

Testimony on FY 2009 Federal Funding for Mental Health, Addictions
and Developmental Disabilities Services

Submitted to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

by

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Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Specter, and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD), we thank you for your leadership on issues related to mental illness, addictions and developmental disabilities. We are pleased to offer the following recommendations and highlight concerns regarding FY 2009 funding.

The National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD) is an organization based in Washington, D.C. active on a number of fronts, including policy development, advocacy and information dissemination on best practices to its members. As an affiliate of the National Association of Counties (NACo), NACBHDD members are a part of the health care safety net that contributes to local systems of care for millions of Americans. NACBHDD members include county and city governments and other local authorities with responsibility for assuring that essential mental health, developmental disabilities and substance use disorder services are provided to vulnerable and often disabled residents.

Recent financial changes at the federal level regarding Medicaid are pressuring states and localities to cut other health and social services to cover the additional costs of essential services for which federal reimbursement is no longer available. While Medicaid is an integral component to local systems of care and ensures that arrays of appropriate services are available to the right person at the right time; other federal, state and local funds are essential to funding these public systems. The coordination of these dollars assists in the delivery of effective community based services as well as transitioning individuals from institutional settings. Discretionary federal funding is pivotal to the federal-state-local partnerships that contribute to the financial foundation of vital local services. Without adequate funding, these activities will not be available to support some of our most vulnerable citizens.

NACBHDD recommendations and concerns regarding mental health, addictions and developmental disabilities funding priorities follow.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant

NACBHDD recommends \$1,858.7 million for FY 2009 – an increase of \$100 million over FY 2008 and \$80 million over the President’s request. The SAPT Block Grant enables states and localities to address the unique needs of their communities. In addition, this block grant is

crucial funding for public addictions systems and provides the capacity for the bulk of prevention and treatment services.

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)

NACBHDD is concerned with the proposed cut of \$63 million to CSAT programs and recommends \$420 million in FY 2009. The President's request would eliminate programs that provide recovery services, state service improvements, program coordination and evaluation and strengthening treatment access and retention. In addition, programs that target pregnant and postpartum women and children and families with substance use disorders would no longer be available

Other CSAT programs would be significantly reduced in the President's proposed budget. The Opioid Treatment Programs/Regulatory Activities, Targeted Capacity Expansion (TCE), Services Accountability, Addiction Technology Transfer Centers (ATTCs), Treatment Systems for the Homeless that include programs important to local substance abuse authorities would all be affected.

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)

NACBHDD recommends \$215 million in FY 2009. This represents an increase of \$20.9 million compared to FY 2008 and an increase of \$56.9 million over the President's request. The proposed budget would cut CSAP by \$36 million allowing a number of programs within this center to be significantly restricted. Of note, the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant is proposed to be funded at \$95,389,000 a cut of \$9,318,000 from FY 2008 level. In addition, the Centers for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPTs) are proposed to be funded at \$4,381,000, a cut of \$7,656,000 from FY 2008 level. These two programs allow for much needed prevention programs at the local level. Other CSAP programs which are slated for elimination include the Sober Truth on Preventing Uderage Drinking (STOP Act) and Evidence Based Practices. The Methamphetamine Prevention program and Program Coordination/Data Coordination and Consolidation Center would receive cuts in funding as well, hindering their effectiveness.

Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)

Community Mental Health Services Performance Partnership Block Grant

NACBHDD recommends \$482.9 million for the FY 2009 budget, an increase of \$ 61.9 million from the FY 2008 budget and from the President's FY 2009 request. The Community Mental Health Services Block Grant is an integral federal funding source that supports community based mental health services.

Childrens Mental Health and Homelessness Programs

While the President's FY 2009 budget did request increased funding for the Children's Mental Health Services Program and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program, NACBHDD recommends \$117.3 million and \$61.1 million respectively for these programs. Adequate funding is essential to create systems of care focused on community based services for children and their families. Additionally, PATH programs allow for local solutions to assisting individuals who are homeless and have a mental illness and/or substance use disorder.

Programs of Regional and National Significance (PRNS)

NACBHDD recommends \$343.3 million for the FY 2009 budget, an increase of \$44.0 million above the FY 2008 budget. NACBHDD is concerned with the President's request for the drastic \$144 million decrease in funding to this program. Programs that prevent youth violence, suicide, and address post traumatic stress disorder would be severely restricted. Jail diversion grants are also slated for reduced funding. These dollars are essential in assisting communities to provide support and organization to appropriately divert individuals with mental illness away from jails and prisons and ensure access to treatment and services in the community.

NACBHDD is particularly concerned that programs targeted for seniors, community technical assistance centers, consumer and family network grants would be eliminated. Additionally, the President's FY 2009 request would terminate state incentive grants. These grants offer flexibility in planning and coordination among federal, state and local entities to create comprehensive plans and enhance existing resources to deliver quality, evidence based services in communities.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

NACBHDD supports the furthering of research in the fields of mental health, substance use disorders and developmental disabilities. Our following recommendations for FY 2009 appropriations:

- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)—\$1,498.6 million
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)—\$1,067.7 million
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)—\$465.5 million
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) -- \$1,341 million

Developmental Disabilities

NACBHDD supports the following recommendations for funding to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities receive services and supports in the communities in which they live. A number of departments and programs touch the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and continued federal financial participation is essential.

Combating Autism Act

NACBHDD supports the President's funding request to expand research, screening, intervention and education activities by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) under the Combating Autism Act. This critical funding is important for research into the causes of Autism, diagnosis, early detection, prevention, services, supports, intervention and treatment of autism spectrum disorder.

Developmental Disabilities Act

While the President's FY 2009 budget request essentially level funds these programs, increased funding for these activities will foster full integration and inclusion in the community for individuals with developmental disabilities. In particular, NACBHDD recommends funding Councils on DD at \$80 million, Protection and Advocacy Systems at \$45 million and University Centers for Excellence in DD at \$41 million.

The Department of Labor

Programs under the Workforce Investment Act are essential to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities have access to employment training and opportunities. We are concerned that most of the programs have been requested to receive reduced funding in the President's FY 2009 budget request. Each program assists local developmental disabilities authorities to ensure the individuals they serve have opportunities in the workforce. NACBHDD recommends the following:

- Adult Employment - \$987.9 million
- Pilots, Demonstration, Research - \$246 million
- Youth Activities - \$1.1 billion
- One Stop Career Centers - \$100 million
- Dislocated Worker Program - \$1.6 billion

Further, the following programs within the Department of Labor provide added support for job training and supports. NACBHDD recommends funding for FY 2009:

- Office of Disability Employment Policy - \$47.5 million
- Community College Initiative/Community Based Job Training - \$150 million
- Work Incentives Grants - \$28 million
- Older Adult Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) - \$572 million
- Veterans' Employment and Training Services (VETS) Program - \$233 million

Department of Health and Human Services

NACBHDD recommends \$850 million for the Maternal & Child Health Block Grant. This program supports the health and welfare of mothers and children to provide access to services and care for vulnerable populations.

Rehabilitative Services Administration

Rehabilitative service programs are particularly important to assist local authorities to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities receive a range of services to reach vocational outcomes. Some programs received level funding requests while others were slated for elimination. Of note, the Supported Employment State Grant program would receive zero funding in the President's FY 2009 budget. These important grants help develop collaborative local programs that offer supported employment services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

NACBHDD thanks the Committee for its continued support of programs benefiting developmental disabilities, mental health and addictions systems. We look forward to working with you on our Association's priorities.