

Access to Mental Health Care Matters



LACK OF ACCESS TO CARE IS THE ROOT CAUSE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN THE U.S.¹

Demand for mental health services is greater than ever and services are not keeping pace.¹



58,557,000
people or more than
1 in 5 adults
live with mental illness²



123 million
people live in a
designated Mental Health
Professional Shortage Area⁴

27% of metropolitan counties and
65% of non-metropolitan
counties lack a single
practicing psychiatrist⁵



53.9%
of adults
with mental illness
received care
in 2023²



50.6%
of youth
with mental illness
received treatment
in 2016³



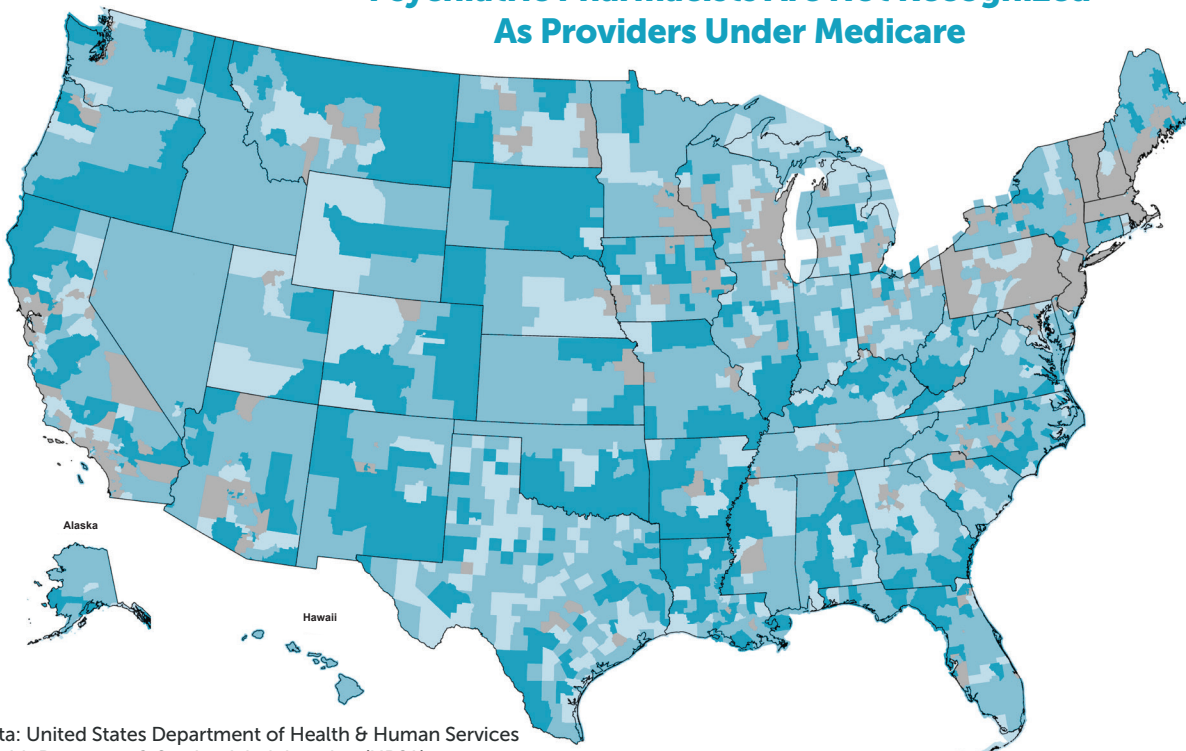
4,220,000 adults with
serious functional impairment
from mental illness
went untreated in 2023 and
45.2% reported a need for mental
health care that was not received²



12.3% or **1 in 8**
of all adult emergency
department visits were
due to mental health
and substance use⁶

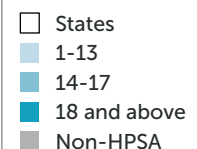
Few States Have Adequate Levels of Mental Health Providers⁷ More Than 6,200 Mental Health Providers Are Needed to Fill These Gaps

Psychiatric Pharmacists Are Not Recognized As Providers Under Medicare



Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)-Mental Health




HPSA scores are developed for use by the National Health Service Corps to determine priorities for the assignment of clinicians. Scores range from 1 to 25. The higher the score, the greater the priority.



PROBLEM: LACK OF ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE

SOLUTION: PSYCHIATRIC PHARMACISTS

Psychiatric Pharmacists Increase Access and Improve Patient Outcomes

-  Psychiatric pharmacists are qualified to provide direct patient care through advanced training, experience, and board certification.
-  Utilizing psychiatric pharmacists for medication management increases access to psychiatrists, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners resulting in decreased wait times for appointments.
-  Patients treated by a psychiatric pharmacist have improved outcomes including^{8,9}:
 - Consistency in taking medications
 - Improved symptoms
 - Higher satisfaction
 - Fewer primary care physician visits.

Patients deserve the high-quality, evidence-based care psychiatric pharmacists provide. This care, like care provided by other types of health care providers, should be reimbursed. AAPP urges federal policymakers to support legislation to:



Require CMS and other payers to pay for services provided by psychiatric pharmacists.



Expand the mental health and substance use disorder treatment workforce through integration of psychiatric pharmacists.



Increase adoption of innovative care and payment models that integrate behavioral health and primary care services.

Barriers to Accessing Care from Psychiatric Pharmacists



Federal limitations on reimbursement and medication prescriptive authority impede psychiatric pharmacists in providing direct patient care services and increasing access.



Lack of recognition of psychiatric pharmacists as providers by Medicare translates to lack of recognition by Medicaid and private insurers.



Lack of reimbursement to health systems for psychiatric pharmacist services substantially reduces feasibility to employ enough psychiatric pharmacists to impact access and patient care.

The American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP) is a professional association representing psychiatric pharmacists nationwide. Our members integrate into teams of health care professionals, making a difference in overall costs, treatment efficiencies, patient recovery, and quality of life.

References available at: <https://aapp.org/advocacy/access>

AAPP
Brenda Schimenti, Executive Director
8055 O St, Ste S113, Lincoln, NE 68510
t:402.476.1677
bschimenti@aapp.org