

2024

Annual Report



MAMH
Massachusetts Association
for Mental Health



mamh.org
+617.742.7452
50 Federal Street
6th Floor
Boston, MA 02110



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Clifford Beers started a national and international mental hygiene movement in 1905 and led the establishment of MAMH in 1913

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REMEMBERING
Cliff Robinson
OUR FRIEND

We lost an important member of our community last year. A dedicated and involved co-chair of the MAMH Community Board of Advisors, Cliff was a guiding light in mental health care across the Commonwealth. He was a lifelong advocate, an active member of the Cambridge community, a lover of opera, and a connoisseur of food and wine. He will be deeply missed by all of us.

Special thanks to members of the MAMH Board committees, including the Executive Committee, Audit and Finance Committee, and Friend and Leader Planning Committee for their work and dedication this year to ensure the success of MAMH.

FROM MAMH LEADERSHIP



COLLECTIVE ACTION TO ADVANCE CHANGE TO END DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND HEALTH BENEFITS THAT ASSURE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING

As we prepare the MAMH Annual Report for 2024, we are grateful for the opportunity to reflect on the impact of our work. At MAMH, we are shoulder to shoulder with our Board, partners, funders, donors, and supporters joined in a shared purpose to make change for people. Together we work tirelessly, equipped with knowledge and inspired by the people we represent to advocate for beneficial policies and secure program investments that support people at risk for and living with mental health conditions.

Collective action rooted in reliable knowledge and sound solutions advances useful change that serves our constituents. MAMH gathers, analyzes, sometimes generates, and then disseminates the knowledge upon which we and our partners rely to illuminate challenges facing our constituents who are children, youth, adults, and older adults from all cultural, racial, and economic communities in the Commonwealth. We conduct policy studies, frame evidence-based solutions, and test innovation in the service of systemic reforms that will protect and promote mental health and well being for individuals, their families, and their communities. We are grateful to our partners – constituents, policymakers, providers, payers, funders, and fellow advocates – for the collaboration that is key to affecting change and driving impact to end disparities in opportunities and access.

Groundbreaking reforms achieved in recent years require careful cultivation and complete implementation to realize full benefits for our constituents. MAMH and our partners worked in 2024, and will work in the years ahead, to secure the full promise of groundbreaking system reforms implemented via executive and legislative actions of the last decade. Implementation is not yet complete and will be achieved with persistent effort to remove regulatory and financial barriers to fully integrated operations of the envisioned care system. We are grateful to public policymakers and system leaders for their commitment to completing the transformation envisioned for care systems.

While the precincts of human need do not align with the silos of bureaucracy, people in need must rely on reforms that integrate care at the service delivery level. For this reason, MAMH collaborates with bureaucracies in health care, economic development, social welfare, public education, and criminal legal systems. Robust partnerships across multiple sectors enable progress. Together we will achieve on behalf of our constituents an equitable and accessible system that addresses promotion and prevention, assures timely intervention and treatment, and supports recovery for all people across the lifespan. We are grateful to the providers and organizations on the front lines who integrate their efforts to better serve people with complex needs.

At MAMH we know our past, understand the present, and analyze emerging knowledge to inform our future. In 2025, MAMH will come together with Board and Staff to engage stakeholders, constituents, partners, funders, and community leaders to develop a new Strategic Plan. The plan will frame our vision, mission, and goals, and detail the strategies and tactics we will employ to continue our efforts end disparities in rights, conditions, and systems. In the words of the Ancient Greek Philosopher Heraclitus, the only constant in life is change. Every day we – **Educate – Mobilize – Advocate** – for change.

Danna Mauch, PhD
December 2024

Ambassador (ret.) Barry White
December 2024

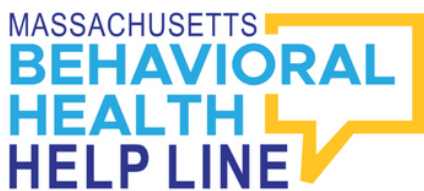
GOAL 1

SERVE AS AN EFFECTIVE CHANGE AGENT TO ADVANCE THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM REFORM

2024 marked the second full year of implementation of the Commonwealth's [Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform](#), including the launch of the Behavioral Health Help Line (Help Line), Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs), and Behavioral Health Urgent Care Providers. MAMH actively partners with state agencies and community stakeholders to help ensure its efficient and effective implementation.



MAMH serves as an active member of the Behavioral Health Help Line Advisory Council, sharing recommendations and guidance to inform the continuous improvement process for the Help Line, which handled over 32,000 calls from January through September 2024. Themes from meetings in the past year included **cultural responsiveness, caller safety, referrals and follow-ups, and marketing.**

Call or text now
833-773-2445

Visit masshelpline.com to chat



With the expansion of mental health and substance use urgent care services at both CBHCs and the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Providers, residents of the Commonwealth are now, more than ever before, able to access **same-day or next-day care and urgent appointments.** In addition to urgent care, CBHCs also offer a comprehensive array of services including individual and group therapy, mobile crisis intervention, community crisis stabilization, and more. There are [31 CBHC locations](#) and [65 urgent care sites](#) across the state offering extended hours on weekdays and weekends.

Implementation of the Roadmap began in FY2023, and much has been achieved since then, but like any major system reform effort, there is a need for ongoing monitoring for accountability and continuous quality improvement. MAMH submitted **a report on the state of Crisis Services in the Commonwealth** with our co-author the [Technical](#)

[Assistance Collaborative \(TAC\)](#) to the Community Policing and Behavioral Health Advisory Council in June of 2023. The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, with its co-author Manatt, issued a [Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform: Overview and Implementation Update](#) in August of 2024. Both reports contain significant recommendations for **capitalizing on early Roadmap implementation efforts**, and MAMH works to advance implementation referencing the findings of these reports, testing with our experience and that of our partners, in shaping our public policy and change advocacy agenda.



URGENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS may be indicated by changes in behavior or thinking, role dysfunction, emerging intent of self-injury, or threats to others, but do not include immediate risk of harm to self or others.

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ADULT EMERGENCY ROOM DIVERSION INITIATIVE

MAMH and its partners secured a \$3.75M increase (over FY24) to support the Department of Mental Health Adult Emergency Department (ED) Diversion Initiative which seeks to **alleviate the ongoing challenges associated with ED boarding** by swiftly transitioning people with mental health conditions currently boarding in EDs to community-based treatment and by preventing potential ED visits in the first place. The initiative demonstrates a commitment towards **community-based mental health support** and the reduction of systemic pressures on EDs, benefiting both individuals in crisis and the healthcare system at large.

The program has a proven track record of reaching people and is cost-effective. In FY25, the budget allows for funding to existing programs to be annualized and for **five new programs to be opened across the state**.

PARITY

Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2022 included a range of provisions to enhance enforcement of parity provisions designed to **ensure that mental health insurance coverage is comparable to medical care insurance coverage**. It is important at this stage to monitor implementation of these reforms, as progress has been uneven. For that reason, MAMH is pleased with a requirement included in the FY25 budget that the Division of Insurance (DOI) must submit a report to the Legislature, no later than January 8, 2025, outlining actions taken to comply with the mental health parity provisions established in Chapter 177. The language explicitly requires that the DOI report an analysis of parity law compliance progress since Chapter 177 took effect in: evaluations and resolutions of consumer complaints alleging a carrier's non-compliance with state and federal laws; and in the performance of behavioral health parity compliance **market conduct examinations** (see more at right). ➔

Market conduct examinations are an important tool used by states to assess compliance of health plans and insurers with the state and federal parity laws and to investigate specific parity violations.



MAMH and its partners were also successful in **maintaining behavioral health representation on the Health Policy Commission (HPC) board**. A proposal had been put forward to reorganize the HPC board, including eliminating the member with expertise in behavioral health, substance use, and mental health services. This would have been deleterious to advancing the Commonwealth's behavioral health system reform efforts, and ensuring that the needs of people living with behavioral health conditions and their families were represented on this governing body. Fortunately, the Legislature passed *An Act enhancing the market review process* just days before the close of the 2023-2024 legislative session. With passage of this new law, **the behavioral health representative will remain on the HPC board and will be appointed moving forward by the Attorney General**.

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WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2022 established the state's **Behavioral Health Advisory Commission**, which made recommendations on disbursement of **funds in Behavioral Health Trust Fund money**. MAMH President and CEO Danna Mauch joined other Commission members in examining strategies and formulating recommendations to ensure the Fund is used as intended to address barriers to the delivery of an "equitable, culturally competent, affordable and clinically appropriate continuum of behavioral health care and services." Most of the Commission's recommendations for how to spend the \$192M in the Fund concerned **strengthening the behavioral health workforce, including:**

- \$100M in investments in **loan forgiveness in exchange for a four year service commitment**,
- \$25M for a scholarship program, which prioritizes the recruitment of culturally and linguistically diverse workforce,
- \$20M in support for clinical supervision of students pursuing degrees in behavioral health,
- \$500,000 in funding for a **comprehensive analysis of rates paid for behavioral health services**, and
- \$500,000 in funding for a study of licensure and certification processes for the behavioral health workforce, which also included a demographic analysis of the current workforce.

Recommendations also include scholarships and stipends to support unpaid clinical hours required for completing educational requirements or obtaining certification or licensure. These investments are particularly important for **advancing health equity** by supporting students of color and students who speak a language other than English.

A strong, stable and culturally responsive workforce is foundational to an effective behavioral health system.

MAMH also supported creation of a new Behavioral Health Workforce Center within the Health Policy Commission. The Center will develop a plan to **recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, experienced behavioral health workforce**, and which can provide linguistically and culturally tailored care across the Commonwealth, prioritizing rural and underserved communities. A Behavioral Health Workforce Center Advisory Group will guide the Center, of which MAMH was recently invited to be a member.

MAMH is pleased to report success in its efforts to secure **\$5 million in loan forgiveness dollars in the Fiscal Year 2024 Close-Out Supplemental budget**. These dollars are targeted to help approximately **100 clinical behavioral health professionals and case managers** in DMH-operated programs in exchange for a four-year service commitment at designated DMH sites. Funding will prioritize staff of color and staff that speak a language other than English.

Behavioral health workforce shortages have contributed to **reduced access** to timely, appropriate, culturally competent outpatient care.

Barriers to community-based care have increased avoidable, and costly, ED visits.

Simultaneously, inpatient and post-acute/long-term care **staffing shortages have reduced the number of available beds** for behavioral health treatment.

Strengthening and diversifying the behavioral health workforce is a critical strategy for improving equitable access to behavioral health for all MA residents.

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SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Massachusetts urgently needs to **provide prompt and effective housing options** to individuals with disabling mental health conditions who are experiencing chronic homelessness and housing instability. Permanent **housing is critical to both engaging in effective treatment and achieving and maintaining recovery**. Significant investments were made in safe and affordable housing programs in 2024.

The Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Rental Subsidy Program (RSP) is a rental voucher program designed to help those living with severe and disabling mental health conditions who are experiencing homelessness and are DMH clients. In 2024, MAMH led advocacy resulting in **\$4.3M in additional funding for the DMH RSP** in FY25, the largest increase in funding for the program in recent history.

265 

Increased funding for the DMH Rental Subsidy Program means that 265 people with mental health conditions now have safe, secure housing to support their recovery.



On August 6, 2024, Governor Maura Healey signed into law the *Affordable Homes Act* (the Act) to address the state's housing challenges. As the **most expansive housing bond bill ever filed** in Massachusetts, the Act both designates funding for housing programs and includes policy provisions to promote housing production and access.

Among its many provisions, the Act creates a Supportive Housing Pool Fund (the Fund) to support the **production of permanent supportive housing**, a critical component in addressing the complex needs of people with mental health conditions. By providing stable, affordable housing combined with access to supportive services like counseling, case management, and health care, this model creates a foundation for individuals to focus on their overall health and wellbeing.

The Act, and the inclusion of the Fund, represents the collaborative efforts of many people including individuals with lived experience and their families, advocates – such as the Supportive Housing Pipeline Coalition and it's more than 80 cross-sector partners – and political leaders. The bill's strength comes from the diversity of housing issues it seeks to address and the incorporation of ideas of people working on these issues year after year. The changes this bill will bring will be felt for years to come.



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CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM REFORM

People with mental health conditions are significantly overrepresented in every aspect of the criminal legal system. MAMH aims to ensure that Massachusetts develops **innovative services that protect people from entry into the criminal legal system**, and actively divert individuals from arrest, adjudication, and incarceration wherever possible. Once in that system MAMH advocates that individuals receive the treatment they want and need, that services are provided in a way that is fair and respectful, and that support is available to ensure successful re-entry into the community. In 2024, MAMH sought reforms at Bridgewater State Hospital, improved services under Section 35 involuntary civil commitment for substance use treatment, and changes to the process by which people are evaluated for competency to stand trial to increase the opportunity to conduct those evaluations in the community.

SECTION 35

Massachusetts is one of more than 30 states that allow civil commitment of an individual who has an alcohol or substance use condition and poses a risk of serious harm to themselves or another person (known in Massachusetts as Section 35) but is the only state that allows commitment to a prison or jail, rather than a therapeutic environment. On December 24, 2024, Governor Healey signed a substance use omnibus bill that expands access to therapeutic, community-based substance use treatment services; among the bill's reforms is a provision to shift, over the next two years, Section 35 commitments for men out of the Department of Correction's Massachusetts Alcohol and Substance Abuse Center facility in Plymouth and into community-based programs. This is a key step in MAMH's efforts to ensure that all people subject to Section 35 court orders receive services in non-carceral, health care facilities. Equally important, MAMH continues to support safe consumption sites, low-threshold housing, and expansion of voluntary substance use treatment services that provide person-centered care and use peer supports.

BRIDGEWATER STATE HOSPITAL

Bridgewater State Hospital (BSH) serves men with serious psychiatric conditions who have pending criminal charges or convictions, or who have been found to lack criminal responsibility. Massachusetts stands as the only state with its secure forensic psychiatric hospital run by a state Department of Correction (DOC), rather than the state department of mental health. MAMH has persistently advocated for an end to this practice. In 2024, MAMH accelerated work with our advocacy partners on legislation to transfer the control of BSH from the DOC to the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. Together we advanced the bill to the Ways and Means Committee before the legislative session expired. The legislation will be refiled in the upcoming session. We also advocated with the Administration to secure no less than \$1M for the Department of Capital Asset Management's study on feasible options to serve patients in a more therapeutic environment than BSH.

CST

Forensic evaluations of criminal defendants' competency to stand trial (CST) are increasing across the state. These cases put an additional strain on the mental health system as forensic patients fill continuing care psychiatric beds, contributing to the problems of emergency department boarding. To address this crisis, MAMH continued its advocacy in support of legislation drafted and filed in 2023. The bill would enable individuals to receive competency evaluations and criminal determinations in community-based settings, such as court clinics, by requiring DMH to establish new capacity to conduct the evaluations in such settings. Currently, many find themselves in DMH-operated continuing care facilities to receive their determinations, despite not requiring inpatient care. This legislation will be refiled in the upcoming legislative session.

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MIDDLESEX COUNTY RESTORATION CENTER

The Middlesex County Restoration Center is on track to open its doors to the public in 2026. The Center is the culmination of years of research, planning, and advocacy by the Middlesex County Restoration Commission, co-chaired by Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian and MAMH's Danna Mauch. It will offer a reception, evaluation, and admission to respite or crisis stabilization beds, **a critical alternative to hospitalization, arrest, and incarceration for people experiencing mental health or substance use crisis** in New England's most populous county. In 2024, the state selected Vinfen as the vendor to develop and operate the Center and Vinfen is working with the Commission, state and local officials to complete implementation planning steps to operationalize the Center.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

MAMH serves as an executive member of the Children's Mental Health Campaign (CMHC), a statewide network advocating for policy, systems, and practice solutions to ensure all children in Massachusetts have access to **resources to prevent, diagnose, and treat mental health conditions** in a timely, effective, and compassionate way.

Significant accomplishments, supported and advocated for by MAMH and its CMHC partners, in the FY25 budget include:

- \$500K for the UMass BIRCh Project for the operation of the School-Based Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center to aid school administrators, teachers, and staff in the implementation of **school-based supports and services**.
- \$5M for the development of a statewide **birth-through-higher-education framework for mental and behavioral health**.
- \$3.875M for the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project (MCPAP), including \$675K for MCPAP for Moms to address the **mental health and substance use condition concerns of pregnant and postpartum people**.
- \$3.3M for Health Law Advocates' Mental Health Access Program for Kids.

The CMHC is also working to **identify need areas and barriers to care** for children and youth with co-occurring autism spectrum disorder and mental health concerns. Current work by the policy accelerator workgroup includes refining a set of actionable, high-impact solutions to help children and youth access the range of services and supports they need to thrive based on input received from state policy makers, providers, families, advocates, and other stakeholders.



Massachusetts Association for Mental Health

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The Joint Committee on Education has extended its deadline for consideration of H.497/S.240 to TODAY (3/15)! This bill would ensure that mental and emotional health are included as part of a comprehensive health curriculum taught to all K-12 students across Massachusetts.

MAMH's [Jessica Larochelle](#) and [Madelyn Brogan, MPH](#), youth advocate [Carson Domey](#), and [Courtney Chelo](#) with the Children's Mental Health Campaign (not pictured) visited the State House earlier this week to meet with Committee members asking for their support of the bill.

Together, let's make a difference in the lives of youth across the Commonwealth! Take action now: <https://ow.ly/cbeo50QumLf>

Thank you bill sponsors Rep. Natalie Higgins (pictured), Rep. Meghan Kilcoyne, and Sen. Nick Collins for your dedication and leadership!



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1 comment

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OLDER ADULT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

MAMH actively promotes behavioral health and wellness across the lifespan. With generous support from the Point32Health Foundation, MAMH leads the Older Adult Behavioral Health Network (OABHN) to **increase the visibility of older adult behavioral health** through advocacy, workforce development, and public education. During the past year, OABHN has:

- Hosted an annual conference for the older adult and behavioral health workforce. This year's conference focused on **cultivating leaders to influence policy, programs, and public understanding of the mental health needs of older adults**;
- Brought together aging and disability advocates to raise awareness about the needs of the diverse population of older adults across the Commonwealth; and
- Co-facilitated How Much is Too Much? with AARP Massachusetts and the MA Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR), a public education series for older adults, families, and caregivers.



Classifying over-finding and keeping as “hoarding” can be detrimental to those seeking and offering help. People aren’t helped by labels, they are helped by **education, support, and a constructive, compassionate approach** to managing their clutter regardless of the causes.

HOARDING RESOURCE NETWORK

Preventing homelessness and offering robust community support is an investment in the well being and stability of both individuals and the community at large. This year MAMH received a grant from the MA Community Health and Healthy Aging funds to launch the Massachusetts Hoarding Resource Network (MHRN) to support **housing stabilization, healthy community living, and eviction prevention**. This work includes:

- Conducting a landscape analysis to identify system strengths, gaps, and opportunities to build **more effective, coordinated models of care**;
- Training bilingual facilitators to lead peer support groups in Gateway Cities to **expand the capacity of organizations to address cultural and linguistic barriers to care**; and
- Education to build self-advocacy across systems by **increasing awareness of tenant rights and reasonable accommodations** for people with invisible disabilities.

GOAL 2

DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC TO END DISCRIMINATION



HOUSING BRIEF

MAMH released a working Issue Brief focused on the lack of affordable housing in the Commonwealth for adults living with mental health conditions. The Brief, ***People Are Still Waiting - 2024***, includes a discussion of the affordable housing crisis, the most common configurations of housing and types of support services, key players in the development of affordable housing units, and sources of affordable housing funding. The research, analysis, framing, and drafting of this seminal report was made possible by support from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health.



In each of these areas, the Brief presents the current situation and pending proposals to **improve access to affordable housing for people living with serious mental health conditions**, as well as MAMH's recommendations. Some of these recommendations would create **housing opportunities for a wider group of people** – low-income people who need affordable housing – and others would create **housing opportunities specifically for people living with mental health conditions**. The Brief also contains an extensive Appendix describing key Massachusetts and federal programs referenced in the brief, catalogued by type and contextualized.

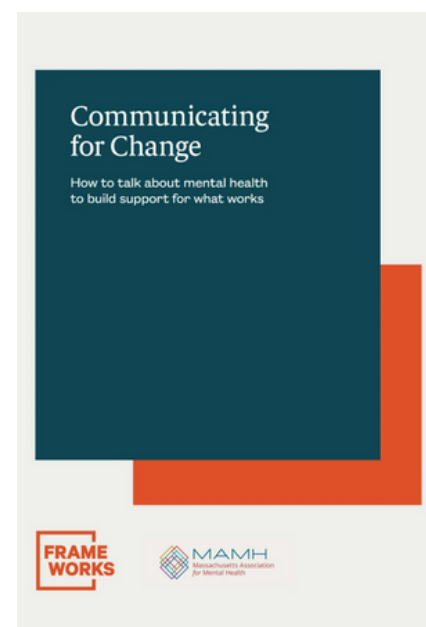
The Brief and an accessible Executive Summary were disseminated in May 2024 as part of MAMH's advocacy, with its housing advocacy partners, in support of the Affordable Homes Act, passed by the Massachusetts Legislature and signed into law by Governor Healy on August 6, 2024.

COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE

Communicating effectively helps us build and shape support for mental health policies and programs that work. That's why, in partnership with the Frameworks Institute, MAMH is offering training, tools, and **resources to help advocates and organizations communicate more effectively** to boost knowledge, shift attitudes, and build support for mental health and wellness.

MAMH conducted a pilot ***Communicating for Change: How to Talk About Mental Health to Build Support for What Works*** training with members of the Parent/Professional Advocacy League in spring 2024. Feedback was very positive, with most attendees reporting they gained valuable knowledge they'd use in future work and advocacy communications. MAMH is pursuing additional funding to expand outreach and free trainings across the Commonwealth.

The *Communicating for Change* Toolkit and training is available through MAMH and made possible by generous support from the Helen Ladd Bracket Trust.



GOAL 2

DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC TO END DISCRIMINATION



CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

Student Access to Behavioral Health Urgent Care (BHUC)

With funding from Mass General Brigham, the American Endowment Foundation, and the Charles F. and Beatrice D. Adams Charitable Trust, MAMH provided grants to seven Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs) to partner with schools in their service areas to provide **key components of Pediatric Behavioral Health Urgent Care to K-12 students**. This grant program, known as Facilitating Student Access to Pediatric Behavioral Health Urgent Care, evaluates the hypothesis that partnerships between CBHCs and schools will result in earlier identification of students who are experiencing urgent behavioral health needs; expedited access to high quality, comprehensive behavioral health services; and fewer adverse outcomes such as unnecessary emergency department (ED) visits, 911 calls, suspensions, and chronic absenteeism.

Each grantee team collaborates with one or more schools to provide **same-day, on-site assessments for students** and to implement key components of pediatric behavioral health urgent care, including **referrals for ongoing or out-of-school care, extended hours, and 24/7 access to crisis services**, if needed.



To obtain feedback from families about their experience with the school behavioral health urgent care grant program, MAMH and the evaluation team created a brief survey, disseminated in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. The family survey is designed to be a direct measure of the impact of grant-funded services on the family. Almost all families (95%) completing the survey expressed **satisfaction with the services they had received**, and the majority of families report that the services provided through the grant have been helpful for their children on several measures, including doing better at school, home, and in social situations. The evaluation team continues to analyze service and outcome data related to 911 calls, suspensions, and chronic absenteeism.

Mental Health Education Curricula Review

MAMH initiated a review of K-12 mental health curricula to **identify strengths and gaps in meeting the comprehensive mental health education goals** established by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in its revised *Curriculum Framework for PreK-12 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education*. MAMH's research was supported by a contract with the MA Department of Mental Health (DMH).

Initial findings indicated that many available curricula address most of DESE's learning standards for mental and emotional health but significant gaps exist, especially with respect to difficult issues like self-harm and suicide. In addition, few available curricula address topics such as knowing when a student or friend may need help with their mental health or where to go to find help. For these topics, additional curricular resources may be needed.

GOAL 2

DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC TO END DISCRIMINATION



Tele-Behavioral Health Report

While many children and adolescents experience positive mental health, a significant and growing number of youth are experiencing mental health issues that interfere with their academic performance, social development, and well being. At the same time, demand for behavioral health services far outweighs provider availability and contributes to significant access issues for children and families.

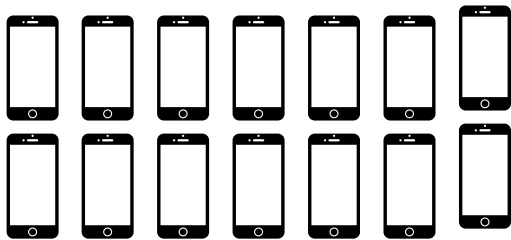
MAMH partnered with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH) to examine tele-behavioral health programs operating in school settings to determine their potential to **increase access to behavioral health services for middle and high school students and their families**. The final report, *Tele-Behavioral Health for Middle and High School Students: Best Practices and Policy Considerations for Massachusetts*:

- Highlights **successful telehealth models** that can be adapted to the needs of different communities in the Commonwealth,
- Addresses **equity concerns**, offering strategies to reduce disparities in access and provide culturally responsive services for underserved groups, including those with limited internet or digital literacy,
- Highlights **policy reforms** in reimbursement, licensing, provider credentialing, and access to affordable Wi-Fi to support sustainable tele-behavioral health services in schools and the broader behavioral health system in Massachusetts, and more.

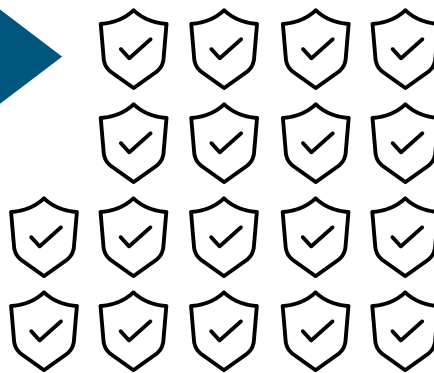
Tele-behavioral health alone is not a solution for all child and adolescent mental health concerns but it can be one option in an array of services available to students. Our vision is that every school district in the Commonwealth provides **equal access for all students to comprehensive systems of school-based behavioral health supports**.



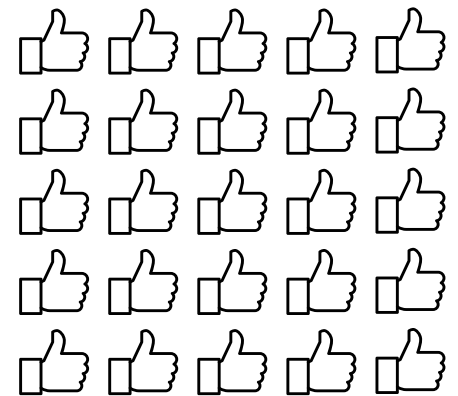
HERE'S A SNAPSHOT



14 telebehavioral health initiatives researched in Massachusetts and other states as of July 2024



18 policy recommendations for program sustainability dissemination



25 best practices and considerations for planning/implementation

Find out more about tele-behavioral health report at mamh.org or on social media.

GOAL 2

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Peer Empowered Support Groups at Boys and Girls Clubs

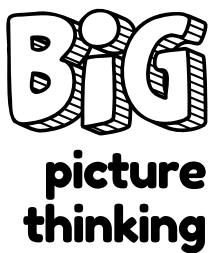
MAMH, with funding from and in partnership with the Mosakowski Family Foundation, is bringing peer-empowered support groups to Boys & Girls Clubs in the Commonwealth, which primarily serve communities of color in economically disadvantaged areas. Peer-empowered support groups can **reinforce youth agency, resiliency, and perseverance**, facilitating connections with other students by providing **a forum for listening and a place of support** in a stigma free environment.

Awards were made to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester, Lynn, and Worcester, and programming started in August 2024. Each of the Clubs is leveraging awarded grant funds to build new programs and enhance or expand others while incorporating middle and high school age peers to help facilitate the groups.

To understand the impact of the support groups, each Boys & Girls Club will track attendance, administer pre- and post-program surveys, and report on various other evaluation metrics. To further learning and measure success, MAMH is facilitating Learning Community meetings to discuss approaches, challenges, data collection, and outcomes. A review of the programs will be completed, culminating in release of a report at the end of the two-year program.



ABOVE: STUDENTS AT THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF DORCHESTER, LYNN, AND WORCESTER.



This initial two-year pilot program reaches the communities of Dorchester, Lynn, and Worcester. However, there are nearly 40 independent Boys & Girls Club organizations operating throughout Massachusetts. Should the pilot yield positive outcomes, youth peer-empowered support groups should be expanded to other Boys & Girls Club sites, and potentially other youth-serving entities, such as YMCAs, Family Resource Centers, Young Adult Access Centers, church and religious groups, and other organizations.

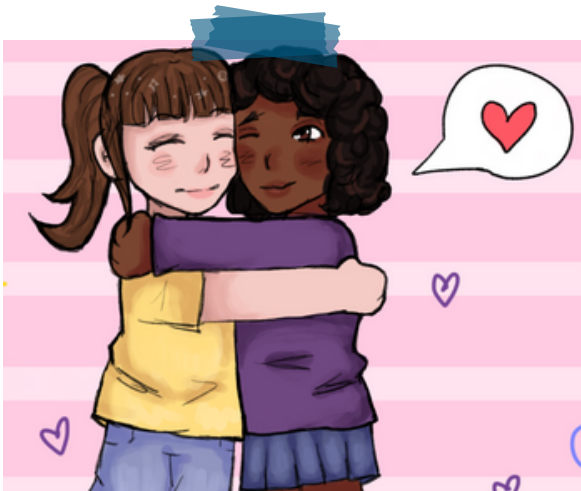
GOAL 2

DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC TO END DISCRIMINATION



Youth Expressions Contest

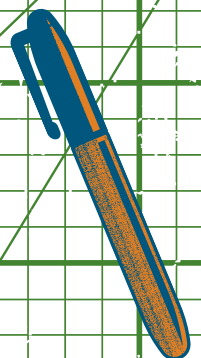
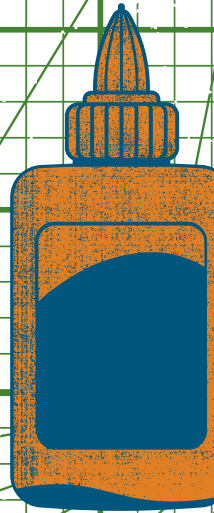
May is Mental Health Month! For five years running, MAMH has partnered with the Massachusetts Health Council for our annual ***Mental Health Matters: Student Expression Contest***. This event is designed to **promote wellness** and inspire students to explore ways to support their own mental health and support the people around us with simple gestures and expressions of empathy.



SPECIAL EVENTS

MAMH hosts events to **raise awareness, foster community engagement, and advance mental health** across the Commonwealth. From educational workshops to advocacy initiatives and fundraising opportunities, MAMH provides **valuable resources, insights, and opportunities to engage** in critical conversations around mental health in Massachusetts. Events in 2024 included:

- A statewide symposium, hosted in partnership with the Association for Behavioral Health, explored strategies for **collaboration between community behavioral health providers and schools** to provide timely, effect behavioral health services for students;
- A morning rooted in music, movement, and motivation, MAMH partnered with youth advocates to host a **spin class fundraiser** for May is Mental Health Month;
- Activities designed to promote understanding, respect, and friendship across generations through **Good Neighbor Day events in Cambridge and Northampton** by MAMH's OABHN and the MA Coalition to Build Community and End Loneliness; and
- **A celebration of former US Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy's new book, Profiles in Mental Health Courage**, offering deeply compelling stories about the bravery and resilience of those living with mental health and substance use conditions.



GOAL 2

DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC TO END DISCRIMINATION



COMMISSION & GROUP INVOLVEMENT

MAMH is an active member of several philanthropic and public commissions, committees, and working groups. Many of these collaborations produce **important research, communication, and advocacy results.**

988 Commission
Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL) Advisory Council
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation
Behavioral Health Advisory Committee
Bridgewater State Hospital Reform Coalition
Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) Population Health
Advisory Council
CEO Alliance for Mental Health ●
Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council
Children's Mental Health Campaign ★
Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention
Commission
Dignity Alliance Massachusetts
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Health Policy Commission Advisory Board
● Behavioral Health Workforce Advisory Board
Lift Our Kids Coalition
MARCH Coalition (Mass and Cass)
Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention (MCSP)
Massachusetts Fail First Coalition
Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance (MHSA)
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute - Health Care Working
Group
Massachusetts Mental Health and Substance Use Parity
Coalition
Massachusetts Peer Workforce Coalition
Massachusetts Public Health Association

Massachusetts Rx Drug Affordability Coalition
Massachusetts Task Force to End Loneliness and Build
Community
MassHealth and Justice Involved Coalition
Mental Health America Affiliate
Mental Health Coalition
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)
Network National Advisory Board
MGH Center of Excellence for Psychosocial and
Systemic Research
Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission ▲
Older Adult Behavioral Health Network (OABHN) ■
PCORI Burnout to Balance (B2B) Project Advisory Group
Restrictive Housing Oversight Committee
Ruderman Family Foundation Mental Health Advisory
Committee
School-Based Behavioral Health Advisory Board
State Mental Health Planning Council ▲
● Older Adult Mental Health Collaborative
● Housing Subcommittee ▲
Stop the Shock Coalition
Supported Decision Making Coalition
Supportive Housing Pipeline Coalition, United Way
Mass Bay
Trauma-Informed Hampshire County Steering Committee
We Work for Health

● Founding Member
★ Executive Committee

▲ Co-Chair
■ Chair



GOAL 3

INCREASE INCLUSION AND ENSURE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE SERVICES



FROM INNOVATION TO ADOPTION: NoC MA

Network of Care Massachusetts (NoC MA) launched in March 2020 and for three years served as the Commonwealth's singular place where all mental health, substance use, and related social services programs and organizations were curated into **a state-wide, user-friendly, searchable tool.**

Planning and early implementation for NoC MA was funded by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, the MetroWest Health Foundation, and the Charles F. and Beatrice D. Adams Charitable Trust, with MAMH selected as the managing entity. As planned at conception, MAMH developed and operated the online database as a public utility and in anticipation of transitioning the resource to the Commonwealth. In 2024, it became a core element of the state's Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform, as **the data backbone** of the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line (Help Line)'s new online behavioral health resource directory and search tool, Treatment Connection.

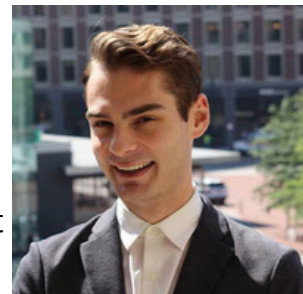
This is a prime example of the public sector adopting the funding and management of a program after the private sector seeded an innovation and demonstrated its effectiveness. MAMH is proud to have collaborated with all partners in making this tool **a permanent asset** for the Commonwealth. MAMH staff provided training to Help Line call center operators and transferred all assets in the NoC MA directory to the Help Line as part of the construction of Treatment Connection.

1,017,120
TOTAL VISITS

to Network of Care Massachusetts from its launch in 2020 through its phasing out in 2024.

MAMH STAFF on the move

Probably the most important asset that transferred from NoC MA to Treatment Connection was staff. In the spring of 2024, MAMH's Program Associate for NoC Kyle Neill left his position at MAMH to become the Project Manager for Treatment Connection at the Help Line. The experience, knowledge, and connections Kyle made at MAMH in operating NoC continue to be leveraged to benefit the Commonwealth.



MAMH ONLINE: COMMUNICATIONS GROWTH IN 2024

MAMH increased our social media presence and engagement, expanding our communications and advancement activities. In 2024, MAMH:

- **Increased our total social media following by over 10%**, to 4,253 followers.
- **Increased our average rate of engagement on social media by 42%**, to 8.2%.
- **Reached 64% more individuals on social media** - a total of 14,666 users - up from 8,955. MAMH accounts also gained **432 new followers**.
- Engaged 650 advocates and supporters who collectively **sent over 1,340 emails to legislators** during the second half of the 2023-2024 legislative session in response to Action Alert communications; and
- Shared research, knowledge, and advocacy updates through videos, podcasts, blogs, and more at MAMH.org.



Follow MAMH on X @MentalHealth_MA, and find us on Facebook and LinkedIn.

FRIEND & LEADER AWARD DINNER



MAMH's annual Friend & Leader Award Dinner salutes leaders whose work contributes to **progress in awareness, health promotion, prevention, and effective treatment for children and adults affected by mental and behavioral health challenges** throughout Massachusetts. This year, we honored the power of partnership and individuals whose work supports mental health and wellness for youth across the Commonwealth.

FRIEND & LEADER AWARD RECIPIENTS

Center for Public Representation and Foley Hoag

The **Center for Public Representation** was founded in 1976 as a national public interest law firm to pursue social justice and full inclusion in community life for people living with disabilities. As a result of CPR's litigation, tens of thousands of children receive supports in their homes and home communities; thousands more people have left psychiatric, developmental disability, and nursing institutions and now live and receive support in integrated settings in the community; and more.



Foley Hoag is a global law firm with a legacy of commitment, compassion, and community. Foley Hoag is actively engaged in pro bono work, representing underserved communities, advocating for policy change, and supporting initiatives that promote equity and justice. The firm's dedication to pro bono service is an integral part of its mission, demonstrating a commitment to using legal expertise for the public good and making a positive impact beyond their client base.



MAMH also recognized the considerable contributions of several other individuals and institutions, including: three Massachusetts Legislators, **Senator Cynthia Creem, Representative Ruth Balsler, and Representative Kay Khan**; and **William James College**, with **Dr. Nicholas Covino**, President, and **Dr. Gemima St. Louis**, Vice President for Workforce Initiatives in the Center for Workforce Development and Professor in the Clinical Psychology Department.

PARTNER IN PROGRESS AWARD RECIPIENTS



SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

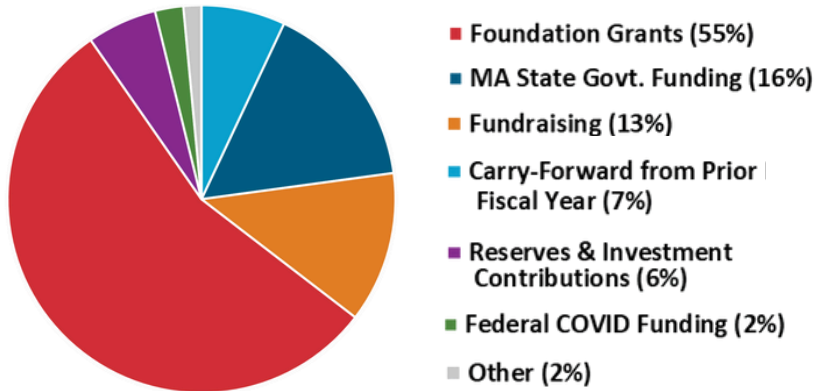


FINANCIAL STATUS

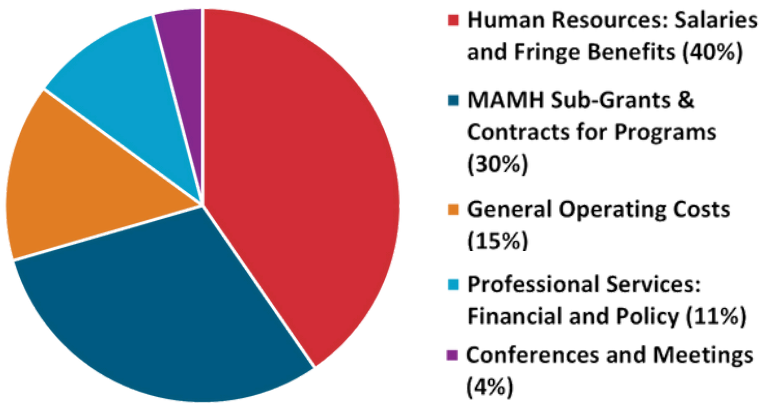


FISCAL YEAR 2024 REVENUE, SOURCES, AND USE OF FUNDS

FY24 REVENUE: \$3.81M | By Source

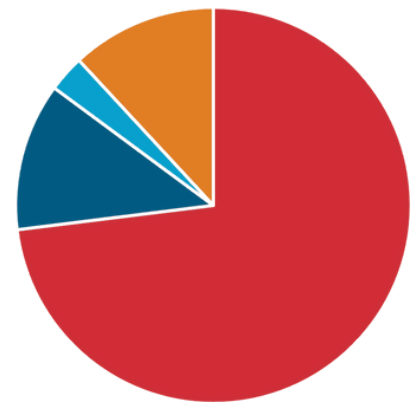


FY24 EXPENSES: \$3.81M | By Use Category



Nearly one-third of MAMH expenditures are provided as sub-grants or contracts to organizations providing direct services, such as Community Behavioral Health Centers supporting students who need urgent mental health care at school.

FY24 MAMH GRANTS: \$2.86M By Focus Area



- Child & Adolescent BH Services (73%)
- Child & Adolescent BH Prevention (12%)
- Expanding Access to MH (12%)
- Older Adults Education & Access (3%)

MAMH draws upon the respective strengths of our Board leadership, staff, and funding partners to move the needle on behavioral health reform in a number of key focus areas.



MAMH Board Members rise to the challenge in supporting and facilitating progress made in advocacy, education, and mobilization each year.

In 2024, members of the Governing Board of Directors were asked to support our Friend and Leader Award Dinner for a special cause. We were able to reach our goal of 100% board participation and secure a generous \$12,500 matching gift.

MAMH TEAM

PRESIDENT AND CEO



Danna Mauch, PhD

As **President and CEO of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health**, Danna Mauch brings organizational leadership, operations management, evaluation research, and strategic consulting experience gained in private and public sector enterprises to achieving MAMH's vision, mission, and goals. Dr. Mauch has a long career in public service. Her population-focused work addresses a broad range of at-risk and vulnerable groups of children, adults, and older adults. She is a published author of government and foundation reports, book chapters, and journal articles on the organization, financing, and delivery of care to vulnerable populations.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE



Nicola Holness, MBA

Nicola Holness, **Director of Administration and Finance**, leads and manages all aspects of MAMH's administrative operations and fiscal management. She also plays a significant role in external relationships with government, health organizations, professional societies, stakeholder organizations, and the community-at-large. Nicola brings to her role two decades of increasingly senior experience, spanning a wide range of management functions. Her expertise lies within strategic planning, grants management, financial management, personnel management, and administrative operations.

PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Jessica Larochelle, SM



Jennifer Honig, JD

As **Co-Directors for Public Policy and Government Relations**, Jessica Larochelle and Jennifer Honig work in collaboration with a range of stakeholders on executive, judicial, and legislative initiatives at MAMH. Jessica brings deep experience in policy analysis, program development, advocacy, and implementation. Jennifer brings decades of experience leading legal advocacy on behalf of individuals with mental health issues who seek access to services and protection of fundamental rights.

KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Jenifer Urff, JD

Jenifer Urff, **Director of Knowledge Dissemination and Technical Assistance**, has 25 years of experience working with public mental health systems. She oversees MAMH's outreach, education, and dissemination of research findings and evidence-based practices.



Leah Landry

Leah Landry, **Director of Communications and Advancement**, works to tell the story of MAMH to various stakeholder groups including mainstream media, partners, funders, donors, and other potential supporters; and assists with Board engagement and activities.



Kate Alicante, MPH

As a **Senior Policy Research Associate**, Kate Alicante brings her experience working with the Massachusetts Legislature to support MAMH's policy and advocacy agenda. She works closely with advocacy partners to advance policy initiatives across state government.



Maddy Brogan, MPH

As **Program Associate for Communications and Special Projects**, Maddy Brogan coordinates MAMH's social media and provides research, communications, and administrative support in connection with MAMH advocacy and special initiatives.



Sara Cleverly

As **Administrative and Financial Coordinator**, Sara Cleverly provides support for a range of office operations, administrative recordkeeping, financial management, grants reporting, and human resource management tasks for MAMH.



Cassie Cramer, LICSW

As **Project Manager** for the Older Adult Behavioral Health Network, Cassie Cramer has more than a decade of experience supporting at-risk older adults in Massachusetts. She combines clinical and peer expertise with advocacy to lead older adult initiatives at MAMH.



Lina Stolyar, MPP

As **Senior Policy and Program Research Associate**, Lina Stolyar brings experience as a data and policy analyst to her role supporting investigation, data analysis, and project management for a broad range of MAMH priorities and initiatives.

In 2024, MAMH welcomed Sara Cleverly to the team as Administrative and Financial Coordinator. Sara comes to MAMH from Idaho and is enjoying getting acquainted with Boston and surrounding areas.



Jenifer Urff has transitioned to a part time role at MAMH to enjoy a gradual retirement. She is still advising and leading numerous MAMH projects while also finding time for swing dance classes.



Louise Povall, MHSM

Senior Policy Consultant
Louise Povall leads strategic plan development and numerous initiatives involving financial planning, state and federal policy analysis, and grant development.



Robert Fleischner, JD

Senior Policy Consultant
Robert Fleischner has been practicing mental health disability law since 1973. He is a national expert on Protection and Advocacy (P&A) access, advance directives, and guardianship.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS...

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...and many other anonymous
donors and supporters of MAMH.

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AND OUR FUNDERS



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Thank you to those who fund and support the work of MAMH through **grants, contracts, donations, and gifts**. Our work is possible because of you.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department
of Mental Health
Mass General Brigham
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute
Metrowest Health Foundation
Mosakowski Family Charitable Foundation
Point32Health Foundation
The Goodness Web



The MAMH policy team regularly publishes **briefs, analyses, white papers, and other resources**. These documents summarize legislation, evaluate the impact on people with behavioral health conditions and their families, and build the case for reform.

Learn more on the [MAMH website](#), by [subscribing to our newsletter](#), or by [following us on social media](#).



Please enjoy these scenes from the **2024 MAMH Friend & Leader Award Dinner**, our annual gala fundraising event.

This year, the Award Dinner is making the transition back to a spring schedule. We look forward to welcoming you all back to the Seaport Hotel in **May 2026**.



ABOUT MAMH



Since 1913, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH) has worked to **improve understanding of mental health conditions** and **combat disparities in access to health services**.

Stay up-to-date with the work we do by following MAMH on social media or subscribing to our email newsletters. Follow the QR code to the left.



EDUCATE.

MOBILIZE.

ADVOCATE.

VISION

MAMH envisions a day when all Massachusetts residents have access to the social and economic opportunities that protect overall health and promote resilience.

MISSION

Advance mental health and well-being by promoting prevention, early intervention, effective treatment and research to address social, emotional, and mental health challenges. Eliminate stigma and discrimination and ensure full social, economic, and political inclusion in all aspects of community life.

VALUES

All people with mental health challenges should be treated with dignity and respect, and have access to services and supports they need.

