



Danna E. Mauch, PhD
President and CEO

Ambassador (ret.) Barry B. White
Chairperson of MAMH Board of Directors

April 20, 2023

The Honorable Ronald Mariano, Speaker
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House, Room 343
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Ann-Margaret Ferrante, Vice Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
Massachusetts State House, Room 42
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
Massachusetts State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker Mariano, Chair Michlewitz, Vice Chair Ferrante, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Ways and Means,

Re: MAMH Support for Amendment 375 (Safe Havens), Amendment 444 (Access to Children's Behavioral Health Services), Amendment 641 (Elder Behavioral Health), Amendment 750 (Children's Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center), Amendment 798 (DMH Adult Emergency Room Diversion Initiative), Amendment 1243 (DMH Rental Subsidy Program), and Amendment 1243 (Office of Refugees and Immigrants Refugee Mental Health Program)

On behalf of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH), I write to thank you once again for your ongoing work to address the behavioral health needs of the Commonwealth's residents and to indicate MAMH's support for the following amendments to the FY24 House Ways and Means state budget:

Amendment #375: Save Havens (Representative Sabadosa)

\$3.5M increase in DMH 5046-2000 Statewide Homelessness Support Services

For new Safe Havens, supervised and supportive housing for homeless individuals with multiple disabilities who have not been successful in traditional shelters

Amendment #641: Elder Behavioral Health (Representative Stanley)

\$1M increase in EOE 9110-1640 Geriatric Mental Health Services

To expand access across the Commonwealth to Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams (EMHOTs) that overcome treatment barriers by working with older adults in their own homes to address issues associated with behavioral health conditions, such as chronic diseases, social isolation, housing insecurity, and financial challenges

Amendment #444: Access to Children's Behavioral Health Services (Representative Barber)

\$250K increase in CHIA 4100-0060

For a Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) study to research a concern that youth with private insurance are not receiving Behavioral Health for Children and Adolescents (BHCA) services, despite the growing need for such services and that such services have been mandated to be covered by fully insured Massachusetts plans since July 2019

Amendment #750: Children’s Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center (Representative Decker)

\$1.275M increase, including 75K for the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH) in DMH 5042-5000 Child and Adolescents Mental Health Services

To support ongoing planning and collaboration with community stakeholders, to support statewide launch of the school-based behavioral health technical assistance center, which provides technical assistance to school districts and partnering community providers to build and sustain capacity to meet the social, emotional, and behavioral health needs of students, to make web-based resources available to schools, as well as for MAMH to conduct an environmental scan of K-12 mental health education initiatives and to align the identified curricular resources with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework

Amendment #798: Adult Emergency Room (ER) Diversion Initiative (Representative Decker)

\$15M increase in DMH 5046-0000 Adult Mental Health and Support Services

To create or expand respite programs that will support individuals in transitioning out of ERs and back into the community, as well as divert individuals from ERs and unnecessary hospitalization in the first place

Amendment #1243: Department of Mental Health (DMH) Rental Subsidy Program (Representative Garballey)

\$4M increase in DHCD 7004-9033 Rental Subsidy Program for DMH Clients

To address the need for rental assistance that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) forecasts, based on the significant number of people with severe and disabling mental health conditions stuck in hospitals and ERs

Amendment #1478: Refugee Mental Health Program (Representative Howard)

\$300K increase in OR1 4003-0122

To provide additional resources to community-based organizations contracted with the Office of Refugees and Immigrants to provide additional behavioral health programming to their refugee communities

Thank you so much for your consideration. If we can provide additional information on any of these amendments, please do not hesitate to reach out to me (dannamauch@mamh.org), Jennifer Honig (jenniferhonig@mamh.org), or Jessica Larochelle (jessicalarochelle@mamh.org).

Sincerely,



Danna Mauch, Ph.D.
President and CEO

- c: Representative Sabadosa
- Representative Barber
- Representative Stanley
- Representative Decker
- Representative Garballey
- Representative Howard
- Joseph Masciangioli, Healthcare Policy Analyst, Office of House Speaker Ronald Mariano
- Brian Donahue, Budget Director, House Committee on Ways & Means