

## NEWS

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### MHAFC Welcomes Increases for Mental Health Programs in President's Budget

Columbus, OH (February 4, 2010)—Mental Health America of Franklin County (MHAFC) commends the Obama Administration for proposing a Fiscal Year 2011 Budget that contains increases for most of the nation's public health agencies, which highlights the need to invest in critical mental health supports and services beyond important steps that would be taken through health care reform.

The budget, which was released on Monday, prioritizes public health programs, including increases in funding for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), despite a difficult fiscal landscape.

The proposed budget includes a \$110 million increase (3.1 percent) for SAMHSA, a \$1 billion increase (3 percent) for the National Institutes of Health and a \$5.2 billion increase (8 percent increase) for mental health care services at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Administration's proposed funding increases would expand the crucial services and supports, research, and prevention interventions for people living with, or at risk of, mental illness that are provided or supported not only through SAMHSA, but at other agencies such as NIH, the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The budget also recognizes the importance of consumer and family participation in one's recovery (for example, the budget proposes a modest increase for Center for Mental Health Services' Consumer and Family Network Grants), as well as the need for integration of behavioral health with primary care (for example, the budget proposes allocating \$25 million towards the integration of behavioral services into primary care health systems at HRSA).

"The message the Administration is sending with this budget is clear and important," said Laura Moskow Sigal, Executive Director. "Funding for health, including behavioral health, complements health care reform efforts and is vital for delivering prevention, early intervention, treatment services and research to communities throughout the nation."

Mental Health America of Franklin County is a private, not-for-profit organization, established in 1956. We are dedicated to promoting mental health in Franklin County through advocacy, education, and support services.



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