



2020 CCAP Mental Health Funding Priority Key Talking Points for Counties Amid COVID-19

Counties should tell their local stories, including examples of relevant impacts to their programs and those they serve, within each of the following priorities as appropriate.

INCREASED FUNDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- **In light of the innumerable impacts COVID-19 is having on communities across the commonwealth and beyond, counties have chosen to focus efforts on their top 2020 priority, mental health funding,** recognizing both the unforeseen increased need of mental health services within our communities and sudden budget stressors that are befalling all levels of government.
 - A targeted, strategic investment of state dollars into community mental health services at the county level is necessary to continue the existing safety net and bolster the availability of mental health services.
 - Counties deliver these services in partnership with the state and seek collaboration that will lead to solutions that better reflect the needs of Pennsylvanians, reduce costs, increase local flexibility and assure the quality of services counties provide.
- **Counties provide community-based mental health services, such as community residential programs, family-based support, outpatient care and crisis intervention, which are critical to the well-being of our constituents and our communities.**
 - These services provide a mental health safety net and are paid for by mental health base funding.
 - As communities have quarantined and issued social distancing and stay-at-home orders, the coronavirus pandemic is causing widespread trauma and the resulting stress can negatively impact overall mental health for many people.
 - Counties were already stretching limited resources before the pandemic, and as COVID-19 conditions continue, the need for accessible mental health services will only increase, exerting additional stress on an already-stressed system.
 - Here in _____ County, we have seen an increase of _____% in service requests alone.
 - The extent of long-term impacts remains to be seen, so we must invest now.
- The Behavioral HealthChoices program must also be preserved to allow counties to coordinate and invest in mental health and drug and alcohol programs and services that meet local needs and challenges.
- **Close collaboration between the legislature, the administration and counties is critical to addressing the mental health system as a whole now and in the future.**