Foundations Behavioral Health

Friends Hospital

Horsham Clinic

Keystone Center

Lancaster Behavioral Health Hospital

MAX Association

Meadows Psychiatric Center

Mental Health Association of PA (MHA)

National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Keystone PA

Pennsylvania Association of County Administrators of Mental Health and Developmental Services (PACA MH/DS)

Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumer Association (PMHCA)

Pennsylvania Psychiatric Leadership Council (PPLC)

Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association (RCPA)

The Roxbury Treatment Center

Treatment Advocacy Center

## Community Hospital Integration Projects Program (“CHIPP”): Another Promise Broken

“Every individual served by the mental health and substance abuse service system will have the opportunity for growth, recovery, and inclusion in their community, have access to culturally competent services and supports of their choice, and enjoy a quality of life that includes family and friends.” — OMHSAS Mission Statement/Olmstead Plan

### The Promise

The Community Hospital Integration Projects Program (CHIPP) was intended to build community capacity and infrastructure necessary for individuals to be treated and supported in their communities. The state could close psychiatric beds and save money, while people would be happier and better adjusted in their home communities, closer to their families and other natural supports. People treated in the community setting rely on county-funded services to maintain their recovery.

Since CHIPP was first established in 1991, through Fiscal Year (FY) 2019/20, there have been 3,626 state hospital beds closed as individuals transferred to the community for services. The program continues and is currently helping to address forensic concerns noted in the ACLU lawsuit settlement and the closure of Norristown Hospital.

### The Reality

OMHSAS uses CHIPP to implement their Olmstead agreement: to enable individuals to live in the least restrictive environment. Consequently, each year there is a CHIPP initiative in the budget. Each year there are more state hospital beds closed; however, one psychiatric hospital bed is used by two or three people in the course of a year. That means for FY 2022/23, there will be between 7,252 and 10,878 individuals in the community who have been diverted from a state psychiatric bed with no corresponding funding for services in the community. This problem is compounded by over a decade of level funding for county community-based mental health services.

### A Promise Broken

As a result of the continued closure of state psychiatric hospital beds, along with a failure to adequately fund community-based mental health services, the Commonwealth has allowed the CHIPP program to fail for Pennsylvanians with mental illness. With the loss of these state resources/state hospital beds, the burden has increased on community-based services. The signs are all around us:

- Increased emergency department visits for mental health concerns;
- Increased number of individuals with mental illnesses in prisons and jails; and
- Increased number of people with mental illness who are homeless.

### What’s Next for CHIPP?

The Coalition urges the General Assembly to, at the very least, support the \$36.6 million increase in county-based mental health funding proposed by the Governor for FY 2022/23. Further, we urge policymakers to recognize and consider the ongoing impact of the closure of state psychiatric beds on the demand for community-based mental health services.