



The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force is the voice of the community on issues related to the quality and responsiveness of mental health and substance abuse disorder services.

October 16, 2020

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Mental Health Task Force Commends Medicaid Policy Changes

Today the Wisconsin Department of Health Services announced a new policy that will enable Medicaid-eligible individuals leaving jail or prison to have health care coverage immediately upon release. This has been a long standing priority for the Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force, and will improve access to care and medication upon re-entry for many Wisconsinites who have a mental illness or other disabilities.

“People with mental illness are over-represented in the criminal justice system,” said Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force Co-chair, Mary Neubauer. “To support successful re-entry, it is essential that individuals with a mental health or substance use diagnosis have immediate access to behavioral health services and medication. Suspension will help these individuals more easily and quickly access care.”

Providing access to health care and medication immediately upon an individual’s release, can help lower health care costs, reduce reliance on costly and traumatizing crisis care, as well as decrease mortality and recidivism for justice-involved individuals.

Wisconsin was one of a very few states that terminated coverage of Medicaid enrollees who are incarcerated.

The Mental Health Task Force thanks Governor Evers, DHS Secretary-designee Palm, and DOC Secretary Kevin Carr for implementing this important policy change that will improve access to essential health care for many Wisconsinites who live with a mental illness.