

THE FACTS AND FICTION ABOUT COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Fiction	Fact
Community Mental Health Services are expensive.	Out-of-home placements, hospitalizations, and incarcerations are more expensive than community mental health services.
Maine's rates are higher than those in other states.	Maine's per capita spending is almost exactly the average for New England, yet we were awarded one of the highest grades in the nation for quality by the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. Different states use different funding formulas, for example Connecticut pays 70% of costs through grant funding, so rate comparisons do not tell the whole story.
Spending for Community Mental health has increased exponentially.	Total spending for Community Behavioral Health DECREASED by \$632,202.78 from FY 04-06. The number of people served has increased in that same period.
Community mental health agencies are inefficient and have high administrative overhead.	The average administration cost for Maine's mental health providers is below 18%, a responsible percentage comparable to rates around the nation.
Mental health services do not produce any positive outcomes and are impossible to measure.	People who are living in their communities are getting better. Our programs are as complex and clinically based as any health care service, with measurable outcomes. We employ rigorous quality assurance and utilization review practices.
The cut to community mental health services was <i>ONLY</i> \$20 million.	Each dollar spent by Maine brings in \$2 from the Federal Government. Actual total reduction in services equals \$60 million. In addition, \$40 million in service is already being taken from the system through the implementation of managed care, <u>for a total reduction of \$100 million this year.</u> In the supplemental budget to be tackled by the Legislature in January, early proposals call for yet <u>another round of budget cuts in excess of \$30 million; this is on top of the \$100,000,000 that was cut from mental health spending less than six months ago.</u> <i>On December 18, 2007, Governor Baldacci announced curtailment of spending that includes an additional \$13.5 million for mental health services.</i>
Community Mental Health represents the entire \$500m projected spending in '08.	The 500M figure represents spending in not only Community Based Mental Health services but the entire system. In addition, Community Based MH service over the past 4 years have actually decreased in cost!
Providers can absorb these cuts by streamlining services and reducing overhead.	Providers are already operating on slim or no margins. Further cuts are not possible without a reduction in administrative burden and/or elimination of services.

For more information about Maine's Community Mental Health System, contact the Maine Association of Mental Health Services at 207-621-4111 or your local providers.