

# Legislative Session Highlights for Mental Health

*Thank you to Heather O'Donnell, Senior VP for Advocacy and Public Policy at Thresholds for presenting these slides to Human Services Information Sharing zoom meeting June 24, 2021, hosted by DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform.*

# Illinois Passed a Balanced Budget

- ▶ The General Assembly passed a balanced \$42.3B state budget by closing several corporate tax loopholes and through an influx of federal funding.
- ▶ An estimated \$1.5B of one-time dollars are dedicated to human services.
- ▶ Use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars: The budget allocated \$2.5B (about one-third of what Illinois is expected to receive).
- ▶ Although Illinois continues to have a structural deficit, there were no tax increases in the state budget.

# Black Caucus' Human Services Pillar

## HB158 Highlights:

- ▶ Community Health Worker Certification and Reimbursement Act
- ▶ Implicit Bias Training for Health Care Professionals Act
- ▶ Behavioral Health Workforce Education Center of Illinois Act
- ▶ Anti-Racism Commission Act
- ▶ Perinatal Doula and Home Visiting Act
- ▶ Health & Human Services Task Force and Study Act
- ▶ The Good Samaritan provision for seeking medical assistance for a person who has overdosed (cannot be arrested, charged or prosecuted for a drug crime)
- ▶ Childcare training on social and emotional learning, infant and early childhood mental health, and ACEs

# Mental Health Legislative Successes

- ▶ **HB3308: Telehealth.** Private insurance plans are required to cover telehealth, including mental health and substance use treatment. Reimbursement parity to in-person services. Medicaid was excluded, but HFS has committed to retaining.
- ▶ **HB2595: Coverage of Medically Necessary Mental health and Substance Use Care.** Creates standards and definitions for what qualifies for “medically necessary.” Insurers cannot arbitrarily set these standards. Insurers will have to submit annual reports to the Illinois Department of Insurance. Goes into effect in 2023.
- ▶ **HB449: Establishes the Housing is Recovery Pilot Program.** Appropriation of \$10M. The goal of the program is to stop the cycle of institutionalization and incarceration for people living with a serious mental illness or substance use condition who are experiencing homelessness. Provides rental support by providing eligible individuals a bridge rental subsidy and support services. Individuals are eligible if they have three or more hospitalizations, are incarcerated in jail/prison, or have an overdose within the previous 12 months.
- ▶ **Medicaid Omnibus.** HFS must develop an implementation plan for “Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics” (CCBHCs).
- ▶ **HB2784. Community Emergency Services and Supports Act.** The goal of this legislation is to provide alternatives to a police response to behavioral health crises, and to avoid hospitalization or incarceration when possible. Provides that calls to 911 shall coordinate for the dispatch of mobile crisis response established by DMH/988. Many provisions regarding training of 911 dispatchers, and coordination of a 988 system.
- ▶ **HB711 Prior Authorization Reform Act.** Creates specific standards for prior authorization based on national standards.

# Mental Health Funding: What Happened and What Did Not

- ▶ Significant increases in Block Grant funding for both mental health and substance use: ~\$75M
- ▶ No Medicaid reimbursement rate increases. Medicaid is the foundation of the mental health system. Adequate rates that allow for increased service capacity are necessary to grow access to care.
- ▶ Illinois is still facing a mental health crisis - access to care continues to be limited, and many individuals that have serious conditions experience multiple hospitalizations, disability, incarceration and institutionalization.
- ▶ We must continue to fight for increased state Medicaid investment in mental health treatment.