

Federal Priorities 2023-2024

There is significant need to continue Congress' bipartisan efforts to address our nation's mental health crisis. ***Mental health recently replaced COVID-19 as the top health care concern among adults in the U.S.*** Reported levels of anxiety and depression have significantly increased in recent years. In 2021, suicide rates increased after several years of decline. Tragically, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth aged 10-14 and 25-34. Shortages in the mental health workforce mean that too many people seeking care cannot get the help they need, even more so when someone faces a mental health emergency.

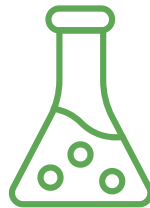
We urge Congress and the Biden Administration to continue their commitment to people with mental health conditions by focusing on the following:



**Reimagining
Crisis Response**



**Improving Youth
Mental Health**



**Advancing
Research**



**Increasing
Access to Care**

As the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization, ***NAMI fights for policy changes that improve the lives of the millions of people affected mental health conditions.***



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Reimagining Crisis Response

Thanks to bipartisan efforts, 988, a nationwide, easy-to-remember number, became available in July 2022 to help people in a mental health, substance use or suicide crisis. But 988 is only the first step to fulfilling Congress' vision to help people in crisis. That vision also includes mobile crisis teams offering an in-person mental health crisis response and crisis stabilization options that provide short-term de-escalation and care. Policymakers must continue efforts to ensure that all people in a mental health crisis receive a mental health response, regardless of where they live.

Advancing Research

Research is crucial to better understanding the brain and discovering more precise diagnostics and innovative treatment options for mental health conditions. While many of the 1 in 5 people with a mental health condition respond to treatment, mental illness remains a leading cause of disability in this country. There is an urgent need for increased funding to identify better diagnostics and medications and discover new therapeutic interventions to treat mental health conditions and reduce mental health disparities.

Improving Youth Mental Health

America's children are in crisis. There is an alarming increase in the prevalence of symptoms of anxiety and depression, as well as suicidal ideation, among youth. The pandemic only exacerbated the unprecedented stresses young people are facing. Supporting the mental health of children and youth will require policymakers to address longstanding challenges that focus on ensuring that our young people have easy access to equitable, effective mental health support in schools and in their community.

Increasing Access to Care

Only half of people with a mental health condition receive treatment. To increase access to care and reduce criminal justice system involvement, people need affordable, comprehensive coverage so that they can get appropriate care as early as possible. This is especially critical for communities of color who remain disproportionately uninsured. Policymakers must address ongoing gaps in the accessibility of mental health care, including improving parity enforcement and expanding a culturally competent workforce.

Learn more:
nami.org/advocacy