

**Working Group Regarding  
Treatment and Coverage of Substance Abuse  
Disorders and Mental Illness**



**Annual Report**

**Produced by:  
State of Illinois  
Department of Insurance**



# Illinois Department of Insurance

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**JB Pritzker**  
**Governor**

**Dana Popish Severinghaus**  
**Director**

December 8, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

The Department of Insurance (DOI) is pleased to submit its Annual Report of the Working Group Regarding Treatment and Coverage of Substance Abuse Disorders and Mental Illness as required by The Heroin Crisis Act (Public Act 99-0480) and specifically pursuant to 215 ILCS 5/370c.1(h)(2).

215 ILCS 5/370c.1(h)(2) requires the DOI, in coordination with the Department of Human Services and the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, to convene a working group of health care insurance carriers, mental health advocacy groups, substance abuse patient advocacy groups, and mental health physician groups for the purpose of discussing issues related to the treatment and coverage of substance abuse disorders and mental illness. 215 ILCS 5/370c.1(h)(2) required the Working Group to meet once before January 1, 2016, and semiannually thereafter.

The attached Annual Report to the General Assembly includes a list of the health care insurance carriers, mental health advocacy groups, substance abuse patient advocacy groups, and mental health physician groups that participated in the Working Group meetings, details on the issues and topics covered, and legislative recommendations as required by statute.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dana Popish Severinghaus".

Dana Popish Severinghaus  
Director of Insurance

# Table of Contents

Working Group Regarding Treatment and Coverage of Substance Use Disorders and Mental Illness Annual Report.....	1
Appendix A: Statutory Language Creating the Working Group.....	2
Appendix B: Working Group Members.....	3

# **Working Group Regarding Treatment and Coverage of Substance Abuse Disorders and Mental Illness Annual Report**

In 2015, Public Act 99-0480 (The Heroin Crisis Act) created a Working Group with the stated purpose of discussing issues related to the treatment and coverage of substance abuse disorders and mental illness. The specific statutory language that established the Working Group can be found in Appendix A.

The Illinois Department of Insurance (DOI) manages the oversight of and provides staff support for the Working Group in coordination with the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) and the Department of Public Health (DPH). The Working Group meets in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Meeting Agendas and Approved Minutes are available on the DOI website at [www.idoi.illinois.gov](http://www.idoi.illinois.gov).

DOI's ultimate goal for the Working Group is to learn what type of education is still needed and to accurately determine where to devote resources. Working Group meeting participants are encouraged to use the DOI for assistance, to convene meetings, and to have conversations.

## **Working Group Participants**

- Health care insurance carriers
- Mental health advocacy groups
- Substance use patient advocacy groups
- Mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers
- Representatives from relevant state regulatory and human service agencies

## **Working Group meetings covered in this 2023 Annual Report**

- July 21, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. CT
- November 17, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. CT

## **Meeting Locations**

Both the July 21, 2023, meeting and the November 17, 2023, meetings were held via WebEx conference call.

## **July 21, 2023, Meeting**

Brian Gorman of Get Covered Illinois gave a brief update on behalf of DOI. The Mental Health Parity campaign is up and running, with phase one completed and the agency moving on to phase two. The goal of the campaign is to educate the public on mental health parity, help consumers understand the laws around mental health parity, and raise awareness of the consumer complaint process. Phase one included setting up a dedicated webpage on mental health parity. Phase two has included a media campaign, including radio ads, and DOI will be developing long form videos with animated content to go along with paid digital spots, banner ads, and advertising on public transportation. During this process, DOI has been working with mental

health advocates and other stakeholders to help craft the messaging. DOI is looking forward to continuing work on this multi-year project.

Eric Foster presented an update on behalf of HFS. HFS is continuing work on the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Initiative, which focuses on an integrated care model, currently funded under Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). However, HFS is planning to submit an application for a federal demonstration in Illinois which requires developing a certification process as well as a prospective payment system. There are upcoming events, including a town hall for providers and several coordinating groups between agencies such as HFS and DHS to work on public policy planning and public stakeholder meetings.

### **November 17, 2023 Meeting**

Brian Gorman of Get Covered Illinois gave a brief update on behalf of DOI. The Mental Health Parity campaign for year one has been completed. The goal of the campaign is to educate the public on mental health parity, help consumers understand the laws around mental health parity and raise awareness of the consumer complaint process. DOI set up a dedicated webpage on mental health parity and included a media campaign through radio ads, social media campaign, and digital ads. DOI developed and completed three long form videos and two shorter videos with animated content to go along with paid digital spots, banner ads, and advertising on public transportation in year two of our efforts. During this process, DOI has been working with mental health advocates and other stakeholders to help craft the messaging. DOI particularly is grateful for the contributions of Blanca Campos for mental health parity support in the Spanish language. DOI is looking forward to continuing work on this multi-year project.

### **Legislative Recommendations and Considerations**

The working group did not finalize any specific legislative recommendations during the 2023 meetings.

## **Appendix A**

### **Statutory Language Creating the Working Group**

#### **215 ILCS 5/370c.1(h)(2)**

The Department, in coordination with the Department of Human Services and the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, shall convene a working group of health care insurance carriers, mental health advocacy groups, substance abuse patient advocacy groups, and mental health physician groups for the purpose of discussing issues related to the treatment and coverage of substance abuse disorders and mental illness. The working group shall meet once before January 1, 2016 and shall meet semiannually thereafter. The Department shall issue an annual report to the General Assembly that includes a list of the health care insurance carriers, mental health advocacy groups, substance abuse patient advocacy groups, and mental health physician groups

that participated in the working group meetings, details on the issues and topics covered, and any legislative recommendations.

## **Appendix B**

### **Working Group Attendees**

#### **2023 Working Group Meeting Agency Staff Participants**

<b>Joanna Coll</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Adam Flores</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Daniel Frey</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Brian Gorman</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Laura Pellikan</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Matthew Pickett</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Robert Planthold</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Andi VanderKolk</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Erica Weyhenmeyer</b>	<b>DOI</b>
<b>Eric Foster</b>	<b>HFS</b>
<b>Michelle Jenkins</b>	<b>DHS</b>

#### **2023 Working Group Meeting Participants July 21**

<b>Laura Minzer</b>	<b>Illinois Life and Health Insurance Council</b>
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#### **2023 Working Group Meeting Participants November 17**

<b>Blanca Campos</b>	<b>Community Behavioral Healthcare Association</b>
<b>Kate Morthland</b>	<b>Illinois Life and Health Insurance Council</b>
<b>Kevin Smith</b>	<b>Health Alliance</b>