

Mental Health Parity Project Overview

Why this project

Historically, insurance companies and health care services plans have provided mental health and substance abuse treatment that is not equal to physical health treatment, provided fewer services, placed restrictions on services, and required more out of pocket payments. Both state and federal legislators enacted laws that prevent inequality of coverage. Few are aware of the right to equal coverage or how to advocate for it. This prevents people from getting the help they need. This project explains the law and helps people obtain mental health parity from their health plans.

Type of project and how it is funded

Disability Rights California has a statewide prevention and early intervention (PEI) stigma and discrimination reduction grant. This is one of the many PEI projects funded by county/CalMHSA/Proposition 63 funds.

Goals of the project

We educate and advocate California's diverse communities about mental health parity laws to prevent and reduce discrimination. We use a range of strategies such as:

- Developing fact sheets on mental health parity
- Providing training about legal rights
- Participating in stakeholder meetings to effect systemic change
- Representing people when coverage for mental health is not comparable to that provided for physical health

- Distributing culturally relevant and age appropriate materials

Materials

Fact sheets are available on mental health parity. To access our materials go to <http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/CalMHSA/CalMHSAParity.html>.

Training

Disability Rights California trains on mental health parity both in-person and through webinars.

Individual Representation

Staff are available to discuss individual mental health parity issues, provide counsel and advice, provide technical assistance in filing complaints and in select cases raising systemic issues provide direct representation.

Contact Information

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Disability Rights California is funded by a variety of sources, for a complete list of funders, go to <http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/Documents/ListofGrantsAndContracts.html>.

The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) is an organization of county governments working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities. Prevention and Early Intervention programs implemented by CalMHSA are funded by counties through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63). Prop. 63 provides the funding and framework needed to expand mental health services to previously underserved populations and all of California's diverse communities.



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