

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force

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Final Report

The Task Force is pleased to offer its [Final Report - PDF](#), which highlights the progress to date on parity implementation, summarizes comments from stakeholders and actions taken during the Task Force's tenure, and offers recommendations on how to:

- Support consumers,
- Improve parity implementation, and
- Enhance parity compliance and enforcement.

Other Task Force activities are being announced along with the release of the Final Report:

- We are unveiling the beta version of the new [Mental Health and Addiction Insurance Help Consumer Portal!](#) The Portal is a web site designed to help consumers find the appropriate Federal or State agency to assist with their parity complaints, appeals, or other actions. We're currently taking public comments on how to improve the portal, so please let us know your ideas!
- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is awarding \$9.3 million to States to help insurance regulators monitor compliance with the mental health and substance use disorder parity protections.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and DOL are releasing a [Consumer Guide to Disclosure Rights: Making the Most of Your Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Benefits - PDF](#) to help consumers understand what type of information to ask for when inquiring about a plan's compliance with parity and to explain the various Federal disclosure laws that also require disclosure of information related to parity.
- DOL, HHS and the Department of Treasury (Treasury) are issuing [guidance on parity and opioid use disorder treatment - PDF](#) to address specific questions the Departments have received related to issues such as the application of parity to opioid treatment access and coverage of court-ordered treatment. The guidance also solicits feedback on how the disclosure document request process can be improved. In addition, a new [Parity Compliance Assistance Materials Index - PDF](#) to assist with navigating the available FAQ.

- SAMHSA is announcing that it will host two State Policy Academies on Parity Implementation for State Officials in Fiscal Year 2017, including one focused on the commercial market and one on parity in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program.

These Task Force activities build on the progress of this Administration, and the recommendations in the Final Report provide a roadmap for future improvements. Other resources were released during the Task Force’s tenure, including:

- Tri-Departmental guidance from HHS, DOL, and Treasury was issued on April 20 to clarify parity requirements.
- DOL and HHS released the Know Your Rights: Parity for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Benefits brochure, which lists some of the common limits placed on mental health and substance use disorder benefits and services and includes additional information on parity in consumer-friendly language.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration released a white paper highlighting best practices of parity implementation and enforcement at the state level.
- DOL and HHS published a paper highlighting Warning Signs - PDE, or health insurance benefit design elements that could be “red flags” of potential parity violations.

Read more in the Final Report - PDF and the blog post!

About the Federal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Task Force

As part of wider Administration efforts to expand access to treatment for people with mental health and substance use disorders, the President signed a Presidential Memorandum in March 2016 creating a Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force. The Task Force focused key Federal agencies on the work of ensuring that Americans receive the coverage and treatment that they need.



Learn more about the Task Force by reading President Obama's announcement and the White House blog post and the Strengthen Insurance Coverage for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders fact sheet.

Task Force Membership Included:

- The White House Domestic Policy Council
- The Department of the Treasury
- The Department of Defense
- The Department of Justice

- The Department of Labor
- The Department of Health and Human Services
- The Department of Veterans Affairs
- The Office of Personnel Management
- The Office of National Drug Control Policy

The Objectives of the Task Force are to:

- Increase awareness of the protections that mental health and substance use disorder parity provide
- Improve understanding of the requirements of mental health and substance use disorder parity among key audiences including health plans, insurers and state regulators
- Increase transparency around compliance with parity and the support, resources, and tools available to ensure coverage is in compliance with mental health and substance use disorder parity

Review Summaries of the Task Force Listening Sessions

- Learn more about parity by [reading the listening session summaries](#) discussing key topics such as the need to improve awareness and understanding of parity requirements to best practices for monitoring and enforcement.

Parity Policy and Implementation

Learn more about the [Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, research on implementation of the Act, and the history of federal parity policies](#)

Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder Treatment

If you or someone you know has a mental health condition or a substance use disorder, there are resources and services available to assist with screening, treatment and recovery:

- [SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator](#): Confidential and anonymous source for individuals seeking treatment facilities for substance use disorder, addiction and mental health concerns
 - [Find a Health Center](#): Some health centers provide mental health and substance use disorder services. Contact the health center directly to confirm availability of specific services and to make an appointment.
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