



Coalition Briefs

FLASH

BREAKING NEWS ABOUT COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH IN NEW YORK

State mental health budget passes Legislature!

3% COLA and 10% Medicaid hike to start 12/1!

Earlier today, the State Legislature passed and Governor Pataki is expected to sign, a new State budget for Fiscal Year 2002-2003. This budget includes needed increases for the community mental health sector. Of greatest significance is a 10% Medicaid fee increase and a 3% cost of living adjustment, though these will not begin until December 1. Nonetheless, Coalition members are pleased that Albany has begun to address the needs of the community mental health sector.

The 10% Medicaid fee increase will go to all Article 31 programs—Clinic, Day Treatment, Continuing Day Treatment, IPRT, and Partial Hospitalization programs. The children's day treatment rate will be raised to the same levels as other clinic services.

While details are still coming in, it appears that the COLA will be on State aid, COPS and Community Services in community mental health. This includes residential programs like CRs, RCCAs, Supported Housing, and CR/SROs, as well as case management (including ACT teams), family-based treatment, and programs that are net-deficit financed. In addition, the Reinvestment funding line will receive the COLA, as will COPs, non-COPs, and CSS supplements.

Although these increases are on the aggregate budget, agencies will have to attest, in a manner to be determined by Mental Health Commissioner James Stone, that “such funding will be or was used to promote the recruitment and retention of staff during the 2002-2003 state fiscal year.”

The budget also includes:

- restoration of 30 shared-staff positions
- 3% COLA for substance abuse
- \$5-\$7 million to OASAS for the transition into the consolidated rate.

Stay tuned for more details. Thanks Albany for listening! Thanks to legislators! □

