












A combination of factors creates challenges for many Floridians to access affordable, appropriate, and timely behavioral health care. Too many adults and children in Florida with behavioral health needs have to rely on clinically inappropriate care settings, such as hospital emergency departments, to receive needed behavioral health treatment. COVID-19 has created new challenges for the behavioral health care system as more people experience symptoms of mental illness and substance use disorder.

Florida's hospitals across the state are committed to working with community groups, state agencies, advocates and consumer groups, and health care providers to implement and sustain systems of care that more timely meet the behavioral health needs of Florida residents.



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFILE FOR FLORIDA

-  20% of adults have a mental illness
-  4% of adults live with serious mental illness (SMI)
-  7% of adults have a substance use disorder
-  4% of youth have a substance use disorder
-  13% of youth experience at least one major depressive episode a year
-  Suicide is the second leading cause of death for Floridians age 25-34
-  61.4% of adults with any mental illness receive no treatment
-  65% of youth experiencing a major depressive episode
-  204 federally designated mental health professional shortage areas – 7th highest in the country
-  238 emergency department visits for opioid-related diagnoses per 100,000 population.
-  375 hospital inpatient stays for opioid-related diagnoses per 100,000 population



## COVID-19 Impact on Behavioral Health:

### More adults are reporting symptoms of anxiety, depression.

- About 42% of U.S. adults reported recent symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder as of Feb. 1, 2021 up from 36% in August 2020.

### More Floridians are experiencing drug overdoses

- 31% increase in non-fatal drug overdoses between April and September 2020, compared with the same period in 2019.
- 12% increase in hospital emergency department visits with a primary diagnosis of opioid overdose between July 1 and September 30, 2020, compared with the same period in 2019.

### COVID-19 itself may be a risk factor for developing mental illness.

- More than one third of COVID-19 survivors nationally were diagnosed with a neurological or psychological condition – most commonly anxiety – within six months of infection.

Sources: Florida Hospital Association, Florida Behavioral Health Association, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health America, Kaiser Family Foundation, The Lancet Psychiatry

\*All data are specific to Florida unless otherwise indicated.

## FHA 2021 Policy Priorities for Behavioral Health



Support increased behavioral health funding to reduce avoidable hospital ED visits.



Support legislation that aligns Florida law with the federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), including aligning authorization and documentation requirements and requiring all state health agencies, health plans, and commercial insurance to report annually on the implementation of the parity act in Florida.



Increase access to behavioral health services to address service delivery gaps in treatment options.



Provide robust oversight of Medicaid Managed Care plans to ensure that they reimburse behavioral health providers fairly and reduce unnecessary denials.



Implement policies to better integrate and coordinate behavioral health services with physical health services through the support of the behavioral health home model.



Support payments and policies that provide comprehensive services and support for moms and babies to improve outcomes and reduce neonatal abstinence syndrome.

