

The Mental Health Legislative Network (MHLN) is a broad coalition in Minnesota that advocates for a statewide mental health system that is high-quality, accessible and has stable funding. The network collaborates to create visibility on mental health issues, act as a clearinghouse on public policy issues and pool our knowledge, resources, and strengths to create meaningful change.

The Mental Health Legislative Network has set the following priorities for the 2026 legislative session:

- ➔ **Protect Access to Medicaid:** Medicaid plays a key role in the provision of mental health and substance use care in Minnesota. As Minnesota implements work requirements and other components of HR1, MHLN urges the Legislature to ensure that legislation meets federal requirements without enacting stricter compliance standards than required, as well as ensure that the exemption available for those living with a disabling mental health or substance use condition can be demonstrated in a variety of ways that provide flexibility outside of limiting it to individuals with an established diagnosis.
- ➔ **Preserve Services as Fraud Issues Are Addressed:** As concerns about fraud in Medicaid and other grant programs are addressed in legislation, we must ensure that the critical services that serve individuals are preserved. Many of these services help people live at home, stay in their communities, and minimize use of more intensive services, including crisis, emergency and inpatient care. We all care about protecting these important services from fraud, but MHLN urges a measured approach that addresses concerns of fraud without creating so many barriers for providers that access to these services is reduced or even eliminated.
- ➔ **Maintain Critical Behavioral Health Grant Funding:** MHLN also wants to ensure that grant funding for behavioral health services remains intact while efforts are underway at the Behavioral Health Division to address concerns raised by a Legislative Audit report about management of grants and programs. Often these grants help provide services in the community that are not billable but are critical to the health and well-being of people living with mental health or substance use conditions. Any reductions to these grants as part of any corrective actions being initiated would only harm some of our most vulnerable Minnesotans.
- ➔ **Address Funding Needs to Support Medicaid Rate Increases:** During the 2025 session, the Legislature passed Medicaid rate increases critical to continued access to treatment and services. However, the planned funding mechanism to support these increases was eliminated by the federal government, creating a need to seek direct state appropriations to support needed rate increases. MHLN supports legislation to repeal the 20% master's level education cutback, as well as an increase in psychological testing codes to 100% of the Medicare rate. These proposals would be funded with general fund dollars.
- ➔ **Policy Changes That Improve Access, Availability and Delivery of Care:** MHLN supports several bills that include no-cost/low-cost items that can improve access, availability and delivery of care. These include the Children's Mental Health Policy bill (HF4379/SF4388); a Clinical Trainee Workforce Clarification bill (HF3904/SF4018); and the SUD policy and funding bills put forward by MARRCH.

Learn more about the Mental Health Legislative Network and its work at www.MHLN.org

